

Volatile Compounds, Phenolic Content, and Antioxidant Capacity in Sultan Hawthorn (*Crataegus azarolus* L.) Leaves

D. Turkmen¹, A. Dursun¹, O. Caliskan², M. Koksak Kavrak¹, and Z. Guler*¹

ABSTRACT

Nowadays, there is considerable interest in plants such as hawthorn that have a rich source of secondary metabolites (volatile and phenolic compounds) in their leaves, with beneficial effects on health. This study investigated the Volatile Compounds (VCs), total phenolic content, and antioxidant activities of Sultan hawthorn leaves collected at three different times based on fruit maturity stages (immature, mature, and over-mature). Our main goal was to determine whether the volatile profile, total phenolic content, and antioxidant activity would change depending on the leaf collection time. A total of 78 VCs were identified in the leaves, 11 of which were for the first time. With the progress in fruit maturity, the levels of most VCs varied, the phenolic content and antioxidant activity increased, and acidity decreased. Benzaldehyde and α -farnesene were the principal VCs accounting for 61% of total VCs identified in leaf at the overmature stage. The principal component analysis successfully separated volatile compounds in hawthorn leaves along the fruit maturity stages. For the first time, the present study provided a general overview of the secondary metabolites in leaves from Sultan hawthorn cultivar along fruit maturity stages. The hawthorn leaf collected at the overmature fruit stage proved to have high potential in secondary metabolites and antioxidant capacity.

Keywords: Overmature fruit stage, Secondary metabolites.

INTRODUCTION

Hawthorn (*Crataegus* spp.) is a tree belonging to the *Rosaceae* family and has more than 200 species worldwide (Özderin and Fakir, 2015). The leaves and flowers of several *Crataegus* species is called with the common name of hawthorn leaf and flower. Herbal remedies, including hawthorn leaves and flower and/or their combination are generally available as herbal tea (EMA, 2021). In folk medicine, these preparations, both green (immature) and red (mature) fruits, are widely used to treat heart failure and high blood pressure as well as diarrhea, insomnia, asthma, and inflammation (Fong and Bauman, 2002; Lakache *et al.*, 2014; Ozderin *et al.*,

2016 Lund *et al.*, 2017). The German Commission E has approved a standardized extract of leaves and flowers to treat heart failure (Sticher and Meier, 1997). These health benefits ascribed to the hawthorn leaves, flowers, or fruits are thought to be related to their high content of secondary metabolites such as phenolic compounds, terpenes, aldehydes, and organic acids (Chang *et al.*, 2002; Liu *et al.*, 2011; Keser *et al.*, 2014; Alirezalu *et al.*, 2018). Hawthorn leaves are a perfect source of phenolic compounds compared to fruits and flowers (Keser *et al.*, 2014; Alirezalu *et al.*, 2018). Most plant phenolic compounds have a high antioxidant capacity and are essential in protecting cells against oxidative damage caused by free radicals (Pandey and Rizvi, 2009).

¹ Department of Food Engineering, Tayfur Sökmen Campus, Faculty of Agriculture, University of Hatay Mustafa Kemal (UHMK), 31034, Hatay, Turkey.

² Department of Horticulture, Faculty of Agriculture, University of Hatay Mustafa Kemal (UHMK), Tayfur Sökmen Campus, 31034, Hatay, Turkey.

