

Title Screening of raspberry and blackberry cultivars for ready-to-eat products
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Citation ISHS Acta Horticulturae 804:399-404 . 2008.
Keywords small fruits; *Rubus*; berries; convenience food; quality

Abstract

The small fruits of the species *Rubus* (raspberries and blackberries) and *Vaccinium* (blueberries) are known to have high nutritional value due to their content of nutraceutical compounds, namely of polyphenols and vitamins, which have high antioxidant activity. A possibility for easier distribution and direct use of such berries is the ready-to-eat product, obtained by mild technologies, fresh, easy and comfortable to be used, healthy and convenience food. The aim of this research was to evaluate the suitability of some raspberry and blackberry cultivars to the preparation as ready to eat fruit. Physical and chemical quality parameters (color, firmness, pH, titratable acidity, soluble solids content (SSC) and dry matter) were studied during the shelf-life at $3\pm 1^{\circ}\text{C}$ of the ready-to-eat berries in sealed 450 ml polypropylene containers. Five raspberry cultivars ('Polana', 'Anne', 'Ruby', 'Heritage', and 'Caroline') and five blackberry cultivars ('Lochness', 'Triple Crown', 'Chester', 'Smoothstem' and 'Hull Thornless') were studied, considering also, for some cultivars, a different provenience of the berries, from the plain or from the hills. In all raspberries cultivars, a decrease in firmness, acidity and SSC was observed after 8 days' shelf life. There were significant differences in quality between cultivars, but not between localities. Blackberry cultivars showed different quality parameters, both within the same cultivar from different localities and between the different cultivars.