

Investigation of some maturity and ripening parameters of West Indian cherry *Malpighia marginata*

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The West Indian cherry is green when immature, and turns yellow/red to bright red when mature and ripe. The fruit has a tart, sweet flavour and is often eaten raw or used to make drinks, in Jamaica and the Caribbean. This study aimed to determine some maturity and ripening parameters such as skin colour, dry matter and sugars of the fruit during maturation and ripening. Results showed that the L^* , and b^* values of the fruit did not vary significantly, while a^* varied significantly. The chroma (C^*) and the hue angle (H^*) also showed a significant variation during maturity. Sugar contents increased significantly during the maturation, while the dry matter content increased slightly. Statistically, a strong correlation was found between the dry matter, the firmness and the skin colour of the fruit during maturation and ripening and these would be good indicators for determining the optimum maturity stage of the West Indian cherry fruits.