

ABSTRACT

Most food flavours and sweeteners are synthetic compounds and reports of their toxic and carcinogenic effects increase daily. The present trend therefore being towards natural products as food additives, an investigation on the production of such compounds from local plants was carried out.

The plant *Abrus precatorius* [Sinhala : Olinda] is the local substitute for *Glycyrrhiza Glabra* [Sinhala : Welmi]. Both plants contain glycyrrhizin as the main active compound and is used both in Ayurvedic medicine, and as a flavour compound and a sweetener. The possibility of extracting glycyrrhizin from *Abrus* callus cultures was investigated.

Selected Citrus species was also investigated.

Optimal conditions for callus growth was determined and comparison of active ingredient in callus and whole plant extracts were carried out both qualitatively and quantitatively by chromatographic methods. Glycyrrhizin from callus of *Abrus* leaf was identified by TLC and also by HPLC.

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