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Evaluation of some quality indices and antioxidant enzymes activity in fruits of two blood orange varieties under heat treatments at post-harvest stage

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In this study, two blood orange varieties ['Sanguinello' and 'Moro' (*Citrus sinensis* (L.) Osbeck)] were treated with different heat treatments to evaluate the effect of the treatments on quality maintaining and antioxidant enzymes activity of fruit peel and pulp at postharvest stage. The fruits were pre-treated in an incubator at 12°C (1 week), 20°C (3 days) and 30°C (2 days) then were stored in cold storage with 5°C and 85% RH for 60 days. Also, one group of un-treated fruits was placed in cold storage as control and other group was kept in common storage. Then, weight loss, juice percentage, TA, TSS, peel color indices (lightness, hue and chroma), antioxidant capacity and antioxidant enzymes activity (SOD, CAT, POD and AXP) of fruits were evaluated at 0, 30 and 60 days. Result showed that, heat treatments had no significant effect on TSS and peel color indices. In contrast, weight loss, TA and juice percentage were affected by heat treatments. APX and catalase (CAT) activity were slightly affected by thermal treatments. While, peroxidase (POD) and superoxididismotase (SOD) enzymes activity were significantly increased up to the end of storage. At the beginning of storage, antioxidant capacity of fruit (peel and pulp) of both cultivars was increased by heat treatments and then was declined over time compared to the fruit controls. Overall, the use of heat pre-treatment in fruits of the blood orange varieties, especially the temperature of 30 °C (2 days) before the begining of storage, can play an important role in preventing weight loss and maintaining or increasing the antioxidant capacity of the fruit after harvesting.

Keywords: Heat treatments, Fruit quality, Antioxidant capacity, Citrus.

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