Physico-Chemical characterization of Watercress (Nasturtium officinale R. Br) sold in the City of João Pessoa/Paraíba

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Watercress (Nasturtium officinale R. Br) is a vegetable used in northeastern Brazil and the world, especially in chopped salads. In this crop is related antibacterial activity, antiscorbutic and expectorant. Data on food composition are extremely importance to public health because it is through them that makes of an individual and therefore of their nutritional status. This study aimed to determine the physic-chemical properties of watercress, market and subjected to physical and chemical measurements in order to obtain more information about its nutritional value. There was obtained an average moisture content of 91.42%, the averages of protein, total minerals, carbohydrates and lipids were (3.39%), (0.93%), (0.85%) and (0.55%), respectively. Among the minerals phosphorus and calcium content showed 147mg/100g and 51.60mg/100g, respectively, with the amount of calcium found in the literature above. Ascorbic acid and total chlorophyll showed average values of 2.27mg/100g and 1.192.22 µg/g products, respectively. Fortitratable acidity, the average was (7.03%), pH (6.27) and soluble solids content (ºBrix 7.2). Thus, due to paucity of data is not referenced. And regarding the content of nutrients and easy to cultivate this vegetable, which allows obtaining a fresh food, good quality and low cost, it would be interesting to encourage and increase theirs consumption by the population.