

Brazil Nut Almonds: Nutritional and Market Aspects

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This paper presents information related to the composition of different fatty acids from brazil nut almonds and the human daily intake needs, as well as an analysis of its production, its growth rate during the last 20 years and its export. and the human daily intake needs. Having the Amazon Biome as its origin, brazil nut trees (*Bertholletia excelsa* H.B.K.) occur in several South American countries, like Brazil, Venezuela, Colombia, Peru, Bolivia and Guyana. The brazil nut trees provide food and timber. Its nuts contain 10 to 25 almonds each, which are used as food mainly in the Amazon region, but are also appreciated around the globe. Its timber is of high value for civil construction as well as for ship construction. The fruit of brazil nut contains high amounts of calories and protein. Additionally, it contains selenium that reduces free radicals, and many studies recommend it for cancer prevention. It is highly consumed by local population *in natura*, toasted, or in flours, sweets and ice creams. The shell of the brazil nut is very hard and its extraction requires high amount of energy. This nut is of economic importance for most states of the Brazilian Amazon, as 60% of the total production is exported *in natura* to Europe, Japan and the United States. Domestic consumption is limited to 5% of production. The statistical analysis evidenced a disadvantage of Brazil in the world market. As second world exporter of brazil nut almonds, Brazil has a negative annual growth rate of its exports (-6.01 %) while its main competitor Bolivia, who is the first world exporter of brazil nut almonds, has an export growth rate of 8.72 %. Considering production, again Brazil is disadvantaged, with a negative annual growth rate of brazil nuts production (-1.28 %), while Bolivia's annual growth rate reaches 5.10 %.

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