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## **Nutritional Characterizations Of Sycamore (*Ficus Sycomorus*) Fruits**

**Emad M. El-Kholie, Tarek M. Abd- El-Rahman and Hager R. Matter**

Nutrition and Food Science Department, Faculty of Home Economics, Menoufia  
University, Shebin El-Kom, Egypt

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### **Abstract**

The chemical composition, minerals content, physicochemical properties, microbiological aspects and antioxidant activity of sycamore fruit were evaluated. The results showed the fruits analysis included the levels of moisture, protein, fat, fiber, ash, carbohydrates and energy values. The highest mineral contents of sycamore fruits recorded for calcium, phosphorus and magnesium, with the mean values 385.50, 383.10 and 305.45 mg/100g, respectively. While, the lowest mineral contents of the fruits recorded for copper, sodium and potassium, with the mean values 1.30, 3.60 and 6.65 mg/100g, respectively. Sycamore fruit contained different amounts of anti-nutrition compounds such oxalate, tannin, saponin and phytate, with the mean values 2.80, 4.0, 1.6 and 1.85 mg/100g, respectively. Fruits contained different amounts of total phenols and total flavonoides, with the mean values 193.25 and 3.63 mg/100g, respectively. The highest phenolics compounds of dried sycamore fruit recorded for catechol and coumarin, while, the lowest which recorded for cinnamic and catechin. At the end of cold storage (6 months) the pH value, viscosity of sycamore jam recorded the lowest levels for titratable acidity, total sugar and reducing sugar. The value of total bacterial count and moulds & yeast of sycamore fruit jam increased a little during storage period. While, *E. coli*, *Staphylococcus aureus* and *Salmonella sp* did not detect.

**Key words:** (Sycamore fruits, antioxidants, jam quality, physical properties, and microbiological aspects.

## **Introduction**

Sycamore (*Ficus sycomorus*, Linn) belongs to *Moraceae*, a family that is reputable for its medicinal values and consists of about 40 genera and over 1,400 species of trees, shrubs, vine and herbs, often with milky latex juices. They are usually found near streams in the savannah area, sycamore which is known as “Baure or Bore” in Hausa is a tree attaining height of 20 m with widely spreading branches and a massive crown. Sheep and cattle eat its foliage (**Zerega et al., 2005**).

Sycamore, locally known as (gemez), is believed to be one of such medicinal plants that need to be thoroughly evaluated in terms of its active and pharmacological constituents. It is a tropical and sub-tropical plant species. It is a tree attaining up to a height of 20 meters and sometimes reaching 6 meters in, growth with widely spreading branches and a massive crown. Sheep and cattle eat its young foliage (**Datzel, 1953**).

Sycamore fruits have been suspected to possess antidiarrhoeal and anticonvulsant activities. The plant has also been reported to be a potent antimicrobial agent against *Salmonella typhi* (**Adashina et al., 2010**).

Sycamore fruits are rich in antioxidants. It has been traditionally used for its medicinal benefits as metabolic, cardiovascular, respiratory, antispasmodic and anti-inflammatory remedy (**Duke et al., 2002**). Also, **Slavin (2006)**, has reported that *Ficus* species are an excellent source of minerals, vitamins and dietary fiber; they are fat and cholesterol-free and contain a high number of amino acids.

Furthermore, **Pande and Akoh (2010)**, added that *Ficus* species contain polyphenolic compounds and flavonoid, which act as antioxidants and they mentioned that the predominant phenolic acids in fig and its leaves were gallic (1.5–6.4 mg/100 g FW) and ellagic (0.2– 33.8 mg/100 g FW), and the most abundant flavonoid was catechin.

On the other side, **USDA (2002)** concluded that figs produced a significant increase in plasma antioxidant capacity for 4 hours after consumption, and overcame the oxidative stress of consuming high fructose corn syrup in a carbonated soft drink. Also, **Zaku et al., (2009)** reported that aqueous extract of the leaves, stem-bark and root-bark of *Ficus sycomorus* were screened for chemical constituents. They found that the extract

contained tannins, alkaloids, reducing compounds, saponins, flavonoid, steroid, terpenoids and anthracenoside. The aqueous root bark extracts induced 50% anesthesia at 30 mg/ml on rabbit compared with xylocaine. The extract was observed to show muscle relaxation in rats. It promotes muscle relaxation and increased aminobarbitone sleeping time in rats. Hence, *F. sycomorus* exhibits pharmacological activities. Furthermore, **Alphonsine et al., (2012)** reported that the highest content in total phenolics and tannins and the best antiradical activity were obtained with *Ficus sycomorus*. In addition, the latex of this plant showed an antibacterial activity on some very important pathogenic germs related to sickle cell disease.

