

Abstract:

Fig was introduced into China about one thousand years ago, but its commercial cultivation just began during the last decades. Why this small fruit became popular is that our research works have gained significant progress on suitable cultivars, culture techniques, and processing and medical usage of fig. According to fig consumption in China, the main cultivars are divided into two types, i. e fresh fruit cultivars and both fresh and processing cultivars, some of them selected from those introduced anciently, the others being introduced in recent years. Fig fruits are transformed into several processing products, such as dried fig, preserved fruits, jam, juice, wine, powder, and the others, but most popular ones are preserved fruits and jam. There are nearly 20 fig - processing factories in the mainland. Fig fruits as well as leaves contain a plenty of amino acids and inorganic elements, showing their high nutritional value. Fig also contains several medical components such as flavone, rutin and quercetin, which can be used in cardiovascular disease medicine production. Additionally, our cooperative research showed that the extracts from fig had significant inhibition in growth of several cancer cells in mouse bodies, the inhibition to spleen cancer high up to 64.06%, EAC 53.85%, Lewis lung cancer 48.85%, HAC liver cancer 44.44% and S180 cancer 41.82%. The nontoxic extracts of fig could increase the immunity of the bodies and postponed the life span after the mice were irradiated by ^{60}Co . These results implied that fig might have an important role in human body health. The problem and perspective of fig development in China are discussed in the paper.