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Contents

1	SUSTAINABLE CROP PRODUCTION PRACTICES FOR CLIMATE RESILIENCE FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY	3
2	ADOPTION INDEX OF MAIZE PRODUCTION TECHNOLOGIES AND CORRELATION MATRIX IN SMALLHOLDER SYSTEMS	9
3	PROXIMATE AND SENSORY ASSESSMENT OF AADUN PRODUCED FROM MAIZE AND GROUNDNUT PASTE	15
4	RURAL WOMEN AND AGRO – PROCESSING: A CASE STUDY OF RURAL WOMEN PARTICIPATION IN GROUNDNUT PROCESSING IN KATSINA STATE	22
5	PROFITABILITY OF DRIP IRRIGATED MAIZE PRODUCTION FOR IMPROVED FOOD SECURITY IN MAIDUGURI SEMI-ARID REGION OF BORNO STATE, NIGERIA	28
6	PROFITABILITY ANALYSIS OF POULTRY EGG PRODUCTION IN IBADAN METROPOLIS, OYO STATE, NIGERIA	37
7	ADOPTION OF MODERN BEEKEEPING TECHNOLOGIES IN SELECTED LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREAS OF BENUE STATE, NIGERIA	44
8	ADOPTION OF RECOMMENDED COCOYAM PRODUCTION TECHNOLOGIES AMONG FARMERS IN ENUGU STATE, NIGERIA	53
9	INNOVATIVE APPLICATION IN MANAGEMENT OF PROBLEMATIC SOIL (ACIDIC SOIL) UNDER MAIZE PRODUCTION IN NIGER STATE, NIGERIA	62
10	EFFECTS OF RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES ON	69
11	POVERTY STATUS OF RICE FARMERS IN NIGER STATE, NIGERIA	69
12	EFFECTS OF FARMER-HERDER’S CONFLICT ON THE FARMERS PRODUCTIVITY IN ADAMAWA STATE, NIGERIA	75
13	EFFECTS OF ADOPTION OF IMPROVED BEEHIVE TECHNOLOGIES ON INCOME AND WELFARE STATUS OF BEEKEEPERS IN EKITI STATE, NIGERIA	81
14	ASSESSMENT OF OUT-MIGRATION AMONG ARABLE CROP FARMERS IN KOGI STATE, NIGERIA: GENDER DYNAMIC APPROACH	88
15	THE EFFECT OF AGRITECH STARTUPS ON PARTICIPATION AND POVERTY STATUS OF ADOPTERS IN OGUN STATE, NIGERIA	97
16	OUTCOMES OF WORK-FAMILY CONFLICT AMONG UNIVERSITY EMPLOYEES: CORRELATES OF TIME, STRAIN AND JOB SATISFACTION	104
17	MICROBIOLOGICAL QUALITY OF OVEN ROASTED PLANTAIN (MUSA PARASIDIACA)	109

	NIGERIA	214
34	ANALYSIS OF DETERMINANTS OF MARKET PARTICIPATION AMONG LOCAL RICE FARMERS IN SELECTED LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREAS OF NIGER STATE, NIGERIA	219
35	LIVELIHOOD DIVERSIFICATION STRATEGIES AND ITS EFFECTS ON FOOD SECURITY STATUS OF RURAL HOUSEHOLDS IN KADUNA AND KANO STATES, NIGERIA: A REVIEW	229
36	NUTRI-CEREALS AS POTENTIAL FUNCTIONAL INGREDIENTS: CHARACTERIZATION AND VALORIZATION	234
37	DETERMINANTS OF FINANCIAL INCLUSION AMONG WOMEN UNDER RURAL FINANCE INSTITUTION BUILDING PROGRAMME IN NORTHERN NIGERIA	235
38	INCOME, SAVINGS AND INVESTMENT PATTERN OF SMALL-SCALE AGRO-BASED ENTREPRENEURS IN KADUNA SOUTH LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF KADUNA STATE, NIGERIA	242
39	IDENTIFYING STAKEHOLDERS' INTEREST IN SALINE QUINOA FARMING ALONG VALUE CHAIN IN MOROCCO	247
40	EFFECT OF DIFFERENT PROCESSING METHODS ON NUTRIENTS AND ANTI-NUTRIENT COMPOSITION OF LEUCAENA (<i>LEUCAENA LEUCOCEPHALA</i>) SEEDS	257
41	PERFORMANCE OF ARBOR ACRE BROILER CHICKENS FED DIET ENRICHED WITH VARYING LEVELS OF NANO ZINC SUPPLEMENTATION AT FINISHER PHASE	263
42	DIVERSITY AND COMPOSITION OF UNDERSTORY SPECIES IN <i>CEDRELA ODORATA</i> AND <i>PINUS CARIBAEA</i> PLANTATIONS IN OMO BIOSPHERE RESERVE, AREA J4, OGUN STATE	268
43	ASSESSMENT OF MATING PROFILE OF RED SOKOTO BUCKS ADMINISTERED VARYING DOSAGE OF ETHANOLIC EXTRACT OF TIGER NUT (<i>CYPERUS ESCULENTUS</i>)	281
44	APPARENT NUTRIENT DIGESTIBILITY AND PERFORMANCE OF GROWER PIGS FED ENERGY AGRO BY-PRODUCTS	286
45	EVALUATION OF SINGLE AND MIXED VIRUS-INOCULATED BAMBARA GROUNDNUT LANDRACES FOR NODULATION AND NITROGEN FIXATION	291
46	FREE RADICAL SCAVENGING ACTIVITY OF SELIM POD (<i>XYLOPIA AETHIOPICA</i>)	298
47	ASSESSMENT OF DIFFERENT DOSES OF AQUEOUS RED HOT PEPPER EXTRACT ON THE GROWTH PERFORMANCE OF THREE BREEDS OF BROILER CHICKENS	303
48	ANTIOXIDANT ACTIVITY OF SUN-DRIED TROPICAL LEMON (<i>CITRUS LIMON</i>) PEEL	308

