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Saffron or Crocus (Zafaron) – Crocus Sativus L.

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Abstract: Human life is closely connected with the plant world. During its evolutionary development, the human body reliably adapted to proteins, carbohydrates, fats and a wide variety of biologically active substances (vitamins, macro and microelements, organic acids, etc.) of plant origin, without which the normal course of life processes and the development of the body as a whole is impossible. As a result of this symbiosis, some plants eventually began to serve humans as food, others as medicine. One of these plants is saffron. The article reflects the chemical composition and medicinal properties of the main types of fruits and vegetables common in our diet. They can be called differently: food for the healthy, medicine for the sick, a priceless gift of nature, a green or home pharmacy.

Keywords: vitamins, macro and microelements, organic acids, fruits, vegetables, medicine.

A perennial, almost stemless, bulbous plant from the iris family – Jridaceae, 10–20 cm high. The tuber sheaths are reticulate. The basal leaves are narrow-linear, surrounded by membranous sheaths, appear along with the flowers and elongate after flowering. Flowers are solitary, rarely 2–3. The flower consists of an above-ground and an underground part. The peduncle and part of the flower tube are below the soil level. The second half of the flower tube is above the ground. The stigmas of saffron are funnel-shaped, widened towards the apex and have a length of up to 3 cm. Saffron was known in Ancient Asyria and Egypt several thousand years BC. According to the ancient Ebers manuscript, saffron was included in 30 medicines and preparations.

About 80 species grow in Europe and Asia, and 20 species in the USSR. Saffron sativa is considered the most common. In our country, saffron is grown in Transcaucasia, Crimea, and Altai. In Central Asia, including Tajikistan, saffron, C. alatavicus, is mainly grown. Blooms in September October. Some types of saffron bloom in early spring.

The raw materials used are saffron stigmas, which are collected in the afternoon during the flowering period of the plant (May-June or September-October). From 1 kg of flowers, 75–80 g of stigmas are obtained. The collection of raw materials is carried out as follows: freshly blossomed flowers are cut or picked. Then, in the evening or the next day, the stigmas are plucked or separated from the flowers and quickly dried in the shade or in dryers. Dried saffron stigmas have a pungent odor and pleasant taste.

Chemical composition. Saffron stigmas contain 51.27% of coloring substances, which include glycosides crocin and picroarocin, carotenoids - lycopene, carotene, zeaxanthin. They contain in %: fatty oil 6.8, essential oil (pinene and cineole) 0.34, phosphoric acid 5.03, sugars 8.6, calcium salts, vitamins. B1, B2 and some other biological active substances. The water content in stigmas reaches only 16.78% (V.G. Volynsky et al., 1983). Saffron leaves contain up to 247.8 mg% vitamin C.

Economic importance. The stigmas of saffron or crocus have a fragrant smell. They are widely used in the food, confectionery and perfume industries as a dye and as a spice. They are considered a harmless means for coloring liqueurs, cheeses, oils, sausages, bread, and confectionery products. Saffron has antiseptic and preservative effects. Food prepared with saffron lasts several days longer than food prepared without it (I. A. Damirov et al., 1982). This is especially important for the republics of Central Asia and countries with hot climatic conditions.

In folk medicine, the stigmas of saffron pistils are used, which have a bright orange-red or light purple color. Since ancient times, saffron has been widely used as a diaphoretic, diuretic, antitussive, cardiac and sedative, as well as to increase appetite. Aqueous, alcoholic and oily extracts from saffron stigmas are used as an anticonvulsant for seizures, thyrotoxicosis, and for the treatment of whooping cough. Topically, aqueous extracts from saffron are used for washing wounds, burnt skin surfaces, as an eye lotion and rinsing the upper respiratory tract.

Mode of application. Pour two teaspoons or 1 tablespoon of saffron pistil stigmas into 1 glass of boiling water, leave until cool, take 1 tablespoon 3 times a day before meals when treating chronic bronchitis or urolithiasis.

For external use - washing wounds, burn surfaces, treating purulent wounds, use more concentrated infusions of saffron stigmas (boil 2 tablespoons per 200 g of water for 30 minutes).

In ancient medicine, saffron stigmas and oil were widely used as a remedy. C. Galen (130–200 AD) wrote about the use of saffron as a cordial and intoxicant. According to him, one or 2 dirhams (5.92 g) of saffron facilitates childbirth, and 3 dirhams kills. According to Abu Sahl (8th century), Isfahan and Kashmiri red saffron was considered the best in the East. Ancient physicians considered saffron to be hot and dry in nature. According to Ibn Sina’s descriptions, saffron strengthens the heart, clears vision and invigorates, facilitates breathing and strengthens the respiratory organs, reduces appetite and due to its tannic and astringent properties. strengthens the stomach and liver, stimulates lust, drives urine, helps against hardening and malignant ulcers in the uterus. Promotes ripening (furuncle, carbuncle, felon - Yu.N.) and opens blockages. Eating saffron improves complexion. When given to drink in wine, it lulls and dulls the senses to the point of loss of reason. Locally, saffron resolves tumors and helps with erysipelas.

Saffron oil softens nerves, eliminates spasms, helps with hardening of the uterus and improves complexion.

According to the descriptions of Muhammad Hussein Sherazi, saffron causes a good mood, strengthens the senses, resolves and

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