



**UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA**

**PHYSICO-CHEMICAL, ANTIOXIDANTS AND STRUCTURAL  
CHANGES DURING DEVELOPMENT OF RED-FLESHED DRAGON  
FRUIT  
(*Hylocereus polyrhizus*)**

**NUR ADILLA JAMALUDIN**

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**By**

**NUR ADILLA JAMALUDIN**

**Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia, in  
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**NUR ADILLA JAMALUDIN**

**September 2010**

**Chairman: Phebe Ding, PhD**

**Faculty: Agriculture**

A study was conducted on the changes in physico-chemical, antioxidant content and cellular structures of red-fleshed dragon fruit at every 5 days interval starting from 5 until 35 day after pollination (DAP). The experiment was conducted using randomized complete block design with four replications. Three fruits per replicate were used. Data from measurements of length, diameter, stomatal density, peel and pulp fresh and dry weight, moisture content, ethylene and carbon dioxide rate, pulp firmness, soluble solids concentration (SSC), titratable acidity, pH, peel and pulp betacyanin content and chlorophyll content were analyzed using analysis of variance and differences between means were determined by Duncan's New Multiple Range Test. Peel and pulp L\*, C\* and h° values were determined by regression. Correlation carried out using Pearson's correlation coefficient. Fruit colour changes and cellular structure were documented as photographs and micrographs, respectively. In this



study, fruit were non-climacteric with no respiration and ethylene peaks were observed. A decrease in stomatal density with closed stomata was found throughout fruit development and maturation. The moisture content in peel increased, while decreased in pulp was observed as DAP progressed. Colour changes of red-fleshed dragon fruit in pulp occur earlier than the peel. The manifestations of red-violet betacyanin only appear after seeds have matured, then followed by pulp colour changes and finally peel change from green to red-violet. The red-violet betacyanin manifested itself gradually in pulp at 25 DAP followed by peel at 30 DAP. The high retention of betacyanin content during development and maturation had caused it to correlate significantly with soluble solids concentration as in process of betacyanin synthesis, sugar derivatives was needed to form red-violet betacyanin. Titratable acidity and pH in fruit were not correlated with betacyanin content in peel but titratable acidity significantly correlate with betacyanin content in pulp. There were significant relationship between DAP with L\*, C\* and h° value of peel and pulp. Betacyanin determination using reversed-phase HPLC-photodiode array detection, was confirmed betanin and isobetanin in the fruit. Fruit has high content of antioxidant activity, yet relatively low levels of ascorbic acid and total phenolic contents. This suggest that major source of antioxidant activity of fruit may not contributed from ascorbic acid or phenolics but rather from betacyanin. The developmental processes of fruit were examined using scanning electron microscope (SEM). As DAP progressed, parenchymatous cell lose their integrity due to cell hydrolysis which leads to losing of firmness. The SEM micrographs had revealed that starch granules in pulp decreased in size and intensity as DAP progressed. The degradation of starch granules contribute to softening of pulp tissue. Various form and shape of crystals such as raphides and druses were observed

in scale tissues. It is clear, the physico-chemical and betacyanin accumulation of red-fleshed dragon fruit changed as fruit developed, matured and ripened which coincide with structural changes.

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan keperluan untuk ijazah Master Sains

**FISIKO-KIMIA, KANDUNGAN ANTIOKSIDA DAN PERUBAHAN STRUKTUR SEL SEPANJANG PERTUMBUHAN BUAH NAGA MERAH (*Hylocereus polyrhizus*)**

