

Development of technology to produce a ready to serve carbonated soft drink using nutmeg (*Myristica fragrans*) rind extract

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Nutmeg, *Myristica fragrans* Houtt., is a tropical evergreen large tree that produces two spices namely nutmeg seed or kernel, and mace or aril. Sri Lanka is the third supplier of nutmeg products. The rind or pericarp that amounts to about 70% of the fruit is usually thrown away and so, this is a by-product that is discarded during processing of nutmeg and mace from the matured fruits. It was expected to make a drink out of nutmeg rind extract for the market as a value added product and this will be beneficial to the country and the grower if the drink could be popularised as an herbal drink.

The product is a carbonated, sweetened, ready to serve soft beverage with food and medicinal value that is produced by using nutmeg rind extract for the purpose of adding the real nutmeg flavour and taste peculiar to the natural spice. Fully matured nutmeg fruits were harvested to produce commercial

nutmeg and mace. The rind was taken to make nutmeg rind extraction. Thoroughly washed rinds were blended and squeezed to obtain the juice which is then added to the sugar syrup. The pre-mixture was added after that and the solution homogenised. The product was boiled for sterilisation and left for cooling. Permitted preservative was added and stirred. The total soluble solids (TSS) in the final product must be 13.5. The product was then cooled to 15°C and carbonated (1.5 gas volume/min). Finally the product was filled in clean glass bottles and hermetically sealed with clean crown closures.

Nutmeg soft drink was subject to sensory evaluation tests by using a specific questionnaire. Overall taste of the nutmeg flavoured carbonated soft drink was tested by a panel. 41% of panel members responded "like very much", while 47 % of members indicated "like moderately". The response for 12 % of panel members was 'like slightly' while none disliked the drink. Nutmeg rind which as a by product at processing can be used for making a very attractive soft drink instead of throwing away. The results of the taste panel indicated that an overall 88% of the people like the drink and therefore, a market demand can definitely be created among the public.

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