NUTRITIONAL AND BIOACTIVE CHARACTERISTICS OF BRAZILIAN CERRADO FRUITS SEEDS

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Foods of vegetable origin constitute one of the main sources of active compounds. Among the species, the fruits from the Cerrado are noteworthy, since they have been achieving great popular acceptance and they are consumed raw or used in the manufacture of jams, juices, ice creams and breads. In order to better identify the quality of these raw materials, the aim of this study was to evaluate the nutritional and bioactive characteristics of Brazilian Cerrado fruits. The seeds of the ripe fruits of araticum, baru, buriti, jatoba, genipap, pequi and sapodilla were separated manually and then crushed and homogenized for nutritional and bioactive analyses, in which the oils were extracted with cold chloroform, methanol and water (2:1:0.8, v/v/v), according to Bligh & Dyer method. In the seeds, levels of carbohydrates, ashes, lipids, proteins, total fibers, vitamin C and minerals were determined; bioactive characteristics, polyphenols and carotenoids were determined in the oils. The seeds of the fruits presented significant amounts of ashes, lipids, proteins, total fibers, vitamin C and minerals, such as calcium, potassium, phosphorus, manganese, iron, magnesium and sodium. The amount of total polyphenols in the fruit oils ranged from 0.70 mg GAE/g, in baru seed oil to 4.59 the mg GAE/g, in buriti oil. Among the several fruits, buriti oil also presented the highest content of total carotenoids (16.70 mg of β-carotene/g). The results of this study demonstrate that the fruits from the Cerrado represent good nutritional and bioactive dietary sources, especially buriti, which contains the best functional properties.

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