

Proximate composition of cultivars of cowpea (*Vigna unguiculata* L. Walp) under different cooking methods

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Beans are one of the agricultural products of high economic value and provide important nutrients such as proteins, carbohydrates, iron, zinc and vitamins. The cowpea (*Vigna unguiculata* L. Wap) also known as string bean is a staple food for the population of North and Northeast regions of Brazil, being the main source of vegetable protein low income groups. The cowpea grains are valuable sources of fiber, adequate intake of amino acids, low fat, among other constituents. The aim of this study was to evaluate the chemical composition of BRS Xiquexique, BR 17 Gurguéia, BRS Guariba, BRS Tumucumaque and BRS Aracê in the raw grains and under different cooking methods, with respect to moisture, protein, ash and ether extract. The moisture determination was performed by conventional gravimetric method, protein by the Kjeldahl method, the ash content by gravimetric method at 550 °C and the ether extract by Soxhlet, all in triplicate. The moisture contents ranged from 69.48 to 66.48 % in samples cooked under pressure with previous soaking. The values of protein, ash and fat were lower in BRS Xiquexique (8.08 g), BR 17 Gurguéia (1.22%) and BRS Guariba (0.56%) after cooked in a pot without previous soaking, respectively. More studies are been carried out in order to verify the best cultivar regarding proximate composition after the cowpea be cooked with and without previous soaking under pressure.

Keywords: Cowpea beans, moisture and composition