

# Portuguese Introduced Three Important Plants Impact in Culinary of Tamil Nadu- An Analytical Study

Chef Sadesh Babu<sup>1</sup>, Mr.K.P. Yuvaraj<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1,2</sup> Assistant professor

<sup>1,2</sup> T. John College

**Abstract-** *Tamil cooking is a mixture of basic spices and ingredients that delivers a great end result. It is elusive, delicate and full of flavours. It is highly nutritious and well-balanced. Whether vegetarian or non-vegetarian food, preparing Tamil Nadu cuisine at home is relatively easy once you know the cooking pattern. Spices such as fenugreek seeds, mustard seeds, cumin, black peppercorns, curry leaves are often used in our cooking process. Even Tamarind and coconut (flesh, milk and oil) play a significant part. There are also dairy products (milk and yogurt). Being a hot and humid place, yogurt rice acts as a coolant at the end of a meal and helps digestion. At present in Tamil Nadu culinary practices, most of the dishes cannot imagine without certain ingredients such as tomatoes, potatoes and chillies. In ancient Tamil Nadu, the above mentioned ingredients were not the part of their culinary pattern. Due to the Trade activities of Portuguese, These ingredients exchange took great role in our culinary. This article establish the ingredients adopted from Portuguese trade, area of growing, health benefits and positive and negative impacts in our culinary culture.*

**Keywords-** Portuguese trade, Ingredients exchange, health benefits, Positive impacts, Negative impacts

## I. INTRODUCTION

Tamil Nadu is renowned for his strong conviction that providing food to others is a privilege to humanity as is popular in other regions of India. The area has rich cuisine that includes both conventional vegetarian and non-vegetarian dishes. Tamil cuisine was created by Tamil people in Southern India several centuries ago. Pepper was one of the most important spicy ingredient widely used. All the dishes were made by using all indigenous ingredient. Peppercorns, coriander seeds, Black Jaggery (karupatti), tender coconut, Honey, ginger, Turmeric, Tamarind, Mustard seeds, ghee are the elements used on early days. At the advent effect of Portuguese trade, certain ingredients Tomatoes, green chillies and potatoes become part of our culinary culture. There was vital changes in cooking techniques as well as eating habits due to the exchange of ingredients in to our culinary tradition.

## II. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. The main objective of the study is to find out an influence of three important ingredients (tomatoes, Potatoes, and chillies) Portuguese trade plants in Tamil Nadu culinary
2. To find out health benefits of these foreign ingredients
3. Analyse in detail bout area of growing these foreign ingredients in Tamil Nadu
4. To find out positive and negative impact of these foreign ingredients in Tamil Nadu culinary

## III. HISTORY OF PORTUGUESE TRADE IN INDIA

Portuguese trade with India had been a crown monopoly since the Portuguese captain Vasco da Gama opened the sea route to India in 1497–1499. (1)The Portuguese were the first among the European merchants who came directly to the Malabar Coast via Cape of Good Hope for trade, followed by the English, the Dutch, the Danes, and the French.

They all considered the Malabar Coast as an important region for the trade in pepper, ginger, cardamom and other spices. The Portuguese set up a number of factories and fortresses to procure the products of the Malabar Coast and store them till the arrival of the ships and their departure in favourable season for Europe. A notable feature of the Portuguese trade with the Malabar Coast was the declaration of royal monopoly on pepper and the signing of contracts with various rulers for the estimated quantity of pepper.(2)

During this time, the Portuguese left their mark on certain Indian cuisines in two ways: by introducing new ingredients to India – including spices that are seen as an essential part of Indian food today – and by introducing Portuguese dishes that then were adapted to Indian culinary techniques and tastes.(3)

### Introduction of foreign ingredients in Indian culinary

The arrival of the Europeans changed India's culinary scenario. A huge compilation of cooking was introduced to indigenous food. When the Portuguese began trading with Indians, they brought various spices and a variety of vegetables into the country with them. Moreover, they started influencing the whole Indian culture as well as food habit. Since the decade in 1498 when Vasco da Gama entered India, Portuguese influence on Indian Food had been seen. The Portuguese journey to India led Goan cuisine reflects the influence of Portuguese on Indian food. Tangy, salty and tasty delicacies are a component of the experience. (4)

During their period in India, the Portuguese left their mark on Indian cuisine with the introduction of new ingredients and products that included chillies, potatoes, tomatoes and other spices, vegetables and fruits that led to the creation of curry and other spices, which are now seen as an essential part of Indian food, but also of typical Portuguese dishes that have been adapted to the Indian techniques and tastes.(5)

### Potatoes

Potato is there main important food crop in the world. Potato is a temperate crop developed under subtropical conditions in India. The Potato is a vegetable which always been a poor man's friend. It has become after being popular crops in this country. It is an economic food to all. They supply source of low cost energy into the human diet. Potato popularly called as the king of vegetables (6)

### History of Potatoes

While there was tremendous resistance to its spread in Europe during 17th century, the Europeansailors, traders, soldiers, missionaries, explorers and colonial officials etc. introduced this crop in several countries in Asia-Pacific region. It is a widespread belief that potato was introduced in India by the Portuguese during early 17th century much ahead than many other countries in the region.