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Federal University of Technology, P.M.B. 65, Minna, Niger State, Nigeria*Corresponding Author's Email: mijindadialiyu@gmail.com**ABSTRACT**

*This study was carried out to determine the antioxidant activity of the selim pod (Xylopi
aethiopia). Extracts of Xylopi
aethiopia pods were investigated for their free radical scavenging activities in the presence of 2, 2-diphenyl-1-picrylhydrazyl (DPPH), using ascorbic acid as the standard antioxidant. The result revealed that with an increase in the concentrations of the selim pod extract from 0.2 to 1.0 mg/ml, the free radical scavenging activity of the selim pod extracts also increased from 16.04 to 48.17%. The DPPH free radical scavenging activity of the selim pod is observed to be dose-dependent. The antioxidant activity of the extract of Xylopi
aethiopia was examined and the results were compared to that of ascorbic acid which served as the standard. The percentage inhibition of ascorbic acid (vitamin C) at the concentration of 1mg/ml was 97.05% meanwhile that of selim pod at the same concentration, the inhibition recorded was 48.17%. Although the free radical scavenging activity is lower than that of ascorbic acid, notwithstanding, the result suggests that Xylopi
aethiopia has potential antioxidant properties which could be exploited as a natural antioxidant for use in animal nutrition and the food industry.*

KEYWORDS: Scavenging activity; *Xylopi
aethiopia*; phytochemicals; antioxidants**INTRODUCTION**

Selim pod (*Xylopi
aethiopia*) is a medicinal plant growing in various parts of Africa (Yin *et al.*, 2019) It is sometimes referred to as Negro pepper and Guinea pepper, and is one of the most valuable spices with numerous health benefits (Yin *et al.*, 2019). *Xylopi
aethiopia* is a spice that is used in flavouring local dishes and the pods are sold as condiments. It is a medicinal plant that has been utilized traditionally in the treatment of several diseases and ailments (Yin *et al.*, 2019).

*Xylopi
aethiopia* is a rich source of phytochemicals and possesses free radical scavenging abilities, it could, therefore, be utilized in the management of free radical-related degenerative diseases by exploiting them as natural antioxidants in food systems (Okechukwu-Ezike and Oly-Alawuba, 2020). John-Dewole *et al.* (2012) from their in vitro studies with the extracts of selim,

reported that it exhibited some anti-microbial and pharmacological properties which might be due to the presence of phytochemicals in the plant.

According to Melo *et al.* (2021), *Xylopiya aethiopicia* contains phenolics and essential oils which might be linked with the remarkable antioxidant, antimicrobial, and moderate anti-SARS-CoV-1 and SAR-CoV-2 activities. *Xylopiya aethiopicia* has been reported to have antimicrobial and free radical scavenging activity and this could be associated with the presence of polyphenols in the plant (Apenteng *et al.*, 2016). Literature is scarce on the antioxidant potential of Nigerian *Xylopiya aethiopicia* to the best of the authors' knowledge.

This research study was therefore conducted to evaluate the antioxidant activity of selim pod (*Xylopiya aethiopicia*) to determine its potential for possible application in animal nutrition.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Sample extract preparation

Accurately 1g of the grounded selim pod was weighed into a conical flask. Then 100ml of ethanol was then added to the weighed samples. The samples were extracted using a digital 4 holes water bath (Model: E-Track England) at 70 degrees for 40 minutes, then later cooled at room temperature and transferred into a 100ml volumetric flask. The samples were filtered using a Whatman filter paper No. 1.

