

Bamboo charcoal and bamboo vinegar*

by Dr. Fu Jinhe

Bamboo charcoal and vinegar production is more and more prosperous in China and most of the products are exported to Japan and other countries.

Bamboo charcoal has a good market in Japan due to a felling ban in natural forests and the good character of bamboo charcoal. In addition to bamboo charcoal being used for fuel, there are several other uses:

Agriculture: As a carrier of organic manure and micro-organism in the soil, bamboo charcoal can improve the vigour of the soil, so people use it as a good soil improver.

Chemicals: Bamboo charcoal can be used as the raw materials of bamboo active carbon. Bamboo charcoal shows strong absorption because of the special structure of micro holes of the bamboo stem, and the function would be more outstanding after it is activated. Tests show that the absorption properties of bamboo active carbon are extremely good.

Medicine and health care: Pillows and mats made of bamboo charcoal can soothe the nerves, relax backaches, and control snoring. Bamboo charcoal also has the functions of deodorization, dehumidifier and fungicide, which are essential to family needs.

Environment protection: Bamboo charcoal can be used as a water clarifier, shield off electromagnetic waves and absorber of poisonous gases. Pollution indoors caused by poisonous materials would be absorbed if the panels were made of bamboo charcoal instead of the asbestos flakeboard and plastic boards. 95% of the nicotine and other poisonous materials would be absorbed if cigarette filters were made of bamboo charcoal.

Other fields: Bamboo charcoal can be made into many kinds of compound materials in the material industry. It also can be made into handicrafts, feed additives and high capacity rechargeable storage batteries, etc.

* Originally published in FAO's NWFP-Digest-L NO. 2/02.

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Bamboo vinegar has 80% water. When it is dehydrated the vinegar consists of about 80-200 components, or 32% organic acid, 40% phenolic compound, 3% aldehyde, 5% alkone compound, 5% alcohol compound, 4% ester compound, and 5% others.

Bamboo vinegar is a by-product of bamboo carbonization. Bamboo vinegar can be used as soil fungicide, plant root growth promoter and deodorizer, in cosmetics, healthy drinks, medicines, etc.

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