KIWIFRUIT PROCESSING. A REVIEW

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Abstract

Kiwifruit (Actinidia sp.) is native to Asia and the first commercial plantations were established in New Zealand, in the early twentieth century. In our country, the first commercial orchard was planted at Ostrov Agricultural State Enterprise (CT) in 1993, by the efforts of Nicolae Cepoiu, Corneliu Petrescu and Florin Stănică. Kiwifruit has become popular worldwide for fresh consumption due to its high sensory and nutritional properties. It contains high levels of bioactive compounds such as vitamin C, vitamin E, flavonoids, antioxidants, carotenoids, minerals and fibbers. Being cultivated both in North and South hemisphere, and having a good storage life (over 6 months), fresh fruits are available through the year. Even so, kiwifruit is largely processed as juices, nectars, syrups, alcoholic drinks (cider, liqueur, brandy), candies and fruit bars, jam and marmalade, patisseries (cakes, cookies), dehydrated and lyophilized products. The aim of this paper is to present a review of the main processing possibilities for kiwifruit.

Key words: *Actinidia sp., benefits, fruits products, nutritional properties.*

INTRODUCTION

Kiwifruit is botanically known as *Actinidia deliciosa* (Beutel et al., 1990). Also known as 'China's miracle fruit', 'the horticultural wonder of New Zealand' and 'Chinese gooseberry (Nirmal et al., 2018; Iliescu et al., 2019).

This species was first found along the border of the Yangtse River valley in China and later, in 1847 and 1904, the first plants were sent to England and United States, respectively (Yerex et al., 1983).

Kiwifruit is an example of recent success in the domestication and commercialisation of a plant for food (Young et al., 1995).

According to official records, the major centre of diversity for *Actinidia* genus is the hilly region of South-Western China (Litz 2005; Nirmal et al., 2018; Stănică et Zuccherelli, 2009), but the first commercial orchards were established in New Zealand (Ferguson and Bollard, 1990; Warrington, 1990; Young et al., 1995) in 1950's (Barboni et al., 2010; Iliescu et al., 2019).

The expansion of this species throughout the world began to take place in the 1960s with the export of New Zealand plants and seeds to

destinations such as Germany, Italy, Spain, India, South America, Morocco, Israel and South Africa (Yerex et al., 1983; Pinto T., 2018).

By the 1980's, other countries around the world began to produce and export kiwi.

At present, commercial growth of the fruit has spread too many countries including the United States, Italy, Chile, France, Greece, India and Japan. (FAO., 2018; Teresa Pinto, 2018).

In Romania, the first commercial orchard was planted at Ostrov Agricultural State Enterprise (CT) in 1993, by the efforts of Nicolae Cepoiu, Corneliu Petrescu and Florin Stănică, on an area of 2 ha. Hayward, Kramer, Katiuscia, Tomuri cultivars and three new selections obtained by Vitroplant Cesena: AD 20, AD 24 and AD 25 were planted (Stănică, 2009; Stănică et Zuccherelli, 2007).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Nutritional value

This new fruit is considered a superfood and is widespread throughout the world, due to his high nutritional value characteristic flavour and high antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties (Sanz et al., 2020). Kiwifruit are some of the most nutrient-dense fruit and compared with other commonly consumed fruit, are particularly rich in vitamins C, E, and K, folate, carotenoids, potassium, fibre, and contain a range of phytochemicals (Ferguson and Ferguson, 2003). Both green and gold kiwifruit contain almost double the amount of vitamin C found in oranges and strawberries; traditionally known as good sources of vitamin C (Scăeteanu et al., 2019).

In addition, kiwifruit have been shown to be a significantly better delivery vehicle for replenishing depleted vitamin C at tissue levels, compared with supplemental vitamin C, in a mouse model (Vissers et al. 2011).

Green kiwifruit has a higher total dietary and insoluble fibre content than other commonly consumed fruit (Scăeteanu et al., 2019).

Its soluble fibre content is lower than that of oranges, but compares well with apples, bananas, and strawberries.

Both green and gold kiwifruit contain significant levels of two fat-soluble vitamins, vitamin E and vitamin K (as phylloquinone).

