

HEALTH BENEFITS



Turmeric is one of nature's most powerful healers. Curcumin is the active ingredient found in turmeric which allows for these medicinal uses.

1. It is a natural antiseptic and antibacterial agent, useful in disinfecting cuts and burns.
2. When combined with cauliflower, it is shown to prevent prostate cancer.
3. Prevented breast cancer from spreading to the lungs in mice.
4. Reduces the risk of childhood leukemia.
5. It is a natural liver detoxifier.
6. Used in Chinese medicine as a treatment for depression.
7. It is a natural treatment for arthritis and rheumatoid arthritis.

Turmeric Turning Profit

Turmeric (*Curcuma longa*), an economically import spice, is required in the agro-processing industry as well as the export and fresh markets. Jamaica consumes an estimated 179,653 kg of turmeric rhizome (curry) powder annually.

Supply Availability

Turmeric is produced island-wide. However, the major producing parishes are Westmoreland and St. Elizabeth.

Prices

The current farmgate price for turmeric ranges from \$44 to 55/kg. On January 21, 2010, the United States Fruit & Vegetable Market news reported an average terminal market price of US\$6.88/kg (J\$612.32/kg) for green turmeric.

Target Markets

In 2009, agro-processors utilized approximately 28,182 kg of turmeric. Two agro-processors were identified.

The exportation of turmeric rhizome increased significantly by 133.4% in 2009 moving from 28,891 kg in 2008 to 67,441 kg in 2009. Our main export destinations were the USA and Canada.

Import

In 2008, approximately 112,121 kg of the rhizome or (curry) powder were imported. Our major suppliers were India, China and the USA.



USES

In turmeric, curcumin is the primary pigment and is generally used in various food industries as a food colour. This unique colour is added to dairy products, beverages, cereal, confectionery, ice-cream, baked and savoury products. Turmeric is mostly used in flavoured milk, drinks, cultured milk and desserts to obtain lemon and banana colours.

Jamaican turmeric contains about 0.88% Ar- curcumin, the active ingredient in turmeric rhizome, which is responsible for its colour and aroma. This compares favourably with a 0.91% for competing origin.