

Abstract:

Antioxidant capacities were determined on a range of soft fruit, including *Fragaria*, *Rubus* and *Ribes*. These covered a wide range although, in general, the most coloured fruit exhibited the greatest antioxidant abilities. The colour was derived from anthocyanin compounds whose antioxidant efficacy depended of the number of hydroxyl groups and the degree and type of glycosylation. However, antioxidant capacity of the fruit did not directly relate to anthocyanin or vitamin C content. A strong correlation with total phenol content suggests that other polyphenols also contribute to the antioxidant capacity of soft fruit. Determination of total phenols may form the basis of a simple screen in breeding programmes aimed at increasing the antioxidant status of fruit.