

Review of: "Ethnobotanical Documentation of Yerba Mate in Syria"

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Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

1. Summary:

- A. Specify in the summary how Ilex benefits health.
- B. Provide more precise data on its introduction to Syria.
- C. In the results: specify what health benefits are perceived by respondents.
- D. Conclusion: summarize the deep-rootedness of this tradition among Syrians.

2. Introduction:

- A. What specific bioactive compounds are among the most important in Ilex? It would be interesting to emphasize the antioxidants at this point: What types of compounds are they? What are the antioxidant mechanisms? What health benefits do they offer? Include scientific evidence and compare them with other sources of antioxidants. Similarly, highlight the anti-inflammatory compounds, mechanisms of action, laboratory evaluations, clinical studies, and compare them with other anti-inflammatory agents.
- B. Here, it would be valuable to specify what social, economic, and cultural aspects are associated with Ilex in South America. This will help contextualize the South American reality to identify cultural differences with Syria.
- C. They mention consumption frequencies; it would have been very helpful to understand the frequency of Ilex consumption, the ways it is consumed (blends), and the consumption frequencies.
- D. What is the cultural significance of this beverage in Tartus, As-Suwayda, Salamiyah, and Qalamoun?

3. Results:

The information could potentially be improved by presenting it in the following way:

- A. Traditional uses (medicinal, dietary, ritual, and spiritual).
- B. Associated traditional knowledge (knowledge diversity, transmission, names, and local usage classifications by types or blends).
- C. Commercial value (local collection and/or production), importance to the local economy, and exchange systems, if any.

- D. Resource conservation and management: (resource availability, plant management, impact of harvesting).
- E. Cultural perception: symbolic importance.
- F. Environmental perception: perception of environmental changes, traditional ecological knowledge.

The section on recent studies on yerba mate should include more precise, up-to-date, and reliable scientific information.