

# Chemical and nutritional composition of copao fruit (*Eulychnia acida* Phil.) under three environmental conditions in the Coquimbo Region

## Características químicas y composición nutricional de los frutos de copao (*Eulychnia acida* Phil.) bajo tres condiciones

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Copao (*Eulychnia acida* Phil.) is an endemic arborescent cactus restricted mainly to the semi-arid Coquimbo Region (29°54'28" S, 71°15'15" W), Chile. The area of distribution is from sea level to 1200 m.a.s.l. The edible fruit called rumpa is generally round, with green or pink peel and small scales on its surface, showing wide variability in size and weight. The aim of this work was to characterize the rumpa harvested in January 2009 and 2010 in three sectors of Coquimbo Region to determine chemical and nutritional composition in three fractions: pulp with seeds, juice, and peel. The research showed that this fruit is a good natural source of mainly soluble dietary fiber, which has a jellied texture and is present in the three fractions analyzed: 2% for juice, 3% for pulp with seeds, and approximately 5% for peel, making it potentially a good source of hydrocolloids for the food industry. The fruit is also a good source of vitamin C; around 55 mg 100 g<sup>-1</sup> in peel, and 30 mg 100 g<sup>-1</sup> in p