Kiwifruit compares well with avocado (1.5 compared with 2.07 mg vitamin E/100 g), the only other fruit high in vitamin E (USDA 2011).

It has been assumed that vitamin E in kiwifruit is restricted to the seeds and therefore not bioavailable (Ferguson and Ferguson, 2003).

However, this seems to be a myth, as Fiorentino et al. (2009b) showed that α -tocopherol is found in the flesh of the kiwifruit, and consumption of both green and gold kiwifruit resulted in increased plasma vitamin E concentrations (Chang and Liu, 2009; Hunter et al., 2012).

The potassium in kiwifruit is comparable with that of bananas, well known for their high potassium content, and more than double that of other fruit. Gold kiwifruit are a good source of folate; similar to that of oranges, but higher than other fruit. (Scăețeanu et al., 2019).

Apart from oranges, both green and gold kiwifruit are better sources of carotenoids, including β -carotene, lutein, and zeaxanthin, than other fruit. The carotenoids contribute to the colour of the kiwifruit, but the unique green colour of green kiwifruit is attributed to the retention of chlorophyll during ripening (1 mg of chlorophyll/100 g), which masks the yellow

colour of the carotenoids (McGhie et al., 2002; Nishiyama, 2007).

Kiwifruit also contains a range of other phytochemicals/polyphenols, although many of the phenolics and flavonoids in kiwifruit are yet to be identified, as to date they have been unextractable (Tarascou et al., 2010).

The taste of kiwifruit is influenced by the balance of sugar and organic acids (Welma et al., 2012).

According to the Institute of Medicine, the recommended daily fibre intake for adults is 25 grams for women and 38 grams for men (Anderson et al., 2009; Lindsey et al., 2020).

However, average fibre intake for US children and adults are less than half of the recommended levels (Wong et al., 2007).

 Table 1. Nutritional references for 100 g fresh fruit for the main species of Actinidia

Nutritional value per 100 g	UM*	A. deliciosa	A. chinensis	A. arguta
Energy	kcal	61 [22]	63 [22]	32 [11]
Water	g	83,1 [22]	82,4 [22]	88,0 [11]
Carbohydrates	g	14,66 [22]	14,23 [22]	9,20 [11]
Sugars	g	8,99 [21]	10,98 [21]	3,9-9,6 ^{[1; 3; 24;} 17]
Protein	g	1,14 [5]	1,23 [5]	1,70 [11]
Fiber	g	2,13-3,39 [15; 19]	2,0 [19]	2,9-4,1 [14]
Saturated fats	g	0,029 [8]	0,149 [8]	13.90-30.50 [10; 14]
Vitamins				
Vitamin A	μg	87,0 [22]	23,0 [22]	37,3-84,5 ^[12]
Thiamine (B1)	mg	0.027 [22]	< 0.01 [22]	0,01-0,05 ^{[9;10;} _{7;17]}
Riboflavin (B2)	mg	0.025 [22]	0.074 [22]	0,02-0,11 ^{[9; 10;} _{7; 17]}
Niacin (B3)	mg	0.341 [22]	0.231 [22]	0,50-1,55 ^{[9; 10;} 7; 17]
Vitamin B6	mg	0.63 [22]	0.079 [22]	1,10-1,90 ^{[9;} 10;7;17]
Vitamin C	mg	92,7 [4; 16; 21; 23]	105,4 ^{[4; 16;} 21; 23]	22,8-43,0 [16; 17; 25]
Vitamin E	mg	1,46 [4; 21; 23]	1,49 [4; 21; 23]	4.6-5.3 [6]
B9 (Folic acid)	μg	25 [22] - 29 [4; 21; 23]	34 [22]	-
Minerals				
Magnesium, Mg	mg	17[22]	12.0 [22]	10,0-23.2 ^{[5;} 20]
Phosphorus, P	mg	34 [22]	25 [22]	31,7-80,2 ^{[5;} 20]
Potassium, K	mg	300 [5; 21]	250-400 [18]	162,7-382 [5; 20]
Calcium, Ca	mg	34 [22]	17.0 [22]	51,5-120,1 [5; 20]
Copper, Cu	mg	0.13 [22]	0.15 [22]	0,05-0,16 ^{[1} _{a,b; 13]}
Iron, Fe	mg	0.31 [22]	0.21 [22]	0,31-1,15 ^{[1} _{a,b;13]}
Zinc, Zn	mg	0.14 [22]	0.08 [22]	0,18-1,45 ^{[1;}
Source				
^[1] Bieniek, 2012a; ^[2] Bieniek, 2012b; ^[3] Boyes et al., 1996; ^[4] Chew et al., 2012; ^[5]				

