



Put a caption for your images and graphs, with a credit source

The challenge

- Limited resources, erratic rainfall, soil degradation, and water scarcity in semi-arid regions pose challenges for smallholder farmers in meeting their animal feed needs.
- Limited awareness and technical knowledge about the potential of cactus pear as a feed source restrict its adoption among farmers.
- Leveraging the unique qualities of cactus pear addresses the persistent struggle to enhance animal feed supply, benefiting smallholder farmers in challenging regions of North Africa, South Asia, and the Middle East.

Our innovative approach

- Investigating cactus pear as a novel and sustainable feed source for livestock.
- Understanding farmers' perceptions, attitudes, and adoption practices concerning cactus pear to ensure successful implementation.
- Evaluating the performance of various cactus pear accessions across diverse environmental conditions and developing nurseries with optimal agronomic practices.
- Enhancing awareness and building the capacity of our partners to effectively promote and utilize cactus pear.
- Establishing robust partnerships with national and international organizations



INITIATIVE ON
Accelerated Breeding



Cactus Pear: A Multipurpose Crop and Resilient Feed Source in in Challenging Semi-Arid Environments

- Cactus pear thrives in harsh environments, requires minimal inputs and grows in poor-quality soils, showcasing adaptability and resilience.
- This multipurpose plant provides valuable products like livestock fodder and human food, while its high-water content helps in water-scarce regions.
- Cactus pear offers economic opportunities for low-income farmers and rural communities with diverse products, while also providing environmental benefits like erosion control, climate regulation, biodiversity conservation, and wildlife habitat.

Sawsan Hassan
ICARDA
s.hassan@cgiar.org

Mounir Louhaichi
ICARDA
m.louhaichi@cgiar.org

Outcomes

- Over 500,000 cactus cladodes planted, boosting cactus pear cultivation.
- Training and capacity development benefited over 5,000 persons, empowering them with knowledge and skills
- Cactus pear cultivation fills the green fodder gap for low-income Indian farmers.
- Growing government and partner interest in cactus as fodder and fruit in India, Jordan, and Tunisia.

Next steps

- Cactus pear, an under-utilized crop, requires dedicated efforts to raise awareness and promote its cultivation to unlock its full potential.
- Urgent action is needed to address the threat of cochineal infestation, which poses a risk to cactus pear materials. Establishing a breeding program for developing cochineal-resistant cactus pear varieties is crucial.
- Further research is necessary to explore and implement effective agronomic practices that enhance the nutritional quality of cactus and optimize its overall benefits.

Partners



INITIATIVE ON
Livestock and Climate

