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P24. Characterization and quantification of total carbohydrates of selected macroalgae from S. Miguel litoral zone

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The ever increasing human population around the world has kept the human community in constant search for new resources to meet the growing demand for food, and medicine. The marine ecosystem, particularly the macroalgae, appears to be a candidate as a natural resource for these needs. Their nutritional value has been widely studied and differs, for the same species, according to different origins and also reflects the influence of geographic origin, climate, season, variety species and seasonal conditions. In addition to their value for human nutrition, the seaweeds may also contribute to a healthy human life. The archipelago of the Azores has a long tradition in the use of marine macroalgae, commonly referred to as "seaweeds", as fertilizers in local agriculture and/or horticulture, and also as food supplements. The consumption of seaweeds is widespread and accepted as a common practice in some of the islands. Being isolated in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean and taking into account the low pollution levels of seawater, the Azores Islands have become a very promising location as a natural resource for marine macroalgae with potential for providing new ingredients of so-called functional or health-promoting foods. In the present study we evaluate the total carbohydrates content of six selected macroalgae collected in the littoral zone of S. Miguel Island, Azores, Portugal: two Chlorophyta, *Chaetomorpha linum* and *Codium adhaerens*, and four Phaeophyta, *Cystoseira humilis*, *Padina pavonica*, *Sargassum cymosum* and *Sargassum vulgare*. The total carbohydrates content ranged from 7.61% to 16.78% of dry weight, in *Padina pavonica* and *Codium adhaerens*, respectively. Characterization of carbohydrates was also performed in all species.