

Tef [*Eragrostis tef* (Zucc.) Trotter] grain and the potentials of its starch for food use

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Tef [*Eragrostis tef* (Zucc.) Trotter] is a tropical C₄ cereal indigenous to Ethiopia. At present, tef cultivation and usage as human food is mostly confined to Ethiopia. This paper highlights tef cultivation and its limitations. Tef grain physico-chemical properties and usage are described. Tef starch has been characterised and compared with normal maize starch. The research showed that in many respects, the properties of tef starch are different from maize starch. Because tef starch granules are very small, smooth and uniform granule size, tef starch can offer applications as a fat substitute (mimetic), and flavour and aroma carrier similar to other small starches (rice, amaranthus and quinoa). Tef starch showed resistance to shear breakdown. Thus, tef starch could be used in high shear processed foods. Also, because of slow retrogradation tendency, application where starch staling is preferred to be reduced is attractive.