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# DETERMINATION OF SOME VITAMIN B-COMPLEX AND ASCORBIC ACID IN WILD VEGETABLES IN AMATHOLE DISTRICT OF THE EASTERN CAPE PROVINCE, SOUTH AFRICA

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The vitamin content of four indigenous, wild leafy vegetables, traditionally consumed by rural inhabitants in South Africa was determined in this study. Low status of these vitamins has been implicated to a number of health risks including scurvy, inability of the body to defend itself against environmentally induced factors such as free radicals. The purpose of this study was to determine the *ascorbic acid* (vitamin C) composition, *niacin* (B3), *riboflavin* (B2) and *thiamin* (B1)-some water soluble vitamin B composition of the wild plants used as food in South African rural areas. *S. nigrum* and *C. album* were found to be rich sources of ascorbic acid, having 1.05 mg/100g and 1.01 mg/100g, respectively which were significantly higher (P = 0.00) than those of both *A. dubius* and *U. lobulata*. The niacin content ranged from 0.43 mg/100g in *U. lobulat*a to 0.10 mg/100g in *C. album*. The entire wild, indigenous vegetables contain reasonably good concentrations of riboflavin which ranged 1.14 mg/100g in both *U .lobulata* and *A. dubius* to 0.78 mg/100g in *C. album*. *U. lobulata* was found to contain maximum amount of thiamine (0.58 mg/100g). The role of these vegetables as sources of vitamins is pertinent given the prevalence of vitamin deficiency in developing countries.

Keywords: indigenous edible plants, water-soluble vitamins

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