

## **W-4 Increasing the role of botanic gardens in conservation, research, and public outreach of food plant diversity: Challenges, opportunities, and collaborative solutions**

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**Duration:** 90 minutes

**Target audience:** Everyone interested in food biodiversity within the botanic gardens community, including conservation experts, horticulturists, senior management representatives, researchers (botany, genomics, etc.), educators, etc.

**Objectives:** Participants will leave the workshop:

- Knowing examples of food biodiversity conservation and use projects from botanic gardens in multiple countries
- Understanding challenges botanic gardens are facing regarding conservation and use of food biodiversity
- Understanding the unique role botanic gardens can play within the larger food biodiversity research ecosystem
- Having developed a list of ideas for ways their garden could further contribute to this work
- Understanding how botanic gardens' work on food biodiversity can contribute to global policy frameworks and commitments, such as the SDGs, FAO goals, and targets under the CBD Kunming Montreal Biodiversity framework.
- They will also be encouraged to take away a 'tiny task' aimed at fostering continued engagement beyond the workshop session.

**Abstract:** This workshop will focus on the increasing role of botanic gardens in food biodiversity research and outreach, aiming to raise awareness and showcase relevant initiatives. It will share examples of food biodiversity conservation and use projects from botanic gardens in multiple countries, identify challenges and opportunities surrounding conservation, research, and public outreach of food plant biodiversity in botanic gardens, with particular focus on gardens' role within the larger assortment of relevant organisations including public seedbanks/agricultural research institutions, academia, and the private sector.

Key topics include understanding and documenting food biodiversity, i.e. threats to its survival, the importance of conservation and research, and the role of botanic gardens. Common challenges such as data sharing, exchange and distribution of seeds and plant materials, cross-sector collaboration, and policy will be discussed, along with

management strategies for conservation and use objectives.

The session will explore the complementary strengths among botanic gardens, agricultural seed banks, and other sectors focused on food biodiversity conservation and use. Participants will examine how such collaborations can contribute to global policy goals, including the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), genetic resource conservation agreements outlined in the UN FAO's Plant Treaty, and relevant targets under the CBD Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) and the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation (GSPC) Complimentary Actions to the GBF and offer strong fundraising rationales.

Attendees will consider ways that botanic gardens can individually support food plant diversity, as well as potential to align across institutions and grow a network to advance collaborative efforts in this area.