*Corresponding author; e-mail: zguler@mku.edu.tr



Researchers stated that phenolics such as chlorogenic acid, vitexin, quercetin-3-*O*-galactoside, quercetin-3-*O*-glucoside, acetylvitexin 2''-*O*-rhamnoside were remarkably high in hawthorn leaf compared to bark (Wloch *et al.*, 2013). Among them, quercetin has also been noted to have an important adjuvant role in slowing Covid-19 disease progression (Di Pierro *et al.*, 2021). Like phenolic compounds, volatile compounds are the secondary metabolites in plants. Volatile compounds in the essential oil of leaves and flowers of *Crataegus* species are previously studied (Robertson *et al.*, 1993; Lakache *et al.*, 2014; Ozderin *et al.*, 2016). Sultan hawthorn is the first standard cultivar grown in Turkey. However, no study is available on volatile compounds, total phenolics, and antioxidant capacity in Sultan hawthorn leaves collected at three different times, even though the metabolites of biochemical pathways in leaves change (Pavlovic *et al.*, 2019). Therefore, we aimed to investigate the alteration of volatile compounds, total phenolic content, and antioxidant activity of Sultan hawthorn leaves based on the fruit maturity stage.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The hawthorn leaves were sampled on September 13 (CT1), September 20 (CT2), and October 2 (CT3) in 2017 season, corresponding to immature, mature, and overmature fruit maturity stages, respectively. At each sampling time, leaves (about 200 g) were collected from 3 trees randomly selected in the orchard, Hatay, Türkiye (36° 43' 09" N, 36° 13' 80" E, elevation 812 m).

Extraction and HS-SPME-GC-MS Analysis of Volatile Compounds of Hawthorn Leaf

The volatile compounds were extracted utilizing the Headspace-Solid Phase Micro-Extraction (HS-SPME) Technique and were

chromatographed by Gas Chromatography-Mass Spectrometry (GC-MS). At each sampling time, nine samples (3 tree x 3 triplicate) were analyzed for volatile compounds. VC analysis was carried out according to the method described by Güler *et al.* (2017). Briefly, leaves (approximately 20 g) were grounded in a chilled mortar. Three grams of grounded leaf sample were separately transferred to a 20 mL HS vial (Agilent, Palo Alto, USA). Sodium chloride solution (3% w/v) was added to HS vial. The vials capped crimp-top PTFE-silicone septum (Agilent Palo Alto, USA) immediately frozen at -20°C until analysis.

Before analysis, the frozen vials were held at 4°C for overnight. The HS samples were kept at 55 °C with continuous stirring for 45 min for extraction of VCs. The VCs were adsorbed to a SPME fiber (50/30 µm; Supelco, Bellefonte, US) coated with carboxen, divinylbenzene, polydimethylsiloxane (CAR/DVB/PDMS) at the same temperature for 45 min.

The VCs were chromatographed on a capillary column (HP-Innowax; 60 m×0.25 µm film thickness×0.25 mm i.d.) equipped with 6890 GC and 5973 N mass spectrometer (Agilent, Palo Alto, USA). The column was initially held at 50°C for 5 minutes, then, programmed by a ramp of 5°C min⁻¹ up to 240°C. The column was held for 5 minutes at final temperature. The SPME fibre was conditioned at 250°C for 30 minutes before analysis. Between the sampling stages, SPME fiber were injected routinely until no impurities were monitored. The constant flow at 1.0 mL min⁻¹ of Helium as carrier was applied. Mass spectrometer was operated at the scan mode in the m z⁻¹ range from 33 to 330 with 70eV electronic ionization. The volatile compounds were identified by matching the recorded mass spectra with WILEY 7n.1 and NIST 02.L libraries. The VCs were identified by taking care of retention index (RI) of compounds with above 85% similarity. The RI of detected compounds was calculated from 1 µL n-alkane series (C8-C20; Supelco 04070 Sigma, St. Louis,

USA) separated with the same chromatographic conditions. The relative concentrations of VCs were calculated by the ratio of peak area of each compound to total area of all peaks.

Preparation of Hawthorn Leaf Infusion

Hawthorn leaves separated from petiole were washed in pure water and dried at room temperature. Then, leaves were ground in a mortar until a fine powder was obtained. Distilled water previously heated to the boiling point was used for infusion. As described by Zhang *et al.* (2018), the leaf powder was infused for 5 min using a 1:50 (w:v) powder:water ratio. After that, the infusion was filtered through Whatman No. 1 (pore size 11 μm) filter paper (Whatman International Ltd., Maidstone, UK). The infusion was cooled to room temperature and used for analysis.