Oleh

**NUR ADILLA JAMALUDIN**

**September 2010**

**Pengerusi: Phebe Ding, PhD**

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Kajian ini dijalankan untuk melihat perubahan fisiko-kimia, kandungan antioksidan dan perubahan struktur sel buah naga merah. Kajian dijalankan pada setiap 5 hari bermula pada hari ke-5 sehingga hari ke-35 selepas pendebungaan (DAP). Eksperimen dijalankan menggunakan blok lengkap secara rawak dengan empat replikasi. Tiga sampel buah bagi setiap replikasi. Hasil dapatan data dari ukuran panjang, diameter, kepadatan stomata, berat kering dan berat basah kulit dan isi buah, kandungan air, kadar etilena dan karbon dioksida, kerapuhan isi, kandungan pepejal larut (SSC), keasidan boleh titrat, pH, kandungan pigmen merah-violet betacyanin dan kandungan klorofil dianalisis menggunakan analisis varians manakala perbezaan min dianalisis menggunakan Ujian Duncan New Multiple Range. Nilai  $L^*$ ,  $C^*$  dan  $h^\circ$  kulit dan isi buah naga merah dianalisis menggunakan regresi analisis. Korelasi menggunakan koefisien korelasi Pearson. Perubahan warna dan struktur sel buah naga merah masing-masing didokumentasikan dalam bentuk foto dan mikrofoto. Keputusan kajian

menunjukkan buah naga merah boleh diklasifikasikan sebagai buah tidak klimaterik apabila tiada puncak respirasi dan pengeluaran etilena didapati. Semasa perkembangan dan kematangan buah naga merah, liang stomata dalam keadaan tertutup. Manakala, kepadatan stomata di bahagian kulit buah naga merah didapati menurun sepanjang DAP berlaku. Semasa DAP berlaku, didapati kandungan lembapan pada kulit buah naga meningkat, sementara penurunan lembapan berlaku di bahagian isi buah. Perubahan warna buah naga merah di bahagian isi berlaku lebih awal berbanding perubahan warna pada kulitnya. Pengeluaran pigmen merah-ungu betasianin hanya berlaku selepas biji buah naga merah matang dan diikuti dengan perubahan warna pada isi buah pada hari ke-25 DAP dan perubahan warna pada kulit daripada warna hijau berubah menjadi warna merah pada hari ke-30 DAP. Pengeluaran pigmen merah-ungu betasianin sepanjang pengembangan dan pematangan buah menyebabkan korelasi yang signifikan dengan SSC. Ini disebabkan oleh gula derivatif diperlukan semasa proses penghasilan untuk membentuk pigmen merah-ungu betasianin. Keasidan boleh titrat dan pH kulit buah naga merah didapati tidak mempunyai korelasi signifikan dengan kandungan pigmen merah-ungu betasianin tetapi keputusan keasidan boleh titrat pada isi buah naga merah mempunyai korelasi signifikan dengan keasidan boleh titrat. Hubungan regresi diantara DAP dan nilai  $L^*$ ,  $C^*$  dan  $h^\circ$  kulit dan isi buah naga didapati signifikan. Untuk mengenalpasti kandungan pigmen merah-ungu betasianin dengan menggunakan HPLC-fotodioda array pengesanan, di mana ia mengesahkan kandungan betanin dan isobetanin di dalam buah naga. Buah naga merah mempunyai kandungan aktiviti antioksidan yang tinggi, tetapi kandungan askorbik asid dan kandungan fenol total (TPC) yang rendah. Ini menunjukkan kandungan aktiviti antioksidan bukanlah daripada askorbik asid tetapi adalah



disebabkan oleh kandungan pigmen merah-ungu betasianin. Proses pengembangan buah diteliti dengan menggunakan Scanning Elektron Mikroskop (SEM). Sepanjang DAP berlaku, sel parenkima kehilangan integritinya disebabkan pemecahan sel yang mana menyebabkan buah naga merah hilang kekerasannya. Microfoto SEM menunjukkan granul gula di bahagian isi buah berkurang dari segi saiz dan kepadatan sepanjang DAP berlangsung. Penguraian granul gula didapati penyumbang kepada isi buah hilang kerapuhan. Juga didapati pelbagai bentuk dan corak hablur yang dikenali sebagai raphide dan druses dibahagian tisu sisik buah naga. Jelas sekali perubahan fisiko-kimia dan penghasilan pigmen merah-ungu betacyanin semasa pengembangan dan pematangan mempunyai hubungkait yang rapat dengan perubahan struktur sel buah naga merah.

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I would like to dedicate this thesis to my late grandfather (Mr. Badusah Abas) and late uncle (Mr. Bekkari Badusah) as both gave me moral support I required within two and half years of completion.

