

ABSTRACT

Pumpkin (*C. moschata* Duch.) fruit is a highly nutritious horticultural crop with great potential for commercialization. However, in Kenya many households do not buy and utilize pumpkins regularly, leading to low demand. These scenarios increase post-harvest losses and provide no incentive for farmers to increase production in Kenya, which has an abundance of pumpkin landraces that unfortunately remain under-exploited and under-utilized. Their distribution and marketing is a great challenge due to easy perishability. Horticultural crops experience losses in quality and quantity in between harvest and consumption. The magnitude of post-harvest losses in fresh fruits and vegetables is estimated to range from 20% to 50% in developing countries. The present study determined marketability of fresh fruit, and the spoilage rate of fresh fruit in the various presentation formats (eighth, quarter and half slices and a control of whole fruit either wrapped or not with cling film). Selling was facilitated by four market women in Nyeri County of Kenya. Statistical analysis showed significant differences ($P < 0.05$) in number of spoilt pieces over time, and between number of days to spoilage of whole fruit, compared to slice fruit. More quarter and half slices got spoiled after a few days of presentation to buyers. Nonetheless, quarter slices had the highest (54.5%) pieces sold, while half slices had the fewest (9.8%) pieces sold. However, no significant differences occurred in average number of pieces sold, or in amount of money from sale of fruit pieces of different presentation formats. Most consumers preferred buying smaller slices. Therefore, adoption and promotion of pumpkin presentation formats that effectively increase shelf-life is recommended to enhance production and utilization in Kenya.