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Kiwifruit is known to contain approximately 2% to 3% dietary fibre comprised of one-third soluble fiber and two thirds insoluble fibre (Mishra et al., 2012; Lindsey et al., 2020). Nutritional references of kiwifruit is summarized in Table 1.

This makes kiwifruit a premier choice for anyone looking to live a healthier life or even simply bolster their immune system.

Health benefits of kiwifruit consumption

Food scientists and nutrition specialists agree that fruits and vegetables, consumed daily, contribute to reducing risks of certain diseases, including cancer and cardio and cerebrovascular diseases (Liu et al., 2000).

The various antioxidants (polyphenol, ascorbic acid, carotenoids, and tocopherols) present in fruits and vegetables contribute to these beneficial effects (Peschel et al., 2006).

Recent studies also have confirmed the health benefits associated with its consumption (Baranowska-Wojcik' et Szwajgier, 2019; Lopez-Sobaler'et al., 2016). Antioxidants contained in kiwifruit reduce oxidative stress support the cardiovascular and system (Leontowicz et al., 2016). In addition to its low caloric content, wealth of vitamins and its high phenolic content (Baranowska-Wojcik' and Szwajgier, 2019) provide protection against heart diseases, cancer, diabetes, vascular diseases and central nervous system diseases (Tyagi et al., 2017), making this fruit a valuable component of a healthy diet and may also be used as a dietary supplement (Baranowska-Wojcik'and Szwajgier, 2019; Sanz et al., 2020).

As a source of ascorbic acid and polyphenols, the kiwifruit aids in lowering the risk of arteriosclerosis, cardiovascular diseases, and some forms of cancer (Puri et al., 2018) in irritable bowel syndrome (Chang et al., 2010) and also protect the cells *in vitro* from oxidative DNA damage (Teresa., 2018).

There is growing evidence that kiwifruit have beneficial effects on digestive health and general wellbeing, a potentially important characteristic in the light of the increasing proportion of the elderly population in ageing societies that experience impaired bowel function, changes in gastrointestinal function and gastrointestinal discomfort (Donaldson et al., 2018).

A consumption of kiwifruit plays a protective role against reactive oxygen species (ROS) due to the presence of great content of antioxidants (Duo et al., 2009; Skinner et al., 2013), enhance iron retention (Stonehouse et al., 2013), have beneficial effects on digestion (Lintas et al., 1991) and may decrease cardiovascular disease incidence (Stonehouse et al., 2013; Scăețeanu et al., 2019).

Kiwifruit have also been proposed to decrease gastric symptoms of indigestion such as bloating (Chan et al., 2007).

Kiwifruit have been shown to relieve constipation in several clinical trials (Eady et al., 2019; Chan et al., 2007; Barbara et al., 2005).

The laxative effect of kiwifruit has been attributed to its fibre content, which is approximately 2-3% of its dry weight.

As described earlier, the fibre content of kiwifruit is approximately two-thirds insoluble and one third soluble fibre (Mishra et al., 2012; Lindsey et al., 2020).

Allergens

Although the popularity of kiwifruit is constantly growing due to its pleasant taste, low caloric value and beneficial effects on health, there are also some contra-indications addressed especially to people who are more sensitive, allergic or intolerant to some fruit compounds (Lucas et al., 2003; Vasile Scăețeanu et al., 2019).

