

PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS AND CHEMICAL COMPOSITION OF PLESH OF SOME DATE (PHOENIX DECTYLIFERS L.) CULTIVARS.

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ABSTRACT

Physical characteristics and chemical composition of flesh of some date cultivar viz. Basra, Desi (Local), Dhakki, Gulistan and Mekrani were determined. Dhakki cultivar exceeded all the other cultivars in average wt. Perfruit, average weight of flesh per fruit, length of fruit, thickness of pulp as well as flesh as percent of total fruit. However, Gulistan surpassed all the other cultivars in thickness of fruit. All the varieties possessed substantial quantities of sugars and essential nutrient elements. All the ingredients in the flesh were statistically significant without exception of phosphorus. The various higher quantities of sugars and nutritional elements in the date cultivars suggests that this could be a good source of carbohydrate and essential minerals in human diet. However, elucidation of cheap preservation processes needs to be explored.

INTRODUCTION

Date (*Phoenix dactylifera* L.) has been one of the important food materials consumed largely by the people in the Middle East and some parts of Africa. The importance of date as a food and medicine can be realised from the fact that it has been quoted in twenty verses of the Holy Quran. The Holy prophet Mohammad (Peace be upon him) spoke of date-palm as a venerated tree and advised the muslims to eat its fruit as an act of merit.

In another Hadith, He (peace be upon him) said that the best property of the date-palm is that it cures many diseases.

Pakistan ranks fifth in production of this meritorious fruit