Physicochemical and Functional Properties of Hawthorn Leaf Infusions

Total solids and ash content of infusion samples were determined gravimetrically according to the standard method of AOAC (2000). pH value and titratable acidity were determined using a pH meter (Orion, Thermo, Beverly, USA) and 0.1N NaOH, respectively. Titratable acidity was expressed as citric acid (g L^{-1}). The color values (L^* , a^* , b^*) of tea samples were determined using a colorimeter (Hunter ColorFlex-EZ, Virginia, USA) after calibrating by using black and white ceramic plates. The measurement was carried out at D65 illuminant and 10° observation angle. The L^* , a^* , and b^* values represent the brightness/darkness (100/0), redness/greenness (+/-) and yellowness/blueness (+/-), respectively.

The infusion samples diluted with distilled water (1:5, v:v) were used to determine the Total Phenolic Content (TPC) and Antioxidant activity (AOC) according to the

protocols described by Masatcioglu *et al.* (2013) and Re *et al.* (1999), respectively. A TPC diluted infusion sample (0.25 mL) was mixed with 3.25 mL of distilled water, then Folin–Ciocalteu reagent (0.25 mL), and stirred for 3 min. Saturated Na_2CO_3 solution (0.5 mL) was added to mixture to neutralization and diluted to 5 mL of distilled water. Then, the mixture was vortexed (ZX3, Velp Scientifica, Usmate Velate, Italy) for 10 s and held at room temperature for 1 h in dark. An UV-VIS 1700 model spectrophotometer (Shimadzu, Kyoto, Japan) was used to measure absorbance at 725 nm. A Gallic acid standard curve ($R^2=0.9996$) with 5-points was used to calculate the total phenolic content. The TPC results were as Gallic Acid Equivalents (GAE) in dry weight (mg g^{-1}).

The ABTS (A1888, Sigma, St. Louis, USA) radical scavenging capacity method was used to determine the antioxidant activity of the infusions. Briefly, ABTS (7.5 mM) and $\text{K}_2\text{S}_2\text{O}_8$ (2.45 mM) was reacted at room temperature for 16 hours in dark to obtain ABTS radical cation ($\text{ABTS}^{\bullet+}$). Then, ethanol (1:2 v:v) was added to $\text{ABTS}^{\bullet+}$ solution to give an 0.8 ± 0.02 absorbance value at 734 nm. $\text{ABTS}^{\bullet+}$ solution (10 mL) mixed with tea sample (100 μL) was vortexed thoroughly for 1 min. After 6 min incubation at room temperature, absorbance (734 nm) was measured using ethanol as blank. Trolox (23881-3, Sigma, St. Louis, USA) ranged from 200 to 600 ppm was used for calibration curve ($R^2=0.9998$). The results were expressed as Trolox Equivalent (TE) in dry weight ($\mu\text{mol g}^{-1}$).

Data Analysis

One-way Analysis Of Variance (ANOVA) was applied to determine the differences between sampling times using a SPSS statistical program (Version 24.00, IBM, USA). Duncan's test was applied to assess significantly different means among



collected times ($P < 0.05$). Correlation analysis between the total phenolic content and the antioxidant activity of samples was performed with the bivariate (Pearson's) correlation test ($P < 0.05$). The JMP software (Version 13, SAS Ins., North Carolina, USA) was used to analysis of principal component.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Volatile Compounds of Hawthorn Leaf

A total of 78 VCs including alcohols (11), hydrocarbons (21), ketones (11), esters (16), aldehydes (18), and a benzene compound (1), were identified in the headspaces of hawthorn leaves (Table 1), as in finding of Ozderin *et al.* (2016) for *Crataegus* taxa leaves. A total of 15 VCs determined above 1% at each collecting time, accounting for approximately 80% of the identified volatiles, are listed in Table 2. In all three collection times, the volatile compound profile of the hawthorn leaf samples was almost like each other and most of the VCs were detected in trace levels. Aldehydes and hydrocarbons were the principal volatile compounds with regard to their number and their percentage composition. Regardless of leaf collecting time, aldehydes represented approximately 63% of total VCs identified, and the percentage of aldehydes increased from CT1 to CT2 and decreased again from CT2 to CT3 (Figure 1).