Assay of DPPH Free Radical Scavenging Activity

The DPPH radical scavenging activity of the selim pod extracts was examined in line with the procedure described by Mukherjee *et al.* (2011) with slight modifications. The concentration of 100 μ M of DPPH was dissolved in methanol to a final concentration of 0.03mM. Serial dilutions were made to check the IC₅₀. The values of IC₅₀ signify the concentration of the sample, which is required to scavenge 50% of DPPH free radicals. The IC₅₀ values were calculated by linear regression of plots. The contents were mixed and incubated for 30 minutes at 37°C. To determine the absorbance at 517 nm, a UV spectrophotometer was used. Vitamin C (ascorbic acid) was used as the standard control antioxidant. All readings were taken in triplicate and the mean values were then recorded. The decrease in absorbance indicated increased radical scavenging activity. The percentage inhibition of the samples at the different doses was calculated using the formula;

$$\% \text{ Inhibition} = \frac{A_o - A_s}{A_o} \times 100$$

Where A_o is the absorbance of the control and A_s is the absorbance of the test sample (selim pod)

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results revealed that with an increase in the concentrations of the selim pod extract from 0.2 to 1.0 mg/ml, the free radical scavenging activity of *Xylopiya aethiopica* extracts also increased from 16.04 to 48.17% (Figure 1)

The DPPH free radical scavenging activity of the selim pod is observed to be dose-dependent. The antioxidant activity of the extract of *Xylopiya aethiopica* was examined and the results were compared to that of ascorbic acid which served as the standard. The percentage inhibition of ascorbic acid (vitamin C) the antioxidant used as standard, at the concentration of 1mg/ml was 97.05% meanwhile that of the selim pod at the same concentration the inhibition recorded was 48.17% (Figure 1).

The IC₅₀ value recorded for *Xylopiya aethiopica* was 0.94mg/ml against the IC₅₀ value of 0.44mg/ml of ascorbic acid. However, contrary to the result obtained in this study for the IC₅₀ for *Xylopiya aethiopica*, Ngwoke *et al.* (2015) reported a lower value of 0.62.mg/ml for acetone extracted *Xylopiya aethiopica* and a much lower value of 0.28mg/ml for aqueous extracted *Xylopiya aethiopica*. This variation may be due to differences in the method of extraction used for the test sample while other likely factors contributing to the disparity in result may be; cultivar type, climatic and soil conditions, storage and handling, etc.

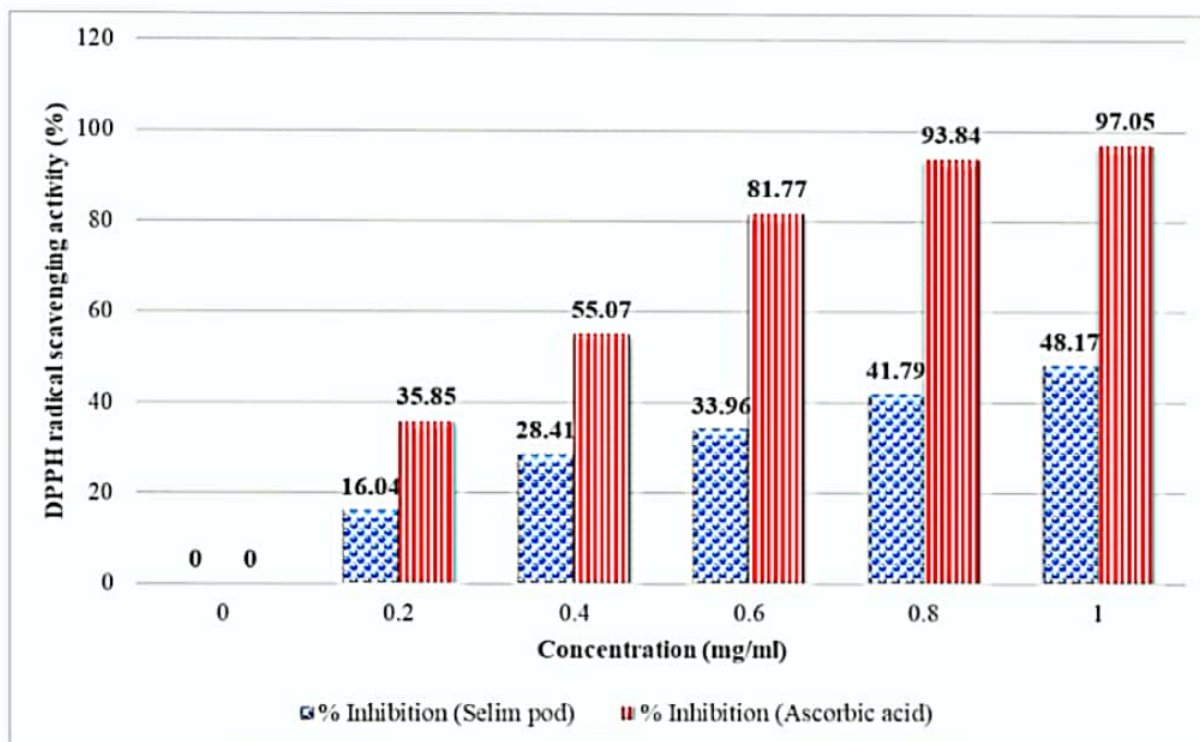


Figure 4: Antioxidant activity of selim pod (*Xylopi aethiopica*)

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study revealed that *Xylopi aethiopica* has antioxidant properties. Selim pod, therefore, has promising potential for use as an antioxidant agent in livestock feeds, food products, and the pharmaceutical industry.

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