Further, the British took potato to hills in Northern Indian and Sri Lanka where it prospered as an important plant of colonial home gardens. Potato cultivation was introduced in the Simla (now Shimla) hills in 1828 and in Nilgiri hills in 1830. By late 18th or early 19th century, the potato was an important established vegetable crop in the hills and plains of India. (7)

### Area of growing

Potatoes can be grown only under such conditions where the temperatures during the growing season are moderately cool. Potato is mostly cultivated by planting tubers. Potato crop is a wholesome food which is rich in carbohydrates, proteins, minerals and vitamins. Potato is an important vegetable crop of which place a prominent role in the economy of Nilgiris in Tamil Nadu. The potato has grown areas in Tamilnadu only in the hilly regions of Dindigul ,Nilgris and in Krishnagiridistrict. Presently KufriJyoti and Kufri Giriraj are the main varieties for this region..(8)

### Influence of Potatoes in Tamil Nadu culinary

In Tamil Nadu culinary, we cannot imagine the meal without any potato preparation. Potatoes are used to make curry, kormas, varuval (deep fry and shallow fry),various snacks and boiled potatoes are mashed and used as baby food in Tamil Nadu cuisine. Urulaivaruvai, Chettinaduurai roast, urulai curry, kongu style urulaikozhambuare famous dishes of Tamil Nadu cuisine.(9)

### Benefits

#### Potatoes

When the potato is cooked with the skin, nutritive value becomes double . Potatoes are rich in vitamin C, B and calcium. It contains 5g fibre and 3g proteins. Potatoes can reduce weight while eating along with the skin. It contains very few fats and only cholesterol. When you eat potatoes along with skin, the immune system become strong. So often people who are sick eat potatoes with the skin and find a solution. Phytochemical in potato prevents cancer. Its skin is rich in fibre. So they control the amount of glucose in the body. Adding potatoes at night can help lower blood sugar levels.(10)

#### Tomatoes

The tomatoes are one of the most important “protective foods” both because of its special nutritive value and also of its widespread production. It is the world’s largest vegetable crop after potato and sweet potato, but it tops the list of canned vegetables. Tomato is an important vegetable crop and it has greater economic importance among the vegetables since it is one of the leading commodities in agricultural exports. The agricultural commodity prices affect the level of living of both consumers and farmers. (11)

### History

Originating in South America, it only really came into its own when it drifted up towards the warmth of Mexico where the Aztecs named it "Tomatl". It was taken to Europe and cultivated from the 16th century onwards. KT Acharya suggested projects as late as 1854 its possible date of entry into India.(12) Due to lack of evidences as it is not clear when and where cultivation of tomato started in India but it is clear that they were the Britishers who made it popular. Different varieties of tomato were planted by them. Because tomatoes thrive in warm, sunny condition with no severe frost, the plants took well to Indian soils.

India grown several varieties of tomatoes, from the small lively cherry tomato bursting with juice to the large fibrous beefsteak. The most common tomato variation are beefsteak, cheery, heirloom, roma and pear. A few of the 7500 tomato varieties grow in India many with rather peculiar name – "best of all", fire ball, desi Dixon, King Humber, roma and red cloud are a few examples.(13)

#### **Area of growing**

The largest tomato producing district in the state of Tamil Nadu is Salem, followed by Dharmapuri, Coimbatore, Dindigul and Theni. Tomato is an important and seasonal vegetable in the daily diet of the Indian households. Tomato (*Lycopersicon esculentum*) belongs to the genus *Lycopersicon* under Solanaceae family. Tomato is a herbaceous sprawling plant growing to 1-3 m in height with weak woody stem. The flowers are yellow in colour and the fruits of cultivated varieties vary in size from cherry tomatoes, about 1–2 cm in size to beefsteak tomatoes, about 10 cm or more in diameter. Most Cultivators produce red fruits when ripe. It is one of the richest vegetables which keeps the stomach and the intestine in good condition.(14)

#### **Influence of Tomatoes in Tamil Nadu cuisine**

All most 90% of curry preparations are not possible without tomatoes in Tamilnadu culinary. Tamil Nadu curries are commonly characterized as super spicy but in fact their sourness is almost as important. Like ornamentation on a building, spices are what you see first, but it is sourness as that often gives you curries their structure, the acid bite enlivening the bland starches we eat them with. Tomatoes are really useful because apart from giving sourness they also thicken and giving body to curries. In Tamil Nadu culinary, All types of major cuisines like Chettinadu, Nanjilnadu, and kongu Nadu, tomato is an vital ingredient.(15)

#### **Benefits**

The tumours will dissolve. Can also act as a pain reliever. Cures lung diseases as well. Frequent eating of its fruits can cure kidney and liver problems. Anaemia and fatigue, will reduce as iron is high. Eating this fruit during arthritis can reduce the amount of vitamin B3 in the blood and reduce pain.(16)