Nur Adilla Jamaludin

## APPROVAL 1

I certify that an Examination Committee has met on (date of viva voce) to conduct the final examination of Nur Adilla Jamaludin on her Master of Science thesis entitled “Physico-chemical, Antioxidant and Cellular Structure of Red-fleshed dragon fruit during Development and Maturation” in accordance with Universiti Pertanian Malaysia (High Degree) Act 1980 and Universiti Pertanian Malaysia (High Degree) Regulations 1981. The Committee recommends that the student be awarded the Master of Science.

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## APPROVAL 2

This thesis was submitted to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia and has been accepted as fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Science. The members of the Supervisory Committee were as follows:

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## **DECLARATION**

I declare that the thesis is my original work except for quotations and citations which have been duly acknowledged. I also declare that it has not been previously, and is not concurrently, submitted for any other degree at Universiti Putra Malaysia or at any other institution.

---

**NUR ADILLA BT. JAMALUDIN**

Date: 23 September 2010

## LIST OF TABLES

Table		Page
3.1	Physicals characteristics of red-fleshed dragon fruit as day after pollination progressed from 5 to 35.	57
3.2	Correlation coefficient (r) for fruit weight (FW), length (FL), diameter (FD), stomatal density (SD), peel and pulp betacyanin contents (BCPe and BCPu, respectively) of red-fleshed dragon fruit.	64
3.3	Correlation coefficient (r) for red-fleshed dragon fruit peel and pulp colour (L*, C* and h°) and betacyanin content.	69
3.4	Physiological characteristics of red-fleshed dragon fruit as day after pollination progressed from 5 to 35.	72
3.5	Chemicals characteristics of red-fleshed dragon fruit as day after pollination progressed from 5 to 35.	74
3.6	Correlation coefficient (r) for pH, soluble solids concentration (SSC), titratable acidity (TA), peel and pulp betacyanin contents (BCPe and BCPu, respectively) of red-fleshed dragon fruit.	76
3.7	Retention times, area of peaks, concentrations and total betacyanin content for peel of red-fleshed dragon fruit during fruit development and maturation.	81
3.8	Retention times, area of peaks, concentrations and total betacyanin content for pulp of red-fleshed dragon fruit during fruit development and maturation.	82
4.1	Correlation coefficient (r) of ascorbic acid (AA), total phenolics (TPC), antioxidant activities (DPPH and FRAP) and betacyanin content (BC) in pulp of red-fleshed dragon fruit.	96

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure		Page
2.1	Betalains are synthesized from the amino acid tyrosine through L-DOPA into the two subclasses, betacyanins (reds and purples) and betaxanthins (yellows).	31
3.1	Fruit fresh weight (a), fruit size (length and diameter) (b) and fruit shape (length to diameter ratio) (c) of red-fleshed dragon fruit as day after pollination progressed. Vertical bars denote $\pm$ SE for means of 12 measurements.	56
3.2	Stomata (in circle) of red-fleshed dragon fruit at 5, 10, 25 and 30 day after pollination (DAP) as obtained from nail polish imprint.	58
3.3	Changes stomata density of red-fleshed dragon fruit as day after pollination progressed. Values are means $\pm$ SE (n=12).	58
3.4	Change in peel and pulp colour of red-fleshed dragon fruit as fruit developed from 5 to 35 day after pollination (DAP).	66
3.5	The peel and pulp lightness ( $L^*$ ) with peel $L^*$ values= $-0.02x^2-1.557x+96.99$ , $R^2=0.92$ and pulp $L^*$ values= $51.62x^2+0.54x-0.024$ , $R^2=0.97$ (a), chroma ( $C^*$ ) peel $C^*$ values= $0.04x^2-0.87x+21.36$ , $R^2=0.66$ and pulp $C^*$ = $0.034x^2-0.9.0x+32.48$ , $R^2=0.88$ (b) and hue ( $h^\circ$ ) peel $h^\circ$ = $-0.12x^2+13.57x-14.64$ , $R^2=0.62$ and pulp $h^\circ$ = $-0.24x^2+5.27x+99.26$ , $R^2=0.93$ (c) of red-fleshed dragon fruit as day after pollination progressed. Values are means $\pm$ SE (12).	68
3.6	Change of chlorophyll content and betacyanin content in the peel and the pulp of red-fleshed dragon fruit as day after pollination progressed. Values are means $\pm$ SE (12).	78
4.1	Change in peel and pulp ascorbic acid of red-fleshed dragon fruit as fruit developed from 5 to 35 day after pollination. Data shown are the means of four replicates vertical bar represents $\pm$ standard error.	92
4.2	Change in peel and pulp total phenolic content of red-fleshed dragon fruit as fruit developed from 5 to 35 day after pollination. Data shown are the means of four replicates vertical bar represents $\pm$	94

