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NUTRITIONAL VALUE OF THE OIL EXTRACTED FROM THE PUMPKIN SEED OIL CAKE

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ABSTRACT: Oil cake is a by-product which remains after the pressing of pumpkin seeds. Until recently, it was mainly used as animal fodder, but lately it has been increasingly used for nutritious food products or ingredients. As the cake retains a considerable portion of oil, the aim of this research was to determine the content of oil in the cakes obtained after pressing 7 samples of naked pumpkin seeds and 3 samples of husk pumpkin seeds, and the nutritional value of the residual oil. The content of oil varied from 11.0 to 16.0 % in dry matter. After that, in the next 24 hours, the oil left behind in the cake was extracted by hexane, at room temperature. The composition and content of fatty acids and the total content of tocopherols were determined. The dominant acids were oleic acid (37.1 – 43.9%) and linoleic acid (30.8 – 44.5%), an ω -6 fatty acid. There was also a small portion (0.1 – 0.3%) of linolenic acid, an ω -3 fatty acid. The total content of tocopherols was considerably high (28.7 – 64.5 mg/100g), with the γ -isomer being the dominant one (73.6 – 85.3% of the total content).

Key words: *pumpkin seed, oil cake, fatty acids, tocopherols*

INTRODUCTION

The utilization of by-products of oil processing is a very important issue for the edible oil industry. Oil cakes, remaining after pressing the seeds, contain considerable amounts of oil, proteins and nutrients, which contribute to the nutritional value of the cake. However, certain kinds also contain antinutrients, which are unacceptable and must be removed in order to ensure the edible status of the cake.

But this is not the case with the pumpkin seed oil cake, a by-product of cold pressing. To date, scientific papers have reported data regarding the use of pumpkin seed oil cake flour in producing cookies, bread and a spread similar to peanut butter (Radočaj et al., 2011).

Since oil, present in a significant percentage in the cake, has not been, so far, a subject of scientific research, the objective of this study was to assess the remained oil by the means of organic solvent extraction, and then estimate the nutritional quality of the oil. To that end, the composition of fatty acids and the total content of tocopherols were determined.

According to the majority of literature data, linoleic (C18:2), oleic (C18:1), palmitic (C16:0) and stearic acid (C18:0) are the most abundant ones. These four acids make up 98% of the total fatty acid content, while the content of other acids does not exceed 0.5% (Murkovic et al., 2004; Nakić et al., 2006; Vujsinović et al., 2010). Fatty acid content may vary depending on diverse factors, such as: the variety of pumpkin, the area of cultivation, weather conditions, stage of ripeness, etc (Griffith et al., 1997; Younis et al., 2000; Siegmund and Murkovic, 2004).

Tocopherols belong to non-glyceride constituents of vegetable oils. Given that they slow down the autoxidation process, their presence is of high importance to the stability of vegetable oils. They have the ability to stabilize free radicals and transform peroxides into stable products, thus ending the chain reaction (Schuler, 1990). Variations in total tocopherol content are relatively high, as a result of the influence of genotype and cultivation conditions,

and the method of oil extraction. However, regardless of these variations in total content, the composition of tocopherols in the pumpkin oil is quite stable. The predominant tocopherol isomers in the pumpkin oil are γ - and α -isomers (Murkovic and Pfannhauser, 2000; Fruhwirth et al., 2003; Gorjanović et al., 2011).

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The starting materials were 7 samples of pumpkin naked seed oil cakes and 3 samples of pumpkin husk seed oil cakes, remained after cold pressing.

Total oil content and moisture content

Contents of oil and moisture were determined according the standard analytical methods, respectively: ISO 659: 2007 and ISO 665: 2008.

Oil extraction

The oil that was left over after cold pressing was extracted from the cake by organic solvent, hexane, at room temperature, over 24 hours. The proportion of cake and solvent was 1:3. After that, the solvent was evaporated in the rotary vacuum evaporator, at the temperature of 40 °C.

Fatty acid determination

Fatty acids were transformed to fatty acid methyl ester by direct transesterification for the neutral samples and with boron trifluoride solution for samples with higher content of free fatty acids (*ISO 5509,2000*). Fatty acid composition was determined by gas chromatography (GC; VARIAN chromatograph, model 1400; Varian Associates, Walnut Creek, CA), equipped with a flame ionization detector and a 3.0 m × 0.32 cm steel column, packed with LAC-3R-728 (20%; Cambridge Ind. Co., Cambridge, UK) on ChromosorbW/AW(80-100 mesh; Merck, Darmstadt, Germany). Nitrogen was used as a carrier gas (flow rate, 24 mL/min) (*ISO 5508,1990*). Fatty acids were identified by comparison of their retention times (Rt) with those of standards (Supelco™ FAME Mix). All determinations were carried out in triplicates.