#### **Chillies**

Without chillies in their spices, Tamil Nadu food is incomplete. Every Tamil Nadu woman knows this simple truth: the chillies rule the kitchen. Chillies are considered one of the commercial crops for spices. Chillies are indispensable in daily life and the most essential ingredient in many different cuisines around the world, as it adds pungent, taste, flavour and colour to the dishes. Indian chili is considered world-famous for two essential commercial qualities, such as levels of colour and pungency.(17)

#### **History**

The Portuguese explorer Vasco-da-Gama reached Indian shores in 1498 bringing the pungent spice with him. During the 16th Century, Portuguese navigators took Chillies to Asia. After Vasco-Da-Gama first took it to India, Chillies became extremely common in India. Locals on the west coast were vigorously cultivating chillies only 30 years after Vasco-da-Gama set foot in India (they were called Gowai Mirchi, indicating they were originally produced in Goa). From there spread chillies to South India and to the North India.(18)

#### **Area of growing.**

Chilli is believed to be one of the popular spice varieties. This is the most commonly used basic spice, named as wonder spice. India is the world's biggest chili pepper manufacturer, buyer, and exporter. Chillies cultivate districts in Tamil Nadu are Ramanathapuram (samba), Thoothukudi (gundu), Sivagangai (samba), Virudhunagar (samba), Tirunelveli (samba).(19)

#### **Influence of Chillies in Tamil Nadu culinary**

Specific varieties are grown for different uses such as vegetables, pickles, spices and condiments. In everyday life, chillies are the most essential ingredient in Tamil Nadu cuisines as they add to the dishes pungent, aroma, flavour and colourist is also known as red pepper or hot pepper, and is an important well-known commercial crop used as a condiment, food supplement or vegetable. Chilli is used mainly as a culinary substitute for providing taste, colour, nutrient and pungency. (19)Chili is practically an essential item in the

kitchen. Various varieties are cultivated for vegetables, spices, condiments, sauces, and pickles. The dry chilly is commonly used in curried dishes as seasoning. It is also used in curry powder.

Chilli is virtually an indispensable item in the kitchen. Different varieties are grown for vegetables, spices, condiments, sauces and pickles. Dry chilly is extensively used as spice in curried dishes. It is also used as an ingredient in curry powder. The popular Chettinad, Nanjil Nadu, Kongu Nadu, Tamil brahmins, The shaibu cuisines are well known for using too many types of spices such as star anise, whole red chillies, fennel seeds, cinnamon, garlic, bay leaf, peppercorn, cumin seeds and fenugreek. In all these culinary practices, Chillies are inevitable ingredients..(20).

### Benefits

Chillies holds all the best properties it's regarded a food for. It has been seen for several years as a food. Chillies holds all the best properties for which it is considered as a food. It has been used as a food for many of years. Chillies were used as food, spice, and household medicine since ancient times for several common problems such as high cholesterol, high blood pressure, joint pain, skin problem, and used as carminative, appetizer, stomach, beverages, neuropathic pain relief, and rheumatic counter-irritant, lumbago.

- Chillies are rich in vitamin C (about double that of citrus fruits) and after preparation, vitamin C is just 30% missing.
- Vitamin A is very strong in dried chillies.
- Red chillies constitute a great source of  $\beta$ -carotene.
- Chillies have antibacterial properties, and contain bio flavonoids, the most common antioxidants in apple juice.
- It is efficacious in protecting against cancer.(21)

### Negative impacts

These ingredients become vital part of our present culinary culture. Even though, various of health benefits by using these foreign ingredients, Still acceptable negative impacts also there. Introduction of these foreign ingredients in Tamil Nadu culture, resulted in

- Cross food culture practices
- Ancient food system faces severe sustainability challenges.
- Lack of importance to indigenous ingredients
- Change in traditional cooking methods

- Change in food eating pattern
- Change in Food service procedures
- Influence of foreign culinary practices in Tamil Nadu cuisine
- Importance for traditional food dishes are reduced.

### IV. CONCLUSION

There are so many scientific secrets hidden behind each of our traditional eating habits. In the ancient Tamil community, the only saying that breakfast is porridge (conjee). Even though we consume less of such liquid foods, our body is full of nutrients and energy. Eating less means less blood flow to the stomach for food digestion. In the afternoon they took the necessary nutrients and energy available foods. They cooked and ate rye, varagu, samai and rice. These foods were supplemented with vegetables, fish and meat. Dinner will be served in the evening before dark. Getting enough sleep after an evening meal rests on many parts of the body, including the intestines. Due to the introduction of these ingredients by Portuguese traders in our food culture resulted in changes in cooking methods, eating habits and created implications in preference of the people. At present, without these three ingredients, Tamil Nadu culinary cannot exist further. It become part of our kitchen. In the name of civilization, we become addicted to foreign food culture due to prevail of these ingredients. In ancient times, each food item was classified according to its kind. They were conscious of the nature of the food. Our diet is a tradition of consuming a variety of foods in combination with emotions. In our culinary practices, both indigenous as well, as these Portuguese ingredients need to be well balanced.

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