	standard error.	
4.3	Change in peel and pulp antioxidant activity of red-fleshed dragon fruit as fruit developed from 5 to 35 day after pollination. Data shown are the means of four replicates vertical bar represents $\pm$ standard error.	98
4.4	Change of ferric-reducing antioxidant power (FRAP) in pulp extracts of red-fleshed dragon fruit as day after pollination (DAP) progressed. Data shown are the means of four replicates.	99
5.1	Picture shows the scales, peel, pulp, peel-pulp transition and seeds of red-fleshed dragon fruit.	106
5.2	Scanning electron micrographs shows cross section of red-fleshed dragon fruit peel, peel-pulp transition and pulp region as day after pollination (DAP) progressed. (a) Fruit at 5 DAP showing regular shapes and thin-walled cells. (b) Fruit at 15 DAP showing vascular bundle started to develop in transition region (circle). (c) Fruit at 20 DAP showing matured vascular bundle with sclerenchyma fibers in transition region. (d) Fruit at 30 DAP showing cell wall breakage and cell collapse (arrows). (e) Fruit at 35 DAP showing peel and pulp areas of further cell breakage resulting from ripening. SF, sclerenchyma fibers. $\times 100$ . Magnification bar = 10 $\mu\text{m}$ .	108
5.3	Scanning electron micrograph shows a cross section of red-fleshed dragon fruit peel as day after pollination (DAP) progressed from 5 (a), 10 (b), 15 (c) and 20 (d) DAP. XY, xylem; PH, phloem; SF,,sclerenchyma fibers; CL, collenchymas. a, and b, $\times 150$ ; c, and d, $\times 250$ . Magnification bar = 100 $\mu\text{m}$ .	109
5.4	Scanning electron micrographs of red-fleshed dragon fruit peel at 15 day after pollination. (a) Cross section of peel showing the organization of cells, with thickened cell walls and small intercellular spaces. (b) Close views of circle area from (a). (c) Close views of cell wall and intercellular spaces. CW, cell wall; IS, intercellular spaces. a, $\times 270$ ; b, $\times 1900$ ; c, $\times 1000$ . Magnification bar = a, 50 $\mu\text{m}$ ; b,c, 10 $\mu\text{m}$ .	110
5.5	Scanning electron micrographs shows cross section in red-fleshed dragon fruit pulp containing funicle at 5 day after pollination. a, $\times 270$ ; b, $\times 300$ ; c, $\times 250$ ; d, $\times 600$ . Magnification bars = a, b, 50 $\mu\text{m}$ ; c, 100 $\mu\text{m}$ ; d, 20 $\mu\text{m}$ .	114



- 5.6 Scanning electron micrographs shows a cross section of red-fleshed dragon fruit pulp containing starch granule as day after pollination (DAP) progressed. (a) Pulp at 5 DAP shows low density of starch granules and starch granules were attach to cell wall, thin cell wall is also apparent. (b) Pulp at 20 DAP shows various size of starch granules. (c) Pulp at 25 DAP shows higher density of starch granules in the inner cells, cell wall become thicker. ST , starch granules.  $\times 900$ . Magnification bar = 20  $\mu\text{m}$ . 117
- 5.7 Scanning electron micrographs shows a size of starch granule as day after pollination (DAP) progressed. (a) Starch granules at 15 DAP. (b) Biggest size of starch granules at 20 DAP. (c) Smallest size of starch granules at 35 DAP.  $\times 6,500$ ; Magnification bar = 2  $\mu\text{m}$ . 119
- 5.8 Scanning electron micrograph shows longitudinal section of red-fleshed dragon fruit scale as day after pollination (DAP) progressed. (a) Scale at 5 DAP shows a crystal idioblast cell containing raphides (circle) and club-shaped cystolith, calcium carbonate (arrow). (b) Close views shows crystals from (a). (c) Scale at 15 DAP shows crystals appears within cells (d) Scale at 15 DAP shows block-like rhombohedral or prismatic crystals. (e) Scale at 20 DAP shows raphide crystals, a needle-shaped calcium oxalate crystals (arrow). (f) Scale at 25 DAP contains raphide crystals. (g) Scale at 30 DAP shows different shapes of crystal. a,  $\times 1200$ ; b, c, e, f, g,  $\times 4300$ ; d,  $\times 3000$ . Magnification bar = a, 10  $\mu\text{m}$ ; b, c, d, e, f, g, 5  $\mu\text{m}$ . 122
- 5.9 Scanning electron micrographs shows cross section of red-fleshed dragon fruit scale as day after pollination (DAP) progressed (a) 15 DAP. (b) 20 DAP. (c) 30 DAP (d) 35 DAP. MC, deposited mucilage; RD, raphides.  $\times 1100$ . Magnification bar = 10  $\mu\text{m}$ . 124

