

BEHAVIOUR OF WEST INDIAN AVOCADO FRUITS IN COMPARISON TO COMMERCIAL HASS

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The aim of this work was to study the commercial potential of local West Indian avocado fruits in comparison to Hass. Three trees, two West Indian and one from Hass variety, were selected from the collection of the *Instituto Canario de Investigaciones Agrarias* (ICIA); both West Indian trees are part of a *Phytophthora cinnamomi* Rands (the main pathogen affecting this crop and restricting its production) resistance selection program. Twenty fruits, homogeneous in size and maturity-ripeness stage, were harvested from each tree. Two storage temperature treatments were applied (10°C and 18°C); respiration and ethylene production were daily measured until market ripe stage was reached (13 and 26 days respectively). Comparison was based on the duration of preclimacteric and climacteric periods as well as the maximum ethylene production and respiration intensity. Weight loss, dry matter content of flesh, and changes in skin colour and firmness were also determined. Results showed that fruit ripening characteristics in one of the West Indian trees were very similar to those of Hass variety.