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Title: Studies on Physicochemical Composition of Bennimix: A Traditional Weaning Food

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Abstract: The aim of this study was to determine the physicochemical composition of Bennimix Baby Food (BBF): a traditional weaning food produced in Sierra Leone and compared with cerelac which is similar to BBF in appearance. Results revealed that BBF was lower in protein content which was 14.1 g, but higher in carbohydrate, fat, fibre, ash, moisture and energy as compared to cerelac in the following amounts, 73.3, 6.3, 2.8, 2.1, 3.6 g and 478 cal, respectively. Vitamins for BBF were very small in quantity. Cerelac has significant ($p < 0.05$) higher minerals than BBF and for the % protein calories it was 13.7%. The amino acids, BBF was lower in the age category of 0-1 year as stipulated by FAO/WHO expert report but higher in the second category (2-5 years). Some of the amino acids like Leucine, lysine threonine, methionine + cystine were 80, 60, 44 and 54 (mg gN^{-1}), respectively. The pasting properties of BBF were not significantly different ($p < 0.05$) with cerelac. Some functional properties, BBF revealed good attributes as compared to cerelac and the difference was significant ($p < 0.05$). Sensory qualities, flavour and taste were rated higher than cerelac however the others were rated lower than cerelac. BBF was successfully compared with Cerelac.

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