

MOISTURE CONTENT AND FATTY ACID COMPOSITION OF FIVE TROPICAL FRUITS ¹

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1. INTRODUCTION

A detailed analysis of the composition of tropical fruits is not easily found in the relevant literature although such information could be very important for the food industry, as pointed out by MERCADANTE and RODRIGUEZ-AMAYA (8).

In order to present some updated data on the moisture content and the fatty acid composition of tropical fruits produced in Northeast Brazil, five of the most consumed fruits were analyzed by GLC/Mass spectrometry.

The fruits analyzed were avocado (*Persea americana* Mill), papaya *Carica papaya* L.), mango (*Mangifera indica* L.), passion fruit (*Passiflora edulis* Sims.) and melon (*Cucumis melo* L.).

2. MATERIAL

All the fruits were produced in the orchards of the Pici Campus of

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b) Linoleic acid (a nutritionally essential fatty acid) was found principally in the pulp of papaya (48.25%), passion fruit (46.98%) and mango (46.20%)

c) The presence of lauric acid in avocado was not a surprise since this plant belongs to the Lauraceae family where this acid was first identified and so received its name, although there was the predominance of oleic (50.98%) and palmitic (24.01%) acids.

7. SUMMARY

In order to present some updated data on the moisture content and the fatty acid composition of tropical fruits produced in the Northeast Brazil, five of the most consumed fruits were analyzed by GLC/Mass spectrometry.

The fruits analysed were avocado (*Persea americana* Mill), papaya (*Carica papaya* L.), mango (*Mangifera indica* L.), passion fruit (*Passiflora edulis* Sims.) and melon (*Cucumis melo* L.)

8. RESUMO

(TEOR DE UMIDADE E COMPOSIÇÃO DE ÁCIDOS GRAXOS EM CINCO FRUTOS TROPICAIS)

Os teores de umidade e ácidos graxos de cinco frutos tropicais produzidos no Nordeste do Brasil foram determinados.

Os frutos estudados foram: abacate (*Persea americana* Mill), mamão (*Carica papaya* L.), manga (*Mangifera indica* L.), maracujá (*Passiflora edulis* Sims.) e melão (*Cucumis melo* L.).

Os ácidos graxos foram determinados por cromatografia gás-líquido seguida de espectrometria de massa.

9. LITERATURE CITED

1. ARAÚJO, F. P. *Melão*. Piracicaba, Escola Superior de Agricultura Luiz de Queiroz, 1978. 12p.
2. BRAGA, R. A. *Plantas do Nordeste especialmente do Ceará*. 3ª ed. Fortaleza, Imprensa Universitária, 1976. 537p.