

Title Effect of harvesting date and storage temperature on the duration of Khalal stage of fresh Barhi dates

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Abstract

This research work aimed at studying the possibility of prolonging the duration of “Khalal” stage for “Barhi” dates. Four harvesting dates (8/8, 16/8, 24/8, 4/9/2012) as well as 3 storage temperatures (5, 0.0, -5°C) were used in this study. Samples of “Barhi” dates at “Khalal” stage were procured from a date palm farm located in the Jordan Valley. The sensorial as well as the physico-chemical properties (weight, volume, circumference, softening rate (change to “Rutab”), moisture, Brix, acidity, pH, colour, ash, tannins, pectin and sugars) of the fresh and stored date samples were determined at specific intervals. The obtained results showed that the fresh “Barhi” dates at “Khalal” stage contain 0.81 - 1.1 % ash, 20 - 37% Brix, 61 - 79% moisture, 0.09 - 0.10% acidity, 1.55 - 3.37% tannins, 4.17 - 10.8% fibre, 0.7- 1.2% pectin, 18 - 35% sugars, whereas the softening rate ranged between 10- 30%. The sensory evaluation results revealed that date fruits stored at 0.0°C achieved the best results (4 scores out of 9, where 1 means like extremely and 9 dislike extremely). The best combination of harvesting time and storage temperature was found to be 24/8/2011 and 0.0°C where a 4 weeks extra time were added to the “Khalal” stage of “Barhi” dates.