

CHARACTERIZATION OF SRI LANKAN COOKING BANANA  
CULTIVARS AND A COMPARISON OF BIOCHEMICAL  
CHARACTERISTICS OF THEIR FRUITS

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Majority of edible bananas are triploids and had their origin from two diploid species, Musa acuminata (AA) and Musa Balbisiana (BB). Most cooking cultivars belong to the ABB group. In the present study Sri Lankan cooking banana cultivars were characterized according to a system proposed by the International Board for Plant Genetic Resources (IBPGR). The cultivars used were Alukehel, Etamuru, Diya-Mondan, Alu-Mondan, Jaffna-Mondan, Buri-Mondan and Marathamana. The results indicated that some of these cultivars may be effectively distinguished by using this system of characterization.

For each cultivar, four replicate fruits were used to study fruit characteristics. The results indicated the following variation amongst cultivars; dry weight ratio of pulp to total fruit (0.73 - 0.78); moisture content (65.5-76.1%); reducing sugar content (1.01 - 2.51%); non-reducing sugar content (0 - 0.59%); starch content (17.8 - 27.0%) and pH value (4.56 - 5.90). Of these only the dry weight ratio of pulp to total fruit and starch content were found to be non-significant at 5% probability level. In general, Mondan types had a higher moisture content than other cultivars. The highest pH value was found in Alukehel. Alu-Mondan exhibited a higher value for reducing sugars. Non reducing sugar content was negligible in all cultivars.

References

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