

## **EVALUATION OF THE HYGIENIC-SANITARY CONDITIONS OF AÇAÍ BERRY PULP STORES IN AFUÁ, THE AMAZON VENICE OF PARÁ STATE - BRAZIL.**

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### **ABSTRACT:**

The extractivism of the fruits of the *Euterpe oleracea* is one of the main economic activities of the Amazon region, its use in the form of pulp has traditional and consolidated consumption, being appreciated in the national and international market in recent years. The Afuá municipality is located on Marajó island., in the state of Pará, being internationally known as the Amazonian Venice. Afuá is one of the main suppliers of açaí for the region, mainly for the states of Pará and Amapá, with many local festivals bringing thousands of tourists every year. The fruit of the açaí is rich in proteins, fibers, vitamin E and minerals such as iron, manganese, copper, boron and chromium, besides energetic, with high content of lipids, omega 6 and 9, wich favor the growth of pathogenic microorganisms. In this way it is necessary to evaluate the hygienic - sanitary conditions of açaí berry pulp stores located in the city of Afuá, both because it is a tourist city, and the high export of açaí pulps. For that, the evaluation of 6 establishments was carried out. In these stores, samples of water and açaí pulps were collected, taken to the Laboratory of Quality Control and Bromatology (LCqB) of the Federal University of Amapá for the microbiological tests. The samples were evaluated for the presence of mesophilic bacteria, coliforms, molds and yeasts by the chromogenic substrate methods defined ONPG-MUG (Colilert®), for water analysis, Violet Red Agar Bile Lactose (VRBA), Bright Green Bile Broth and Potato Agar Dextrose (BDA), for pulp analysis. The evaluation of the sanitary conditions showed that 83.3% of the establishments showed improper food handling conditions, such as the presence of insects and spider webs in the places. Acai manipulators also had poor conditions, such as wearing inappropriate clothing and dirty fingernails. The results of the VRBA method were indicative of the presence of Gram negative bacteria in 100% of the samples, and in 66.6% of the samples they had total coliforms and *E. coli*, besides the presence of yeasts and filamentous fungi. 90% of the analyzed water was contaminated. In this way, the results observed in the hygiene-sanitary evaluation of the açaí berry pulp stores observed several points that suggest a connection between the results of the check list and the results obtained in the analyzes, suggesting possible external contaminations that are not inherent to the fruit.

**Key words:** Acai pulp, Food safety, Microbiological quality, Afuá, Quality control