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Title: The Nutritive Value of *Cucumis melo* var. *agrestis* Scrad (Cucurbitaceae) Seeds and Oil in Nigeria

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Abstract: This study investigated the biochemical properties of the *Cucumis melo* var. *agrestis* seed and its oil. Also the effect of fungi on the biochemical properties of artificially infected oil after 14 days of incubation was determined. Eight fungi were isolated from diseased *C. melo* var *agrestis* seed during a six months period and monthly sampling from 3 markets in Lagos state, Nigeria. The fungi include *Aspergillus flavus*, *A. niger*, *A. wentii*, *Botrodiploia theobromae*, *Mucor* sp. *Penicillium pinophylum*, *Phycomyces* sp. and *Rhizopus* sp. The moisture content of the usually healthy melon seeds was $4.50 \pm 0.73\%$ and oil yield was $59.46 \pm 1.29\%$. The seeds also contained $30.40 \pm 1.09\%$ carbohydrate and $3.89 \pm 0.55\%$ protein. The extracted oil was edible and non-rancid with free fatty acid value of $1.94 \pm 0.34\%$; peroxide value of 8.00 ± 0.56 meq kg^{-1} , iodine value of 10.50 ± 0.81 and saponification value of 193.0 ± 12.24 meq kg^{-1} . The fungi artificially inoculated on the oil changed its biochemical properties, turning the oil rancid. The melon seed sampled did not contain heavy metal lethal to human health.

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