According to some studies, people who are allergic to birch pollen are also allergic to kiwi (Eriksson et al., 2003); and approximately 12-17% of people allergic to natural rubber latex may develop an allergy to kiwifruit (Kim and Hussain, 1999; Lucas et al., 2003).

The main allergens identified in kiwifruit are actinidine (Act d 1), protein kiwellin (Act d 5), thaumatin-like proteins (Act d 2) and oxalates (Bublin et al., 2004; Hassan and Venkatesh, 2015; Henare, 2016; Maddumage et al., 2013; Nguyen, 2012).

Most patients with allergic reactions to kiwifruit experience localized symptoms of irritation and discomfort in the oral mucosa, but more severe systemic reactions such as rash, redness, and hives have also been observed (Ferguson et al., 2003; Lucas et al., 2007; Lucas et al., 2014; Nishiyama et al., 2004; Pastorello et al., 1998; Popovic et al., 2013). Most allergic symptoms occur within minutes of eating kiwi fruit (Bublin, 2013).

Some studies (Watanabe and Takahashi, 1998) have shown that *A. arguta* fruits have a lower oxalate content than those of *A. deliciosa* species.

According to Chen et al. (2006), thermal processing reduces the risk of causing allergic reactions in people who are sensitive or intolerant to the consumption of fresh kiwi.

Storage possibilities

Being cultivated both in North and South hemisphere and having a good storage life (over 6 months), fresh fruits are available through the year when harvested at correct maturity and at optimal storage conditions (temperature, gas composition, relative humidity, ethylene concentration). In Figure 2. processing possibilities of kiwifruit can be observed.

Kiwifruits that are intended for sale within 3-4 months are stored under normal atmospheres (Brigati and Donati, 2003), whereas fruits that are to be kept for longer times are stored under modified atmospheres. Earlier MAP with 3% O₂ and 3% CO₂ was used, but afterwards oxygen concentrations reduced and CO₂ concentrations were increased owing to the reason that higher CO₂ concentrations reduce fruit respiration and hence ripening (Sozzi et al., 1980).

Presently kiwifruits are stored under 4.5% to 5.0% CO₂ and 1.8% to 2.0% O₂ in CA storage (Brigati and Donati, 2003). ULO (Ultra Low Oxygen) technique have also been used but it did not seem to be suitable for kiwifruit as it results in development of off-flavours and thus reduced storage life (Brigati and Donati, 2003).

Within cool storage relative humidity is maintained above 94% to 95% that helps to reduce weight loss by 2% to 7% (Nardin and Galliano, 1988).

Kiwifruits are sensitive to ethylene and concentrations as low as 0.1-1.0 ppm can induce softening (Monzini and Gorini, 1986). In cool storage, ethylene concentrations are kept below 0.05 ppm in order to prevent softening (Guroo et al., 2017).

Processing

Kiwifruits are mostly eaten fresh, although some kiwifruits are also processed into juices, alcoholic beverages (cider, liqueur, brandy), purees, candied fruit and bars, jam and marmalade, dehydrated and lyophilized products, cakes or pastries, kiwifruit leathers (Cassano et al., 2007; Guroo et al., 2017). In Figure 2, processing possibilities of kiwifruit can be observed.

The freeze-drying process, using lower temperatures and reduced pressure, is more expensive, but allows a much better retention of bioactive ingredients (Morais et al., 2018; Tylewic et al., 2020).

Actinidia deliciosa - the green kiwifruit is not usually processed due to the fact that the chlorophyll responsible for the attractive green colour gets destroyed during processing (Torreggiani et al., 1994).

Also, the characteristic flavour of green kiwifruit gets lost. *Actinidia chinensis* - the golden kiwifruit has become an alternative to food processors. In terms of processing, 'Jintao' variety has shown good results, the yellow colour of the fruit survives well in processed products like juices and jams (Guroo et al., 2017).

However, high prices currently fetched by yellow-fleshed kiwifruit reduces the processing options. For the fruits that do not meet quality standards of the fresh fruit market, processing can be an alternative for adding value to the product.

Small quantities of fruit that do not meet grade standards are used for cosmetics or nutraceuticals (Guroo et al., 2017).

