

**STUDIES ON THE UTILIZATION AND PROXIMATE COMPOSITION OF
WILD *AFRAMOMUM ANGUISTIFOLIUM* (SONN.) K. SCHUM FRUITS IN
NAKASEKE DISTRICT, UGANDA**

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ABSTRACT

Nakaseke district is located in the central region of Uganda and has high abundance of edible *Aframomum angustifolium* (wild cardamom) fruit, locally known as “Amatuunguru”. The fruit is consumed by only few people who access it from the wild and there is limited information on the nutritional benefits of the fruit. This study determined the utilization and consumptive benefits of *A. angustifolium* fruits among the local communities of Nakaseke district as well as the proximate composition of the fruit. A cross-sectional survey using an interview guide was conducted to establish the utilization and consumptive benefits of the fruit while the proximate composition (crude protein, fat, carbohydrate, fiber and ash, moisture) was determined using standard methods of Association of Official Analytical Chemists (AOAC). The results revealed that fruits are collected and consumed by the local communities because of their nutritional and medicinal values. *A. angustifolium* plant is not domesticated despite the different consumptive benefits accrued from it. The results revealed that children are the major collectors (consumers) of the fruit (48%) compared to women and men and they collect the fruit from the wild as they go about their chores like collecting firewood, tending grazing animals and fetching water. The fruit’s availability is highest in the rainy season and maturity indicators include the fruit exocarp turning red in colour. The exocarp is removed and thrown away during consumption leaving the inside part which is edible. The fruit was found to contain moisture (72.98%). The content of the dry matter was ash (13.97%), crude fat (4.35%), crude protein (6.82%), crude fiber (12.55%) and nitrogen-free extracts/NFE (62.30%). Hence the fruit is a suitable supplement for moisture, fats, proteins and crude fiber needed in human diet. The plant is still collected from the wild and grows mainly in swampy areas (wetlands) which are being cleared for agriculture, settlement and road construction. This plant could be endangered if its conservation is not prioritized.

Key words: *Aframomum angustifolium* fruits, utilization, consumptive benefits, proximate, wild, Uganda

