ARBOREAL CASHEW PSEUDO-FRUITS NATIVE FROM CERRADO: CHEMICAL COMPOSITION, TOTAL PHENOLIC CONTENT AND ANTIOXIDANT CAPACITY

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Arboreal cashew from Cerrado (Anacardium othonianum Rizz.) is composed by two portions: the true fruit, that comprises a reniform nut, and the pseudo-fruit, characterized by a reddish peduncle with juicy pulp, which is consumed both fresh or processed. However, data about the phenolic composition and antioxidant activity of this pseudo-fruit are rare in literature. Therefore, this work evaluated chemical characteristics and antioxidant activity of arboreal cashew pseudo-fruits from three different regions of Goiás’ Cerrado (Faina, Goianésia and Santa Terezinha de Goiás). The proximate composition was analyzed by standardized methods, the phenolic compounds were determined with the Folin-Ciocalteau reactive and the antioxidant activity was measured by the free radical (DPPH+) scavenging method. High contents of moisture and low amounts of proteins and lipids were observed in the pseudo-fruits, with significant differences (p<0.05) among the three regions of Goiás’ Cerrado for moisture and lipid contents. The total phenolic contents of the pseudo-fruits ranged from 240.76 to 329.97 mg of gallic acid equivalent 100 g⁻¹ (fresh samples), and the pseudo-fruits from Goianésia showed the highest antioxidant capacity (8.17 g fruit .g⁻¹ DPPH). These results reinforce the potential of the arboreal cashew pseudo-fruit as functional food, and researches must be encouraged in order to guide its use in healthy diets and processed foods.