

Nutritional quality of *Oryza sativa* L var. Bg 360 and At 362, and *Eleusine coracana* var. Ravana

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The main source of carbohydrates of Sri Lankans are cereals. *Oryza sativa* L. (Rice) is the staple food of Sri Lankans while *Eleusine coracana* (Finger Millet) is popular among rural and health-conscious communities. The objective of this study is to estimate the nutrient content of selected commonly consumed cereal varieties. Two rice varieties, Bg 360 and At 362 and a finger millet variety 'Ravana' were evaluated for moisture, ash, crude fibre, fat and crude protein contents. Antioxidant activity of the cereals were analyzed by DPPH (2,2-diphenyl-1-picrylhydrazyl) radical scavenging activity. The highest crude fibre ($5.35 \pm 0.90\%$) and ash ($5.44 \pm 1.20\%$) contents were shown in At 362 rice variety. The highest moisture ($14.61 \pm 0.25\%$), crude protein ($2.34 \pm 0.25\%$) contents and antioxidant activity ($359.38 \mu\text{g/mL}$) were recorded in Finger millet variety. The results reveal that red colored rice variety At 362 and Finger Millet variety 'Ravana' are rich in nutrients compared with white colored rice variety Bg 360. Rice varieties rich with bran layer and finger millet varieties provide more nutrients and health benefits to consumers.

Keywords: Antioxidant activity, cereals, proximate composition

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