The antibacterial activities of ethanolic extracts of *F. sycomorus*, L. and *F. platyphylla*, Del. in the treatment of ailments have been previously reported. The antibacterial activity of *F. sycomorus*, L. could be related to the presence of bioactive compounds, such as flavonoids, alkaloids, tannins, saponins and setroids (**Salem et al., 2013**).

This work was conducted to study the chemical composition, minerals content, physicochemical properties, microbiological aspects and antioxidant activity of sycamore fruits.

## **2. Materials And Methods**

### **Material:**

The fresh fruit of sycamores (*Ficus sycomorus*) was obtained from local market, transferred to trlas and stored at  $-18^{\circ}\text{C}$  until used.

### **Chemicals:**

Folin-Ciocalteu reagent and standard substances including gallic acid, sinapic acid, caffeic acid, chlorogenic acid, *p*-coumaric acid and dihydroxy benzoic acid were purchased from Sigma Chemical Company (St. Louis, MO). Vanillic acid, ferrulic acid, rutin and quercetin from Fluka St. Gallen, Switzerland. All reagents and standards were prepared using Milli-Q deionized water (Millipore, Bedford, USA). All other chemicals and reagents were of analytical reagent grade and purchased from Al-Ghomhoria Company for drug, chemicals medical instruments, Cairo, Egypt.

## **Methods:**

### **Preparation of sycamore fruits**

A part of the fresh fruits appropriated has been dried at 45°C for approximately 6 hours in a hot air, then minced to powder by milling using a locally Milling machine (Molunix, Al-Araby), company, Egypt, and then kept in plastic sachets at room temperature (25°C±2°C).

### **Analytical methods**

Moisture, protein (N x 6.25 Kjeldahl method), fat (hexane solvent, Soxhlet apparatus), fiber and ash were determined according to the method recommended by **A OAC (2010)**. Carbohydrate calculated by differences as follows:

% Carbohydrates = 100 - (% moisture + % protein + % fat + % ash + % fiber).

Energy value was estimated by the sum of multiplying protein and carbohydrates by 4.0 and fat by 9.0 according to **FAO (1982)**.

### **Determination of minerals content**

The atomic absorption spectrophotometry as described by **Okwu&Ndu, (2006) and Odom et al., (2013)** was used in the mineral analysis, magnesium and calcium was determined by complexometric titration described by **James, (1995) and Shimoyamada (1998)** whereas potassium was by flame photometry explained in **AOAC, (1990)**.

### **Anti-nutritional factors**

The tannin content was determined using the vanillin-HCl reagent method of **Burns, (1971)**. The oxalate content of the samples was determined using the potassium permanganate titration method of **Dye (1956)**, while the phytic acid content was determined using the method of **Mc Cance and Widdowson (1935)**.

### **Determination of physicochemical properties of sycamore jam:**

Viscosity was determined as standard procedures described by **Ranganna (2002)** using a digital viscometer (model no. R 1:3M, Rheological Int.).

#### **Determination of total soluble solids**

The total soluble solids of the fresh and the processed sycamore jams was determined by using a refractometer (Carl Zeiss Jena – Germany) and they were expressed as percentage of TSS **Genna *et al.*, (2008)**.

#### **Determination of titratable acidity (%)**

Titratable acidity was determined by titrating samples with 0.1M NaOH and was expressed as percentage citric acid (**AOAC 2006**).

#### **Determination of pH:**

pH of jam samples were measured using a pH meter model Orion 3 Star Series pH Benchtop (Thermo Electron Corp., Beverly, MA) **AOAC, (2005)**.

#### **Determination of sugars**

Sugars (reducing and total sugars) were measured as per the standard method of Lane and Eynon according to the method described by **Pearson, (1976)**.

