

Poster

SWANJATHA: A PLANT MISCONCEIVED AS RICE PLANT

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ABSTRACT

A plant belongs to the family Poaceae called “Swanjatha” was recently referred to as new traditional rice variety by media. To characterize the Swanjatha and to find out its relation to rice, experiments were conducted at RRDI, Bathalagoda in *Maha* 2014/15. Seed samples were collected from Pambahinna, Galkiriyagama and Makandura areas where Swanjatha has been reported. Phenotypical characteristics of plant samples were studied and compared with rice and sorghum plants according to IRRI descriptor. Based on morphological characterization of plant height, pattern of tillering, stem and internodes characters, seminal roots, leaf blade and sheath and mid rib, presence or absence of auricle and ligule, panicle and grain characters, samples observed as Swanjatha were identified as *Sorghum margaritifera* in the family Poaceae and tribe Andropogoneae. In particular, there is no auricle and ligule in Swanjatha at the collar region of leaf sheath which is compulsory characters of rice. This was also proven by the information of the National Herbarium at the Department of National Botanical gardens. These results revealed that the Swanjatha is totally different to rice plant *Oryza sativa* and similar to cultivated sorghum.