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Assessment of Traditional Processing Technologies of *Tamarindus indica* in Northern Benin

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Abstract

Native plants and fruits have recently gained a lot of attention due to their nutritional and functional potential. This is the case with *Tamarindus indica* which is a nutritious fruit with a variety of uses. It has several appellations depending on the region. The pulp of *Tamarindus indica* remains the most used organ of the species but underutilised despite its interesting nutritional properties. Its high perishability makes it compulsory to process it into different derived products. The objective of this study is to assess traditional technologies for processing *Tamarindus indica* pulp in the municipalities of Bassila, Djougou and Material in northern Benin. Data were collected through a semi-structured survey and sixty-five tamarind processors were interviewed apart from nine socio-linguistic groups. Descriptive statistics and correspondence analysis were used to link ethnofood knowledge to processes.

It arises from the investigations that, out of the three municipalities surveyed, the ethnic groups producing tamarind drinks are mostly Yoa-Lokpa (42.86%), Ottamari and related (28.57%) followed by the Dendi and Yoruba (10%) of which fifty percent are women. Main derived products from tamarind were nectar, powder and sirup. Citation frequencies from informants showed that tamarind nectar is mainly produced by Yoa

-Lokpa ethnic group and related (58.79%) followed by Dendi and related (16.28%) while Tamarind powder is processed only by Ottamari and related ethnic groups. Tamarind sirup is a product specific to the Yoruba and related socio-linguistic groups of the municipality of Bassila. It is suggested that further characterisation of the identified product is performed for their better valorisation.

Keywords: Benin, Tamarind drinks, tamarind pulp, traditional technologies