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Ecuador: Agricultural Technicians Seek To Increase Consumption Of High-protein Vegetable "chocho"

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On July 3, the Inter Press Service reported that agriculture specialists are seeking to increase consumption of "chocho," a high-protein vegetable easy to cultivate, with multiple uses. Chocho was an important food source for native peoples of the Americas during the pre-Hispanic era. In 1990 technicians began gathering chocho plants from several areas of the country, stored them in a plant bank at low temperatures and are now cultivating them in experimental plots to obtain high quality seeds. Known in Peru and Bolivia as "tarwi," the vegetable has a 42% protein content and also contains alcaloids with anti-parasitic properties. Cultivation does not require fertilizers or special care, result of the plant's genetic characteristics which allow it to absorb nitrogen from the air.

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