Benzaldehyde, the simplest aromatic aldehyde in nature, was the most abundant aldehyde (Table 2), in line with the findings of Robertson *et al.* (1993) and Ozderin *et al.* (2016). The tendency to decrease in benzaldehyde towards from CT1 to CT3 is compatible with an increase in benzene methanol, a reduction product of benzaldehyde (Table 2). Benzaldehyde can be derived from *trans*-cinnamic acid produced by the degradation of amino acid phenylalanine in many plants (Riu-Aumatell *et al.*, 2005; Güler *et al.*, 2017). It is both a flavoring agent with carcino-static

properties and a repellent to insects (Morgan, 2018). CT1-leaf had the highest level (51%) of benzaldehyde, followed by the CT2 (42%), and CT3 (39%) leaves. The other principal aldehydes determined in leaves were *trans,trans*-2,4-heptadienal, *trans*-2-hexenal, and *trans,cis*-2,6-nonadienal, which originated from the autoxidation of linolenic acid (Hatanaka, 1993). Among them, *trans,trans*-2,4-heptadienal was the second most abundant VC in CT1-leaf. It was not influenced by collection time, indicating that hawthorn leaf is rich in n-3 polyunsaturated fatty acids.

Alcohol chemical group decreased from CT1 to CT3 (Figure 1), but were the third most abundant compounds accounting for approximately 10% of total volatiles. *Cis*-3-hexenol was the predominant alcohol, followed by benzene methanol, hexanol, and *trans*-2-hexenol. Six-Carbon (C6) aldehydes and alcohols known as 'green leaf aldehydes and alcohols' were dominant in hawthorn leaf, which is derived from 13-hydroperoxide of linoleic and linolenic acid through the lipoxygenase pathway (Hatanaka, 1993; Güler *et al.*, 2013).

Esters, together with ketones, were the fourth most abundant VCs, which accounted for approximately 5% of the total volatiles identified. Among esters, *cis*-3-hexenyl benzoate was at a relatively higher level, but its level significantly decreased from CT1 to CT3 (Table 2), decreasing unsaturated C6 alcohols.

Regardless of the time of leaf sampling, hydrocarbons were the second most abundant chemical group (Figure 1). α -Farnesene (sesquiterpene) was the dominant hydrocarbon, presenting 18.6% of total VCs identified in CT3-leaf (Table 2). It has a high economic value due to its use in the pharmaceutical and cosmetic industries and its effect on insect resistance in many plant species (Liu *et al.*, 2019; Wang *et al.*, 2019). α -Farnesene, one of the major compounds identified in the olive tree and *Platanus orientalis* leaves, has recently been reported as one of the natural products effective

Table 1. The volatile compounds identified in hawthorn leaves collected at different times.

