

## Abstract

Wild edible plants are used as food and energy sources. However, their uses are not as the potential inherent in the resources. *Balanites aegyptiaca* is a multipurpose species in semiarid areas including Ethiopia. Hence, quantitative nutrition study in specific habitat is essential for sustainable use of the species. Composite fruits sample of *B. aegyptiaca* was collected from six areas of east Shewa, Ethiopia for nutrient analysis following standard laboratory procedure. The results reveal that the fruits are rich in P, Ca, Fe, Zn, Cu, Na, K, Mg and Mn. The nutritional content varied ( $P < 0.05$ ) across land uses. Mean calculated energy value of lipids ranged from 0.09-0.27 kcal 4.2-7.68 for *B. aegyptiaca* and the total energy from carbohydrate was 342.2-354.24 kcal. Therefore, the fruit of *B. aegyptiaca* is promising in terms of nutrient content to human's diet diversification. It is a valuable species particularly during dry season for coping and adapting to climate variability/change. In spite of the promising potential, the nutritional contribution of this species to the people's diet remained underutilized. Therefore, the utilization of *B. aegyptiaca* is justified to be considered for integration in dryland agrobiodiversity systems and nutrition research to enhance the contribution to the diet of people and enhance its sustainable utilization.