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Traditional Vegetables: Preliminary Studies on Seeds of Vinegar (*hibiscus sabdariffae* L.)

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Vinegar or hibiscus is a traditional vegetable, characterized by the limited distribution and influence on the food and traditional culture. It is grown from north to south of Brazil and it is also consumed in African countries, in the United States, Japan, India, and Russia. The leaves are used in salads or stewed in tea, and the flowers and immature fruit are ingredients for the preparation of jams and juices. As a traditional vegetable, usually with non-commercial plantings, the vinegar still requires the development of appropriate methodologies for cultivation, especially in relation to stand establishment. Thus, little or no information about the viability and dormancy of vinegar deposited in germplasm bank can be verified. The aim of this study was to study the viability and dormancy of vinegar seeds based on information from farmers who reported frequent problems in stand establishment. Seeds of vinegar derived from sample from a lot of 2011 were subjected to mechanical scarification for 15, 30, and 60 seconds. They were then subjected to germination tests on roll paper and sand. Results showed the existence of dormancy, since non-scarified seeds germinated 3% for the tests on paper and sand. Scarification for 30 seconds showed germination of 94% on paper and 84% on sand. Scarification for the longer periods possible caused damage to the physiological quality of seeds. Thus, it was concluded that vinegar seeds show post-harvest dormancy and scarification may be used to minimize the negative effect of dormancy.

Keywords - traditional vegetable, vinegar, *Hibiscus sabdariffae* L., viability, dormancy