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Abstract title Medicinal plants in Belgium
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Abstract text

Belgium has strong medieval traditions of medicinal plants use and medicinal gardens in monasteries and old hospitals. However, a big part of the knowledge and interest in medicinal plants was lost during periods of intensive industrialisation and urbanisation in 20th century.

Hainaut and the region "*Pays des Collines*" are known as an example for the use and cultivation of medicinal plants since the 16th century. In 1929 more than 23 hectares were cultivated with medicinal plants in the area of Flobecq-Wodecq-Lessines. Garden angelica, camomile, greater burdock, henbane, mint, valerian, mallow and other medicinal plants were grown in large scale in this region until 1950. From the 20th century, however, medicinal plants constituted an important target for the development of new medicines in the pharmaceutical industry and became of little interest for the general public, even in rural areas.

Renewed interests on medicinal plants and their use has been raising in the recent decades with the green, nature and environmental movements. It brought back a regained focus on ethnobotanical knowledge to modern lifestyles, both in rural and urban areas, through various local and scientific community-driven cultural and educational projects.

Title of the related panel : Towards sustainable use of medicinal plants. Historical perspective on foraging, cultivation and use of medicinal plants in European countries.

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