#### **Determination of total phenolic content**

Total phenolics in the selected extract samples were determined according to Mazza's method (**Mazza *et al.*, 1999**), with some modifications as described by **Radovanović and Radovanović (2010)**. Briefly, 0.25 ml of the diluted sample was mixed with 0.25 mL of 0.1% HCl in 95% ethanol and 4.55 ml of 2% HCl, approximately 15 min before reading the absorbance at 280 nm with a UV/ VIS spectrophotometer (Agilent 8453 spectrophotometer). The absorbance at 280 nm, A , was used to estimate total phenolics (gallic acid was used as standard).

#### **Total flavonoid content:**

Total flavonoids in the fruit extract examined were determined by using a slight modification of the method given by **Meda *et al.*, (2005)**. A 0.5 ml of diluted extract solution was mixed with 0.5 ml of aluminium chloride (2%). After incubation at room temperature for 20 min, the absorbance of the reaction mixture was measured at 415 nm. A blank sample contained 0.5 ml of sample and 0.5 ml of distilled water. A 0.5 ml sample of aluminium chloride mixed with 0.5 ml of distilled water was used to zero the spectrophotometer. The data were calculated according to a

standard curve of quercetin (3–20 µg/ml), and they were expressed as quercetin equivalents (QE) per gram of extracts.

#### **Identification of phenolic compounds**

The polyphenol composition of the fruit was analysed by using high performance liquid chromatography (HPLC), previously filtered through a 0.45 µm-pore size membrane filter. The apparatus used for the separation and determination of individual polyphenols from the sycamore fruits was an Agilent Technologies 1200 chromatographic system, equipped with an Agilent photodiode array detector (DAD) 1200 with RFID tracking technology for flow cells, and a UV lamp, an automatic injector, and Chem. Station software. The column was calibrated at 30°C. The separation was performed on an Agilent-Eclipse XDB C-18 4.6 ×150 mm column. The HPLC method was used according to **Radovanović et al., (2010)**.

#### **Microbiological examination**

##### **Preparation of sycamore samples for microbiological analysis:**

Ten grams of each fruit sample were homogenized with 90 ml. of distilled water so as to give 0.1 dilutions. Then different dilutions (1:10<sup>-1</sup> to 1:10<sup>-6</sup>) were prepared to be used for microorganisms tests.

Total aerobic bacterial count determined on nutrient agar media according to the method described by **Oxoid Manual (1979)**, *Staphylococcus aureus* determined on Paired parker agar base media (**ICMSF 1996**), while molds and yeasts, enumerated in potato dextrose agar (**ICMSF, 1996**), *E. coli* (Oxoid) enumerated on Endo agar media (**WHO, 1988**) and *Salmonella sp.* SS agar Oxoid modified according to **Bryan, (1991)**.

##### **Statistical analysis**

Statistical analysis were performed by using computer program statistical package for social science (SPSS), and compared with each other using the suitable test. Statistical analysis has been achieved using IMB-P-C computer by SPSS program (**SPSS, 1998**).

#### **Results And Discussion**

##### **Chemical composition of sycamore fruits**

Data presented in Table (1) show the chemical composition of sycamore fruit. It is clear to notice that the sycamore fruit as wet weight

contains different amounts of moisture, protein, fat, fiber, ash, carbohydrates and energy values. The mean values were 97.50, 0.97, 0.36, 3.03, 1.91, 19.23 % and 84.04 k.cal/100g, respectively. These results are in agreement with **Nkafamiya et al., (2010)**.

#### **Mineral contents of sycamore fruit**

Data given in Table (2) show the mineral contents of sycamore fruits. The obtained data showed that the highest mineral contents of sycamore fruit recorded for calcium, phosphorus and magnesium. The mean values were 385.50, 383.10 and 305.45 mg/100g, respectively. On the other hand, the lowest mineral contents of sycamore fruit recorded for copper, sodium and potassium. The mean values were 1.30, 3.60 and 6.65 mg/100g, respectively. These results are in agreement with **Mutayobe et al., (2014)**.

#### **Anti-nutrition contents of sycamore fruit**

Data given in Table (3) show the anti-nutrition contents of sycamore fruit. The obtained results indicated that a sycamore fruit contains different amounts of anti-nutrition compounds such as oxalate, tannin, saponin and phytate, the mean values were 2.80, 4.0, 1.6 and 1.85 mg/100g, respectively. These results are in agreement with **(Ladeji et al., 2004)**, they reported that oxalate for example tends to render calcium unavailable by binding to the calcium ion to form complexes (calcium oxalate crystals). These oxalate crystals formed prevents the absorption and utilization of calcium. The calcium crystals may also precipitate around the renal tubules thereby causing renal stones. The oxalate and phytates composition of sycamore were 2.85 and 1.98, respectively. Phytates in food are known to bind with essential minerals such as calcium, iron, magnesium and zinc in the digestive tract, resulting in mineral deficiencies **(Bello et al., 2008)**.