Tocopherol content

Quantification of tocopherols was carried out using high performance liquid chromatography (Waters M600E, USA) on a Nucleosil 50-5 C18 reversed phase column with fluorescence detection and external standard solutions of different tocopherols. The following procedures were applied: n-hexane extraction, extract vaporization and reconstitution in methanol using membrane filtration. Mobile phase was 95% ethanol with a flow rate of 1.2 ml/min. The fluorescence detector (Shimadzu RF-535, Japan) operated with the excitation wavelength at 290 nm and the emission wavelength at 330 nm.

Statistical analysis

Data are reported as means ± SD ($n = 3$). Statistical analysis was performed using Statistica 7 software package.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Contents of oil and moisture in the samples of cakes remained after pressing the seeds are displayed in Table 1.

Table 1. Amounts of remained oil and moisture content in the samples of cakes

Cake sample	Oil content		Moisture content (%)
	(% tel quel)	(% d.m.)	
Pumpkin naked seed oil cake			
OLINKA	11.2	12.1	7.93
SB	11.1	12.1	8.28
F1 OLINKAxG	10.3	11.2	8.31
F1 OLINKA x 371B	14.1	15.2	7.63
GLEISDORFER EXPRESS	14.7	16.2	8.84
GLEISDORFER DIAMANT	13.5	14.8	8.77
K2	12.4	13.5	8.15
Pumpkin husk seed oil cake			
OLIVIJA	12.7	13.8	8.06
DAKI 802	10.0	11.0	8.80
K1	13.3	14.2	8.23

Data are the means \pm standard deviation values ($n = 3$)

As shown in Table 1, the moisture contents in the cakes were rather steady, ranging from 7.63 to 8.84%. On the other hand, the results regarding the amounts of oil remaining in the cakes were not so homogenous – the contents varied from 11.0 to 16.2 % d.m. and were considerably high. Berenji (2007) reports that the content of remained oil may vary from 10 to 18%, depending on the pressing method.

Table 2 shows the composition and content of fatty acids in the samples of oil extracted from press cakes. As for the composition of fatty acids, pumpkin seed oil belongs to the oleic-linoleic type. As seen in Table 2, oleic acid content ranged from 37.1 ± 0.11 to $43.9 \pm 0.04\%$, while that of linoleic acid, belonging to ω -6 fatty acids, varied from 30.8 ± 0.09 to $44.5 \pm 0.015\%$. In addition, the presence of a small percentage (0.1 do 0.3%) of α -Linolenic acid, an ω -3 fatty acid, was detected, which increased oil's nutritional value. The measured data are in accordance with the results obtained for the oil extracted from seeds, reported by various authors (Schuster, 1983; Wentzel, 1987; Karlović et al., 2001; Fruhwirth et al., 2003; Vukša et al., 2003; Vujasinović et al., 2010). Namely, the literature does not provide specific data on the composition of fatty acids in the oil extracted from pumpkin seed press cake.

Considering that the composition of fatty acids is a major indicator of both nutritional value and oxidative stability of vegetable oils, it was important to determine the total saturated fatty acids (SFA), monounsaturated fatty acids (MUFA) and polyunsaturated fatty acids (PUFA) content as well. A higher SFA content contributes to oxidative stability, but from the nutritional point of view and in terms of preventing coronary disease, oils with higher MUFA and PUFA contents are preferred. The total content of unsaturated fatty acids in the examined oils was on average four times higher than that of saturated fatty acids.

Table 2. Fatty acid composition (% w/w) of the oil extracted from pumpkin seed press cake

