

## Development of Herbal Tea Using Powdered Pumpkin Seeds (*Cucurbita maxima*)

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### **Abstract**

Pumpkin seeds are an excellent source of essential nutrients. The pumpkin seeds are generally thrown away after the flesh is consumed. By creating value-added products like herbal tea blends, pumpkin seed consumption can be increased. The *Cucurbita maxima* variety of pumpkin was chosen for this study because it is commonly grown in Sri Lanka. The samples were collected from the open market in the Gampaha district. The optimal time required for drying of pumpkin seed was determined by measuring the moisture content of the pumpkin seeds at one hour interval while dehydrating at 70°C. The dried pumpkin seeds were made into five treatments and roasted at 130°C, 140°C, 150°C, 160°C, and 170°C for 15 minutes. Then the roasted pumpkin seeds were ground to form powdered pumpkin seed (PPS). Moisture content (MC), ash content (AC), acid insoluble ash (AIA) content and pH content of PPS samples were determined. PPS samples with tea bag and without tea bags for brewed for 5 minutes. A sensory evaluation using seven points hedonic scale was conducted to determine the odor, color, taste, appearance, and overall acceptability of the brewed PPS with and without tea bags. PPS sample roasted at 170°C resulted the lowest MC, AC and AIA value as 1.97±0.02%, 4.24±0.35% and 0.28±0.02% respectively and highest pH content 6.94±0.02. PPS roasted at 170°C without tea bag obtained significantly higher scores for color, odor, taste, appearance and overall acceptability. The findings showed that roasted powder at 170°C can be used To make herbal tea.

**Keywords:** *Cucurbita maxima*, Herbal tea, Pumpkin seed powder, Roasting temperatures