EFFECTS OF DIFFERENT COOKING METHODS ON BIOACTIVE COMPOUNDS AND TOTAL ANTIOXIDANT ACTIVITY OF CASHEW APPLE (*Anacardium occidentale*, L.) “FLESH”.


Cooking food leads to significant changes in its chemical composition which affect the concentration and the bioavailability of the bioactive compounds. The development of food products from fruits has attracted the growing market for products with a reduced level of fats. The aim of this study was to analyze the bioactive compounds of different “in natura” cashew apple fibers (artisan and industrialized) and compare the different methods of cooking of the cashew flesh. Different types of cashew “flesh” were made from fibers (artisan and industrialized). These types of “flesh” underwent different methods of cooking (boiling, steaming, frying and a mixed method) and their bioactive compounds were measured (ascorbic acid, total carotenoids, total antioxidant activity through the ABTS method – azinobis (3-ethylbenzothiazoline 6-sulfonic acid) and the DPPH method (2,2-diphenyl-1-picrylhydrazyl). The bioactive compounds showed significant differences between the *in natura* fibers, while they were significantly similar in terms of phenolic compounds. The artisan cashew fiber had a high level of ascorbic acid, (147.8 mg.100g⁻¹), which is an excellent source of vitamin C. Both fibers showed satisfactory levels of total phenolic compounds and showed antioxidant activity. In both, the levels of ascorbic acid and carotenoids were high as the basic cashew “flesh” is an excellent source of these bioactive compounds. In general, frying exhibited higher means for the compound evaluated, being the best cooking method. It can be seen that making use of cashew apple residue is important both in terms of combating waste and in the development of new food products.