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The gastronomic potential of forgotten crops, heritage varieties and landraces.

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**Applicable ‘track’:**

**C.5:** Gastronomic landscape and biosphere stewardship: Food as a tangible entry point for revitalizing landscapes and equitable food system transformations

**Key words:**

*forgotten foods, forgotten flavours, biodiversity, food security*

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**Presentation type:** Oral Presentation

**Title:**

The gastronomic potential of forgotten crops, heritage varieties and landraces.

**Introduction:**

Global levels of agrobiodiversity are decreasing, leading to food and nutrition insecurity, loss of dietary diversity and negative implications for culinary heritage. This is partially due to the homogenisation of the global food supply. The standardisation of food systems after the green revolution has had many implications, such as the loss of ingredient variety; as a result of which, 90%, of today's global food production originates from just 15 crops and many of the minor-crops and traditional varieties have been lost or diminished from consumer plates. Many of these forgotten crops have great economic, societal, and sensory potential, which could be exploited through innovative gastronomic concepts.

**Methods:**

The study is based on a mixed methods approach, firstly it includes a case study on the sensory characteristics of 10 UK 'forgotten' pea varieties and comparison to their commercial relatives (1) This has been carried out using the *TA.XTplus 100C Stable Micro Systems'* Texture Analyser and (2) preference/acceptance tests with 140 untrained panellists (affective test). The second method consisted of a systematic literature review of peer reviewed articles on the sensory characteristics, culinary applications, and gastronomic potential of forgotten crops versus their commercial relatives worldwide.

**Main Findings:**

- 1) **Texture Analysis:** These crops contain unique texture characteristics such as higher puncture thresholds, elevating the consumer desirability.
- 2) **Sensory Analysis:** Some forgotten crops/varieties, when compared to commercial cultivars, have greater flavour profile and higher consumer acceptability.
- 3) **Systematic Literature Review:** Many of these forgotten crops are cultivated and consumed on micro scale in local food systems, often correlated to culinary heritage, orphan traditions and heirloom seeds passed on from generation to generation. In many cases, their sensory, organoleptic, nutritional, and societal characteristics tend to be superior to their commercial cultivars.

**Conclusions:**

Food value chain actors must take advantage of the hidden gastronomic potential of forgotten and underutilised crops. Further research around the revival strategies for these forgotten edibles is required.