| Volatile Compounds | RI | Leaf collection times ^o | | | Volatile Compounds | RI | Leaf collection times ^o | | |
|---|-------|------------------------------------|-----|-----------------------------------|---|-------|------------------------------------|-----|-----|
| | | CT1 | CT2 | CT3 | | | CT1 | CT2 | CT3 |
| <i>Esters (16)</i> | | | | <i>Aldehydes (18)</i> | | | | | |
| Butyl 2-butenate ^{#1} | 1570 | | | | Acetaldehyde ^{#1} | <800 | | | |
| Butyl hexanoate ^{#1} | 1425 | | | | Benzaldehyde ^{#1,2} | 1551 | | | |
| Butyl octanoate ^{#1} | 1623 | | | | 3-Phenoxy-benzaldehyde | 2072 | | | |
| Butyl benzoate ^{#1} | 1891 | | | | <i>trans</i> -2-Hexenal ^{#1,2} | 1227 | | | |
| Ethyl hexadecanoate ^{#1} | >2000 | | | | Hexanal ^{#1,2} | 1060 | | | |
| Hexyl hexanoate ^{#1} | 1620 | | | | Nonanal ^{#1,2} | 1404 | | | |
| Hexyl decanoate ^{#1} | 2024 | | | | <i>trans</i> -2-Heptenal ^{#1} | 1341 | | | |
| Hexyl benzoate ^{#1,2} | >2000 | | | | <i>trans,trans</i> -2-4-Heptadienal ^{#1,2} | 1514 | | | |
| <i>cis</i> -3-Hexenyl acetate ^{#1} | 1330 | | | | Octanal ^{#1,2} | 1303 | | | |
| <i>cis</i> -3-Hexenyl 2-methyl-propanoate ^{#1} | 1471 | | | | 2,6,6-Trimethyl-1-cyclohexene-1-carboxaldehyde | 1646 | | | |
| <i>cis</i> -3-Hexenyl hexanoate ^{#1} | 1668 | | | | <i>trans,cis</i> -2,6-Nonadienal ^{#1,2} | 1606 | | | |
| <i>cis</i> -3-Hexenyl benzoate ^{#1} | >2000 | | | | <i>trans,trans</i> -2,4-Nonadienal ^{#1} | 1725 | | | |
| Isopentyl propanoate | 1493 | | | | <i>trans</i> -2-Decenal ^{#1} | 1662 | | | |
| Methyl tetradecanoate | 2021 | | | | <i>trans,cis</i> -2,4-Decadienal ^{#1} | 1787 | | | |
| Methyl hexadecanoate ^{#1} | >2000 | | | | <i>trans,trans</i> -2,4-Decadienal ^{#1} | 1835 | | | |
| Methyl salicylate | 1810 | | | | 3-Dodecenal ^{#1} | 1772 | | | |
| <i>Hydrocarbons (21)</i> | | | | <i>Alcohols (11)</i> | | | | | |
| <i>Alkane-alkene (11)</i> | | | | <i>Alcohols (11)</i> | | | | | |
| Cyclododecane ^{#1} | >2000 | | | | Hexanol ^{#1,2} | 1361 | | | |
| Tetradecane ^{#1} | 1400 | | | | <i>trans</i> -2-Hexenol ^{#1,2} | 1414 | | | |
| Pentadecane ^{#1} | 1500 | | | | <i>cis</i> -3-Hexenol ^{#1,2} | 1393 | | | |
| Hexadecane ^{#1} | 1600 | | | | Octanol ^{#1} | 1565 | | | |
| Heptadecane ^{#1} | 1700 | | | | Octen-3-ol ^{#1,2} | 1457 | | | |
| Octadecane ^{#1} | 1800 | | | | Benzeneethanol ^{#1,2} | 1938 | | | |
| Eicosane ^{#1} | 2000 | | | | Benzenemethanol ^{#2} | 1901 | | | |
| Tricosane ^{#1} | >2000 | | | | <i>cis</i> -Farnesol ^{*#1} | 1949 | | | |
| Decylene ^{#1} | 1976 | | | | Nerolidol ^{#1} | 2052 | | | |
| Tridecylene | 1347 | | | | Salicyl alcohol ^{#1} | 2045 | | | |
| <i>trans</i> -4,8-Dimethyl-1,3,7-nonatriene(C11) | 1315 | | | | Surfynol ^{#1} | 2096 | | | |
| <i>Terpenes (10)</i> | | | | <i>Ketones (11)</i> | | | | | |
| 4-Cyclopropylnorcarane ^{#1} | 1695 | | | | 1-Octen-3-one ^{#1} | 1313 | | | |
| α -Terpinene ^{§#2} | 1716 | | | | 2(5H)-Thiophenone ^{#1} | >2000 | | | |
| L-Carvone ^{§#1} | 1765 | | | | 2-Nonanone ^{#1} | 1928 | | | |
| Naphthalene [§] | 1777 | | | | 6-Methyl-3,5-heptadien-2-one | 1612 | | | |
| α -Copaene ^{§#1,2} | 1506 | | | | 6-Methyl-5-hepten-2-one ^{#1} | 1352 | | | |
| β -Gurjunene [§] | 1592 | | | | Geranylacetone ^{#1} | 1872 | | | |
| α -Bergamotene ^{§#2} | 1734 | | | | Hexahydrofarnesyl acetone ^{#1} | >2000 | | | |
| α -Farnesene ^{§#1,2} | 1759 | | | | <i>o</i> -Hydroxyacetophenone ^{#1} | 1838 | | | |
| B-Bourbonene ^{§#2} | 1535 | | | | α -Ionone ^{#1} | 1877 | | | |
| 13-Epimanoyl oxide [§] | >2000 | | | | β -Ionone ^{#1} | 1968 | | | |
| <i>Compounds with benzene (1)</i> | | | | <i>Compounds with benzene (1)</i> | | | | | |
| 1,2-Dichloro-benzene ^{#2} | 1462 | | | | β -Damascenone ^{#1} | 1849 | | | |