The tannin and saponin content were 4.03 and 1.75 %, respectively, tannins are plant polyphenols, which have ability to form complexes with metal ions and with macro-molecules such as protein and polysaccharides **(Dei et al., 2011)**.

#### **Total phenols and total flavonoids content of sycamore fruit**

Total phenols and total flavonoids of sycamore fruit are shown in Table (4). It is clear to notice that the sycamore fruit contains different amounts of total phenols and total flavonoids. The mean values were

193.25 and 3.63 mg/100g, respectively. These results are in agreement with **Mahmoud *et al.*, (2013)**, they reported that the total phenols and total flavonoides of dried sycamore were  $56 \pm 2.64$  as mg/100g galic acid and 19.62 mg/100g as catchin respectively.

#### **Phenolics compounds of sycamore fruit**

Data presented in Table (5) show the identification of phenolics compounds of dried sycamore fruit by using HPLC technique. The obtained results showed that highest phenolics compounds of dried sycamore fruit recorded for catechol and coumarin, which recorded 9.41 and 8.14 mg/100g, respectively.

On the other hand, the lowest phenolic compounds of dried sycamore fruit recorded for cinnamic and catechein, the mean values were 0.62 and 1.26 mg/100g, respectively. While, pyrogalllic and ferulic acid did not detect under these conditions. These results are in agreement with **Mahmoud *et al.*, (2013)**, who reported that the phenolics compounds in dried sycamore fruit using HPLC were catechol 9.396, catechein 1.2597 mg, chlorogenic acid 2.7871 mg, synergic acid 5.209 mg, coumarin 8.084 mg and cinnamic acid 0.621 mg, respectively.

#### **Physicochemical properties contents of sycamore fruit during cold storage for 6 months:**

The physicochemical properties of sycamore fruit during cold storage for 6 months are shown in Table (6). It is clear to notice that at zero time of cold storage period the pH value of sycamore fruit was 4.03. With progress of storage period up to 3 months, the pH value decreased, the value was 3.64, while, at the end of cold storage (6 months) the pH value recorded the highest reduction being, 3.01.

On the other hand, at zero time of cold storage period the value of total soluble solids (TSS) of sycamore fruit was 67.8 %. With advancement of storage period up to 3 months, the value of TSS slightly decreased. The value was 66.83%, while, at the end of cold storage (6 months) the TSS value recorded the highest reduction being, 63.80 %.

Regarding the titratable acidity, at zero time of cold storage period the value of titratable acidity of sycamore fruit was 0.45 %. With progress of storage period up to 3 months, the value of titratable acidity slightly



increased. The value was 0.51%, while, at the end of cold storage (6 months) the titratable acidity value recorded the highest increased being, 0.57.

The viscosity value at zero time of cold storage period of sycamore fruit, the value was 26.25 mPa.s. With advancement of storage period up to 3 months, the value of viscosity slightly decreased, which was 25.85 mPa.s, while, at the end of cold storage (6 months) the viscosity value recorded the highest reduction being, 25.25 mPa.s.

For the total and reducing sugar, it could be noticed that, at zero time of cold storage period the values of total sugar and reducing sugar of sycamore fruit were 43.50 and 28.20 %, respectively. With progress of storage period up to 3 months, the values of total sugar and reducing sugar slightly increased, the values were 43.92 and 28.95%, respectively. While, at the end of cold storage (6 months) the total sugar and reducing sugar values recorded the highest increases being, 45.73 and 30.13 %, respectively. These results are in agreement with **Beenu *et al.*, (2014)**, they reported that the processing of fig fruit pulp into jam and nectar resulted in a significant increase in physicochemical properties like TSS and TA but brought down a significant decrease in pH.