Although in our country the foods based on kiwi fruit are quite few, worldwide the range of commercial products is very wide. In Figure 1 some of the products found on the shelves of Chinese stores are presented: a) kiwi cider; b) bars and jellies; c) 1-3 jam; d) - i) candied or dehydrated fruits; j) kiwi honey; k) lyophilized fruits.



Source: Lavinia Iliescu, 2019 Figure 1. Kiwifruit products, China 2019

The fruits of *Actinidia deliciosa* are less used in the production of products, such as juices or jams, than those of Actinidia chinensis, due to chlorophyll, which is destroyed during processing (Torreggiani et al., 1994).

Guine and Seabra (2017), created two types of kiwi-based nutritional bars (plain and walnut) and analysed consumer preferences. They capitalized on the pulp of kiwi fruit not in accordance with marketing and consumption fresh (in terms of shape and size).

To evaluate the sensory profile, the following attributes were analyzed on a 5-point hedonic scale: consistency, texture, intensity of kiwi flavor, kiwi taste, acidity, sweet taste and homogeneity.

A preference test was also performed to identify the preferred sample of consumers. The conclusions of the study were - simple kiwi bars were much more appreciated, especially in terms of color, consistency, texture and homogeneity (Guinea and Seabra, 2017).

In order to assess the sensory properties of some dehydrated kiwi fruits, at different temperatures (50°C, 60°C, 70°C and 80°C), descriptive sensory profile tests were performed, the evaluated sensory attributes being: colour intensity, aroma intensity, sweet taste, sour taste and bitter taste, texture, general appearance (Correia et al., 2017). Chakraborty et al. (2020), using a hedonic scale of 9 points, determined the degree of consumer acceptance for freeze-dried kiwi fruit and obtained the following results: for sweet taste an acceptance rate of 68.18%, for sour taste - 90.91%, salty taste - 100%, bitter taste - 100%, aroma -95.45%, texture - 77.27% and for the overall impression - 81.82%.

Hussein et al. (2017) analyses consumers' perception of natural kiwi juice, which can be considered a functional drink, due to its high content of antioxidants and vitamins. Consumer preferences on the colour, taste, aroma and overall appearance of natural kiwi juice indicate the possibility of widespread marketing of this product.

For kiwi products such as jams, marmalades, jams, the combination with other types of fruit can improve the colour and flavour of dishes.

In studies on consumer perception, Reddy et al. (2015), analysed parameters such as - general appearance, taste, aroma, texture, colour, consistency, aftertaste, overall acceptability.

Regarding the drinks obtained from kiwifruit, Hande and Chavan (2019) mentioned in their study some results on consumer preferences regarding colour, appearance, consistency, aroma and overall appreciation of products.

A major impact on consumers' perception of products is also the packaging or the form of presentation, which can influence the association between colour and flavour (Wan et al., 2014).



Figure 2. Processing possibilities of kiwifruit

According to Soufleros et al. (2001), the sensory evaluation of kiwi wines and the statistical analysis of the results showed that: the sweetness is significantly affected only by the amount of sugars, while the role of alcohol is marginal. Sensory alcohol is significantly influenced by sugars, alcohol and CO2, while carbon dioxide, viewed as a sensory indicator, was not found to be statistically influenced by any chemical factor examined.

The conclusions of the studies showed that the acceptability of kiwi wines is higher if they contain 10% vol. alcohol, more than 30 g/l sugars and 0.5 bar CO₂ (Soufleros et al., 2001).

CONCLUSIONS

Kiwifruit contains high levels of bioactive compounds such as vitamin C, vitamin E, flavonoids, antioxidants, carotenoids, minerals and fibbers, he becoming popular worldwide for fresh consumption due to its high sensory and nutritional properties.

Even fresh fruits are available through the year (being cultivated both in North and South hemisphere, and having a good storage life – over 6 months), kiwifruit is largely processed. The main processing possibilities for kiwifruit worldwide are juices, nectars, syrups, alcoholic drinks (cider, liqueur, brandy), candies and fruit bars, jam and marmalade, patisseries (cakes, cookies), dehydrated and lyophilized products.

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