

NUTRITIONAL AND PHYSICAL ASPECTS OF BAOBAB FOOD PRODUCTS: REVIEW

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Africa has endowed a plethora of unique plant species with high health-promoting substances. The baobab tree is widely used in Africa for a variety of purposes including, medicinal, food and fruity beverages. This review aims to focus on nutritional value and physical aspects of baobab food products. Baobab leaves, seed oil and fruit pulp are considered as most valuable foodstuff. For the most part, baobab fruit pulp contains a large amount of vitamin C (3-499 mg/100 g) and other essential minerals such as calcium, potassium, phosphate and essential chemical components like sugar, fibre protein content, and lipids. Additionally, the extracted baobab seed oil (BSO) is an alternative source of unsaturated fatty acids (Oleic and Linoleic) and vitamins (D and E). The physical properties of BSO on the other hand, have been examined and it characterized by: (14.79 wt.%) moisture content, (0.867 g/cm³) density, (35.03 mm²/s) viscosity, (0.874) specific gravity and (30.63%) linoleic acid. Whereas the baobab leaves encompass 13-15% protein, 6-7 % carbohydrate, 4-10 %, fat was 4-10 %, 11 % of crude fibre and 16% ash. Accordingly, the energy values of baobab leaves have been well tended to range from 1180 to 1900 KJ/1g. These results showed varied compositions in terms tree's organs characteristics. Therefore, further studies in the physical and chemical characteristics of raw materials of baobab products is needed to provide essential information for food engineering and unit operations systems and predict the behaviour of innovative baobab products.