#### **Microbiological aspects of sycamore jam during cold storage for 6 months:**

Data given in Table (7) show the microbiological aspects of sycamore jam during cold storage for 6 months (cfu/g). It is worth to mention that at zero time of cold storage period the count of total bacteria (TBC) of sycamore fruit jam was  $3.5 \times 10^1$  cfu/g. With progress of storage period up to 3 months, the value of sycamore fruit jam slightly increased, the value was  $9.0 \times 10^1$  cfu/g, while, at the end of cold storage (6 months) the sycamore fruit jam value recorded the highest increase being,  $7.0 \times 10^2$  cfu/g. On the other hand, *E. coli*, *Staphylococcus aureus* and *Salmonella sp* did not detect in sycamore fruit jam in any time during cold storage period for 6 months.

Regarding the total count of mold and yeasts, it could be observed that at zero time of cold storage period no counts were recorded until 2 months. With advancement of storage period up to 3 months, the counts of

mold and yeasts of sycamore fruit jam detected being,  $0.4 \times 10^1$  cfu/g. While, at the end of cold storage (6 months) the sycamore fruit jam value recorded the highest increase of mold and yeasts counts being,  $3.4 \times 10^2$  cfu/g. These results are in agreement with **Dilek (2003)**, they found that at the end of 3 months cold storage, the total mesophilic aerobic counts of disinfected figs increased. For the microbiological tests, the only mold count was obtained for one of the three plates of 3 months cold stored figs. However, the counts were still below  $10^3$  cfu. g<sup>-1</sup>.

**Table (1): Chemical composition of sycamore fruits**

<b>Component</b>	<b>% (W/W)</b>	<b>D/W</b>
<b>Moisture</b>	74.50± 0.01	----
<b>Protein</b>	0.97 ± 0.01	3.80± 0.02
<b>Fat</b>	0.36 ± 0.02	1.41± 0.01
<b>Fiber</b>	3.03 ± 0.01	11.88± 0.04
<b>Ash</b>	1.91 ± 0.04	7.50± 0.02
<b>Carbohydrates</b>	19.23±0.02	75.41± 0.03
<b>Energy value (K.cal/100g)</b>	84.04± 0.03	329.53± 0.01

W/W = Wet weight D/W = Dry weight

**Table (2): Mineral composition of sycamore fruits**

<b>Parameter</b>	<b>Sycamore (mg/100g)</b>
<b>Phosphorus</b>	383.10 <sup>a</sup> ± 0.020
<b>Magnesium</b>	305.45 <sup>b</sup> ± 0.020
<b>Calcium</b>	385.50 <sup>a</sup> ± 0.011
<b>Iron</b>	10.80 <sup>c</sup> ± 0.041
<b>Zinc</b>	8.75 <sup>c</sup> ± 0.010
<b>Copper</b>	1.30 <sup>e</sup> ± 0.030
<b>Sodium</b>	3.60 <sup>e</sup> ± 0.004
<b>Potassium</b>	6.65 <sup>d</sup> ± 0.020

Mean under the same column bearing different superscript letters are different significantly (P< 0.05).

**Table (4): Anti-nutrition of sycamore fruits**

<b>Component</b>	<b>Value (mg/100g)</b>
<b>Oxalate</b>	2.80 <sup>b</sup> ± 0.015
<b>Tannin</b>	4.00 <sup>a</sup> ± 0.003
<b>Saponin</b>	1.60 <sup>c</sup> ± 0.020
<b>Phytate</b>	1.85 <sup>c</sup> ± 0.004

Each value is represented as mean ± standard deviation (*n* =3). Mean under the same column bearing different superscript letters are different significantly ( *P*< 0.05 ).

**Table (4): Total phenols and total flavonoids of sycamore fruits**

<b>Component</b>	<b>Value(mg/100g)</b>
<b>Total phenols</b>	193.25 <sup>a</sup> ± 12.40
<b>Total Flavonoids</b>	17.68 <sup>b</sup> ± 0.013

Mean under the same column bearing different superscript letters are different significantly (*P*< 0.05).

**Table (5): Phenolics compounds in dried sycamore by HPLC**

<b>phenolic compounds</b>	<b>Value (mg /100g)</b>
<b>Catechol</b>	9.41 <sup>a</sup> ±0.379
<b>Catechein</b>	1.26 <sup>c</sup> ±0.155
<b>Chlorogenic acid</b>	2.84 <sup>c</sup> ±0.19
<b>Synergic</b>	5.21 <sup>b</sup> ±0.2
<b>Coumarin</b>	8.14 <sup>a</sup> ±0.17
<b>Cinnamic</b>	0.62 <sup>d</sup> ±0.035
<b>Pyrogalllic acid</b>	ND
<b>Ferulic acid</b>	ND

ND = Not detection

Mean under the same column bearing different superscript letters are different significantly (*P*< 0.05).

