



## Harvest amounts and ethnobotanical uses of the rhododendron (*Rhododendron* sp.) in Turkey

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**Abstract:** *Rhododendron* sp. that is forest roses, one of the important species of family Ericaceae. In the temperate regions, it spreads in the southern and northern hemisphere. The rhododendrons have wide spread species in all areas except Africa and South America. Rhododendrons, which are generally bushy, are rarely seen in tree sizes. In acidic soils, organic matter is growing very well in rich and moist soil. Generally from the sea level up to 3,500 - 4,000 m high. It is frequently seen in Turkey, particularly in the coastal area of the Black Sea. We have five natural species: *Rhododendron smirnovii*, *R. ponticum*, *R. ungeronii*, *R. caucasicum* and *R. luteum*, there are 12 taxa related to them. At the same time, it is known among different people such as Komar and Ağur or Ağu among the people. In the species belonging to the Ericaceae family, grayanotoxin is usually present in high concentrations. Rhododendron luteum and Rhododendron ponticum species are mentioned. The pollen of these plants contains a toxin called grayanotoxin (andromedotoxin). This honey, which is fed with toxins, is consumed by humans, and the 'honey poisoning' is seen. Since they have wide distribution in the Black Sea region, poisoning cases in the region are frequent in June and July. This condition, which has negative effects on health, is known due to heart rhythm deterioration and hypotension. It may result in death on a more serious scale. The purpose of working in this context is; The General Directorate of Forestry uses harvest data to tell the location of forest roses in our country and to emphasize the results by referring to the usage areas among the people. According to the data received from General Directorate of Forestry, Department of Non-Wood Products and Services. First record belongs to year 1996 in the period of 1989-2015. In 1996, for the first time, 16,830 kg forest roses collected and gained 67,32 TL incomes in the territory of The Forest Regional Directorate Adana, Mersin and Antalya. After the first harvest in 1996, the total harvest amount was recorded as 21,800 kg and the total income was recorded as 14,504 TL. Forest rose was harvested from The Forest Regional Directorate Bolu, İstanbul, Adapazarı, Adana, Mersin and Antalya until now. Maximum amount of forest rose harvested while performing from The Forest Regional Directorate Bolu (in 2008) with 77,400 kg, and minimum amount of harvest was carried out from The Forest Regional Directorate Mersin (in 1996) as 600 kg of forest rose harvested.

**Keywords:** *Rhododendron* sp., Ericaceae, Harvest, Ethnobotanical use, Turkey