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AA	-	Ascorbic acid
DAP	-	Day after pollination
DOPA	-	Dihydroxyphenylalanine
DPPH	-	1,1-diphenyl-2-picryl-hydrazil
FRAP	-	Ferric-reducing antioxidant power
SEM	-	Scanning electron microscope
SSC	-	Soluble solids concentration
TA	-	Titrateable acidity
TPC	-	Total phenolics content

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<b>Page</b>
<b>ABSTRACT</b>	ii
<b>ABSTRAK</b>	iv
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</b>	viii
<b>APPROVAL</b>	ix
<b>DECLARATION</b>	xi
<b>LIST OF TABLES</b>	xii
<b>LIST OF FIGURES</b>	xiii
<b>LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS</b>	xvi
<b>CHAPTER</b>	
<b>1 INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2 LITERATURE REVIEW</b>	<b>4</b>
Red-fleshed dragon fruit	4
Botany of red-fleshed dragon fruit	4
Economical value of red-fleshed dragon fruit	5
Fruit development	6
Growth stage	7
Maturation stage	8
Ripening stage	9
Senescence stage	10
Physical characteristics	11
Physiological changes during fruit development	18
Chemical changes during fruit development	21
Structural changes during fruit development	26
Betacyanin pigment	28
Biosynthesis of betacyanin	29
Economical value of betacyanin	30
Antioxidants	32
Antioxidant content	34
Antioxidant activity	38

<b>3</b>	<b>PHYSICO-CHEMICAL AND BETACYANIN CONTENT OF RED-FLESHED DRAGON FRUIT DURING FRUIT DEVELOPMENT AND MATURATION</b>	
	Introduction	41
	Materials and Methods	43
	Plant material	43
	Physical analyses	44
	Physiological analyses	47
	Chemical analyses	48
	Results and Discussion	53
	Physical changes	53
	Physiological changes	71
	Chemical changes	73
	Conclusion	85
<b>4</b>	<b>PHENOLIC CONTENT AND ANTIOXIDANT ACTIVITY OF RED-FLESHED DRAGON FRUIT DURING FRUIT DEVELOPMENT AND MATURATION</b>	
	Introduction	86
	Materials and Methods	87
	Betacyanin content determination	87
	Ascorbic acids determination	88
	Total phenolics content determination	89
	DPPH determination	90
	FRAP assay determination	90
	Statistical analysis	91
	Results and Discussion	91
	Antioxidant content	91
	Antioxidant activity	97
	Conclusion	102
<b>5</b>	<b>CELLULAR STRUCTURE OF RED-FLESHED DRAGON FRUIT DURING FRUIT DEVELOPMENT AND MATURATION</b>	
	Introduction	102
	Materials and Methods	105
	Tissue preparation for SEM studies	105
	Results and Discussion	105
	Cellular changes in peel region of red-fleshed dragon fruit	107
	Cellular changes in Peel-pulp transition region of red-fleshed dragon fruit	113
	Cellular changes in Pulp region of red-fleshed dragon fruit	113
	Cellular changes in Scale region of red-fleshed dragon fruit	120
	Conclusion	125

<b>6 GENERAL CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH</b>	127
<b>REFERENCES</b>	130
<b>APPENDICES</b>	153
<b>BIODATA OF STUDENT</b>	154
<b>LIST OF PUBLICATIONS</b>	155