Fatty acid	<i>Oli extracted from naked pumpkin seed cake</i>						<i>Oli extracted from husk pumpkin seed cake</i>			
	Olinka	SB	F1 Olinka x G	F1 Olinka x 371B	Gleisdorfer Express	Gleisdorfer Diamant	K2	Olivija	DAKI 802	K1
Myristic acid C14:0	nd	0.1±0.03	0.2±0.04	nd	0.2±0.03	0.2±0.00	nd	nd	nd	nd
Palmitic acid C16:0	12.9±0.09	11.6±0.06	11.8±0.09	11.4±0.02	11.5±0.11	15.3±0.30	13.3±0.09	11.9±0.12	15.5±0.10	11.2±0.02
Stearic acid C18:0	6.2±0.05	5.1±0.01	6.2±0.03	6.1±0.09	6.2±0.09	9.3±0.02	5.6±0.06	6.5±0.10	5.3±0.08	5.2±0.08
Oleic acid C18:1	43.9±0.04	42.9±0.02	40.7±0.06	41.7±0.01	37.5±0.08	43.5±0.03	43.6±0.11	42.3±0.05	37.1±0.109	39.2±0.10
Linoleic acid C18:2	36.7±0.06	40.2±0.20	40.8±0.07	40.3±0.31	44.3±0.04	30.8±0.09	37.3±0.01	39.0±0.12	41.7±0.17	44.5±0.15
Linolenic acid C18:3	0.1±0.12	0.1±0.21	0.2±0.19	0.3±0.21	0.2±0.29	0.1±0.10	0.3±0.19	0.2±0.18	0.1±0.16	0.2±0.22
Behenic acid C22:0	nd	nd	nd	0.4±0.17	0.1±0.00	0.5±0.15	nd	nd	0.3±0.00	nd
SFA	19.1±0.14	16.8±0.10	18.2±0.16	17.9±0.28	18.0±0.23	25.5±0.59	18.9±0.15	18.5±0.22	21.1±0.18	16.4±0.10
MUFA	43.9±0.78	42.9±0.67	40.7±0.66	41.9±0.78	37.5±0.55	43.7±0.71	43.6±0.69	42.3±0.70	37.1±0.70	39.2±0.69
PUFA	36.8±0.79	40.3±0.88	41.0±0.79	40.6±0.66	44.5±0.59	30.9±0.60	37.6±0.88	39.2±0.69	41.8±0.70	44.7±0.78

Data are the means ± standard deviation values (n = 3)

Total tocopherols were measured and the results are shown in Figure 1.

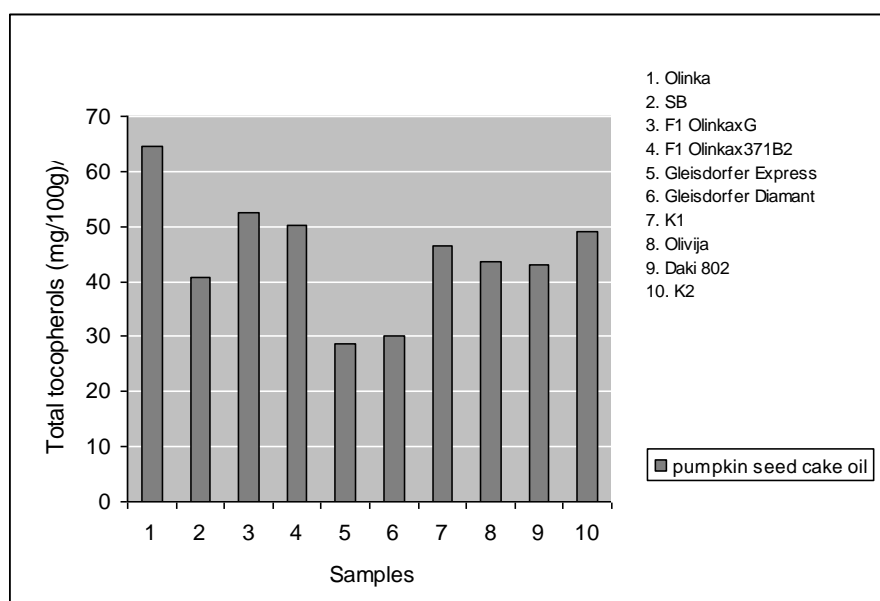


Figure 1. Total tocopherols content in oil from pumpkin seed press cake

The total content of tocopherols in the oil extracted from pumpkin seed press cakes was relatively high, ranging from 28.76 to 64.53 mg/100g and contributing to the nutritional value of the samples. The content was highest in the oil obtained from the Serbian “Olinka” pumpkin cake, and lowest in the oil extracted from the cake remained after pressing the seeds of the Austrian “Geisdorfer Express” hybrid. γ -Tocopherol as the dominant tocopherol isomer in all samples, accounting for 73.64 – 85.28% of total content.

CONCLUSIONS

From the point of view of the composition of fatty acids all samples regardless of the type of cake used for their extraction corresponded to the oleic-linoleic type, which indicates a high nutritional value of the oil. Considering that the amount of tocopherol detected in the examined oil was considerably high, we can draw a conclusion that a large percentage of tocopherol remains in the cake. Therefore, the oil left over in the cake should be considered for use, taking into account its nutritional value and its high presence in the cake.

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