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I International
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for Sustainable Development
in Mountain Regions

Book of Abstracts



**I International Conference on Research for Sustainable
Development in Mountain Regions: Book of Abstracts**

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Sy06005

Growing stevia in Northeastern of Portugal: effect of N rate and cutting regime

Sandra Afonso, Margarida Arrobas, Isabel Q. Ferreira, Manuel Ângelo Rodrigues
Polytechnic Institute of Bragança, Bragança, Portugal

Stevia rebaudiana (Bertoni) is a perennial herb native from South America. It is characterized by a high content of steviol glycosides in its leaves representing an interesting no-calorie sweetener. Since December 2011 has increased interest in this species in Europe after steviol glycosides have been authorized as food additives. In this work, the adaptation of stevia to the growing conditions of NE Portugal was assessed, as well as the potential to produce biomass when grown as an annual crop and subjected to various N rates (0 to 150 kg N ha⁻¹) and two cutting regimes (single and double cut). Most plants died during the winter (minimum temperatures peaked at -8.0 °C at 10 cm aboveground), being necessary to replant the crop next spring. In the double cut regime and the higher N rate 1514.4 and 2390.0 kg/ha of dry leaves and 4748.5 and 5215 kg ha⁻¹ of total dry matter were respectively produced in 2014 and 2015. Based on the leaf N concentrations recorded from these experiments, preliminary sufficiency ranges of 25 to 35 g kg⁻¹ for mid-summer and 15 to 25 g kg⁻¹ for early autumn are proposed.