

Teresa Carita\* e Fernando Llera \*\*

\* INIAV, I.P. - *Estação de Melhoramento de Plantas, Estrada Gil Vaz, Ap. 6, 7351-901 Elvas, Portugal; E-mail: teresa.carita@iniav.pt*

\*\* *Instituto de Investigación Agraria La Orden-Valdesequera (CICYTEX), Autovía A-5 Km 372, 06187 Guadajira, Badajoz, España; E-mail: fernando.llera@gobex.es*

**ABSTRACT**

Grass pea (*Lathyrus sativus* L.) is an annual legume crop used for human consumption since ancient times. This species has many interesting agronomically and nutritionally characteristics. Noteworthy, its great adaptability to different environments, drought and waterlogging tolerance, little demand of inputs and the high level of protein (25% - 29%).

It is believed that the renewed interest in grass pea is justified by the attempt to recover traditional cultures, with the awareness that the maintenance of biological diversity is the key to any future strategy for development of sustainable agricultural systems and a way to ensure food security, nutrition and welfare of human beings.

**Key-words:** *Pulse, Agronomy, Nutrition*