

## Geographical and nut wise variation of some macro mineral nutrients in cashew nuts (*Anacardium occidentale* L.) grown in Sri Lanka

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Some mineral (P, K, Ca, and Na) contents of the cashew nuts, grown in four districts of Sri Lanka (Anuradhapura, Puttlam, Batticaloa and Badulla) and their variation with respect to geographical location and nut size were investigated. Over 15 samples (from Sri Lanka Cashew Corporation) were analyzed from each district. The mineral contents are presented on a dry basis.

With respect to mineral nutritional aspects, the big size group (2.7-3.1 cm, Geometric Mean Diameter, GMD) cashew nuts were the best as they contained the highest amount of phosphorous (0.874%), potassium (0.861%) and calcium (0.149%). The medium (2.4-2.7 cm GMD) and small (2.1-2.4 cm GMD) size groups were lower in mineral content. All the minerals except calcium showed a significant district wise variation ( $P < 0.0001$ ), Batticaloa and Badulla district cashew nuts having the highest phosphorous content (0.915% and 0.929%, respectively). The highest potassium content (0.698%) and the lowest sodium content (0.013%), which is advantages as far as the consumer health is concerned, were found in the Anuradhapura district cashew nuts. Further, because of the lowest moisture content (5.52%), Anuradhapura district cashew nuts may have a higher storage life over the others. On average, cashew kernel contains 0.830% phosphorous, 0.687% potassium, 0.138% calcium and 0.0176% sodium.

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