**Table (6): Physicochemical properties of sycamore fruit jam during cold storage for 6 months**

Storage Period (month)	pH	T.S.S. %	Titrateable acidity (%)	Viscosity (mPa.s)	Total sugar (%)	Reducing sugar (%)
0	4.03	67.80	0.45	26.25	43.50	28.20
1	4.00	67.60	0.47	26.11	43.75	28.43
2	3.84	67.00	0.49	26.01	43.80	28.60
3	3.64	66.83	0.51	25.85	43.92	28.95
4	3.30	66.31	0.52	25.72	44.10	29.30
5	3.23	65.40	0.55	25.30	45.30	29.70
6	3.01	63.80	0.57	25.25	45.73	30.13

Mpa.s = Millipascal-second

**Table (7): Microbiological aspects of sycamore jam during cold storage for 6 months (cfu/g)**

Storage Period (month)	Total Bacterial count	<i>E. coli</i>	<i>Staph. aureus</i>	<i>Salmonella sp</i>	Mold & Yeast
(0) time	$3.5 \times 10^1$	ND	ND	ND	ND
1	$4.4 \times 10^1$	ND	ND	ND	ND
2	$6.2 \times 10^1$	ND	ND	ND	ND
3	$9.0 \times 10^1$	ND	ND	ND	$0.4 \times 10^1$
4	$2.1 \times 10^2$	ND	ND	ND	$0.9 \times 10^1$
5	$4.2 \times 10^2$	ND	ND	ND	$2.6 \times 10^2$
6	$7.0 \times 10^2$	ND	ND	ND	$3.4 \times 10^2$

ND= Not detected

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## الخصائص التغذوية لثمار الجميز

عماد محمد الخولى - طارق محمد عبد الرحمن - هاجر رضوان محمد على مطر  
قسم التغذية وعلوم الأطعمة - كلية الأقتصاد المنزلى - جامعة المنوفية - مصر

### ملخص البحث

تم فى هذه الدراسة تقييم التركيب الكيميائي ومحتوى المعادن والخصائص الطبيعية والكيميائية، والجوانب الميكروبيولوجية ونشاط مضادات الأكسدة لثمار فاكهة الجميز. وأظهرت النتائج أن ثمار الجميز تحتوي على كميات مختلفة من الرطوبة والبروتين والدهون والألياف والرماد والكربوهيدرات وقيم الطاقة. حيث سجلت الثمار محتوى عالى للأملاح المعدنية فى مثل الكالسيوم والفوسفور والمغنيسيوم. وكان متوسط القيم ٣٨٥,٥٠، ٣٨٣,١٠، ٣٠٥,٤٥ ملجم / ١٠٠ جم على التوالي. فى حين كانت أقل القيم مع النحاس والصوديوم والبوتاسيوم، التى بلغت ١,٣٠، ٣,٦٠ و ٦,٦٥ ملجم / ١٠٠ جم، على التوالي كما احتوى ثمار الجميز على كميات مختلفة من مضادات التغذية مثل الألكسالات، والتانينات، والصابونين والفيتات التى بلغت ٢,٨٠، ٤,٠، ١,٦ و ١,٨٥ ملجم / ١٠٠ جم على التوالي. كما احتوى ثمار الجميز على كميات مختلفة من الفينولات والفلافونيدات الكلية التى بلغت ١٩٣.٢٥ و ٣.٦٣ ملجم / ١٠٠ جم، على التوالي. أعلى قيم للمركبات الفينولية لثمار الجميز التى تم التعرف عليها سجلت مع مركب الكاتيكول والكيومارين، فى حين أن أقل قيم قد سجلت مع حمض السيناميك والكاتشين. فى نهاية التخزين البارد (٦ أشهر) لمربى الجميز وجد أن قيمة الأس الهيدروجيني واللزوجة سجلت أعلى انخفاض، والعكس مع كل من الحموضة، السكريات الكلية والسكريات المختزلة. وكانت أعلى قيم للعد الكلى للبكتيريا والفطريات والخمائر فى مربى ثمار الجميز فى نهاية فترة التخزين.

**الكلمات الافتتاحية:** ثمار الجميز - مضادات الأكسدة - جودة المربى - الخواص الطبيعية - الدلائل الميكروبية.