

Table of Contents

In Press

Article Archive

- [HORTSCI \(45\) 2018](#)
- [HORTSCI \(44\) 2017](#)
- [HORTSCI \(43\) 2016](#)
- [HORTSCI \(42\) 2015](#)
- [HORTSCI \(41\) 2014](#)
- [HORTSCI \(40\) 2013](#)
- [HORTSCI \(39\) 2012](#)
- [HORTSCI \(38\) 2011](#)
- [HORTSCI \(37\) 2010](#)
- [HORTSCI \(36\) 2009](#)
- [HORTSCI \(35\) 2008](#)
- [HORTSCI \(34\) 2007](#)
- [HORTSCI \(33\) 2006](#)
- [HORTSCI \(32\) 2005](#)
- [HORTSCI \(31\) 2004](#)
 - [Issue No. 1 \(1-36\)](#)
 - [Issue No. 2 \(37-80\)](#)
 - [Issue No. 3 \(81-118\)](#)
 - [Issue No. 4 \(119-157\)](#)
- [HORTSCI \(30\) 2003](#)
- [HORTSCI \(29\) 2002](#)

Editorial Board

Ethical Standards

Reviewers 2017

For Authors

Author Declaration

Instruction for Authors

Submission Templates

Guide for Authors

Copyright Statement

Fees

Submission/Login

For Reviewers

Guide for Reviewers

Reviewers Login

Subscription

Essential oil of peppermint (*Mentha × piperita* L.) from fields in Eastern Slovakia

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Citation: Sústriková A., Šalamon I. (2004): Essential oil of peppermint (*Mentha × piperita* L.) from fields in Eastern Slovakia. Hort. Sci. (Prague), 31: 31-36.

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The peppermint, *Mentha × piperita* L., is a plant that represents the oldest and traditional medicinal herbs used in both Eastern and Western traditions until recent time. The peppermint has a history of use in herbal medicine dating back to the ancient Egyptian, Greek and Roman times (Murray 1995) although it need not have been used for the same reasons. The large therapeutic effects of peppermint dry drug as well as essential oil in human medicine caused the peppermint to be appreciated by the pharmaceutical industry. The world peppermint production is realized by large-scale cultivation using suitable intensive practices. Studies of the qualitative and quantitative characteristics of peppermint essential oil produced under the agroecological conditions of Eastern Slovakia confirmed its high composition quality considering the heavy metal contamination. At the same time, the determination of peppermint essential oil composition in comparison with the analysis of peppermint oil produced in the other parts of the world suggested its competitive quality parameters in the world market. A suitable menthol content of peppermint of Slovakian provenience predestinates this peppermint gene material for the breeding of new cultivars opposite to foreign ones and its introduction into agricultural conditions.

Keywords:

peppermint; *Mentha × piperita* L.; qualitative and quantitative composition of essential oil; Eastern Slovakia

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