^o CT1, CT2, and CT3 indicate hawthorn leaves collected at three different times corresponding to immature, mature, and overmature fruit maturity stages, respectively. RI: Retention Index of VCs calculated by using *n*-alkanes (C₈-C₂₀) series. Three-point color scales from white to black represent compounds identified from minimum (not detected) to maximum percentages (51%) in hawthorn leaves and midpoint was taken as 50%. [§] Phenolic compound; [§] Terpene compounds; [#] Compounds have been previously determined in *C. azarolus* fruit (Dursun *et al.*, 2021), leaf and flower volatile oil content of hawthorn taxa (Ozderin *et al.*, 2016).

**Table 2.** The mean relative percentage composition of the major VCs in hawthorn leaves.^a

| No | Volatile Compounds | Leaf collection times | | | P value |
|----|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|---------|
| | | CT1 | CT2 | CT3 | |
| 1 | Benzaldehyde | 39.2±2.2 ^b | 50.9±4.7 ^a | 42.0±2.8 ^b | * |
| 2 | α -Farnesene | 2.8±0.1 ^b | 2.3±0.8 ^b | 18.6±0.2 ^a | *** |
| 3 | <i>trans,trans</i> -2,4-Heptadienal | 7.3±0.2 | 7.2±1.3 | 7.8±0.0 | ns |
| 4 | <i>trans</i> -2-Hexenal | 5.6±0.8 | 4.3±1.1 | 3.6±0.6 | ns |
| 5 | <i>cis</i> -3-Hexenol | 5.4±0.4 ^a | 4.5±1.6 ^a | 1.4±0.4 ^b | ** |
| 6 | Benzenemethanol | 1.5±0.1 | 2.1±0.7 | 2.3±0.3 | ns |
| 7 | 6-Methyl-5-hepten-2-one | 2.8±0.1 ^a | 1.4±0.5 ^b | 1.6±0.5 ^b | ** |
| 8 | Geranylacetone | 2.1±0.6 ^a | 1.4±0.7 ^{ab} | 0.7±0.1 ^b | * |
| 9 | Acetaldehyde | 0.8±0.5 ^b | 1.8±0.4 ^a | 0.9±0.3 ^b | * |
| 10 | <i>cis</i> -3-Hexenyl benzoate | 1.4±0.0 ^a | 1.0±0.4 ^a | 0.5±0.0 ^b | ** |
| 11 | 3-Dodecenal | 1.5±0.3 ^a | 0.8±0.3 ^b | 0.4±0.0 ^b | ** |
| 12 | Hexanol | 1.4±0.2 ^a | 0.8±0.4 ^b | 0.5±0.3 ^b | * |
| 13 | <i>trans</i> -2-Hexenol | 1.8±0.1 | 0.9±0.6 | 1.3±0.3 | ns |
| 14 | <i>trans</i> -4,8-Dimethyl-1,3,7-nonatriene | 1.5±0.1 ^a | 0.8±0.2 ^b | 1.3±0.3 ^a | * |
| 15 | <i>trans,cis</i> -2,6-Nonadienal | 0.5±0.3 ^b | 0.5±0.2 ^b | 1.3±0.2 ^a | ** |

^a The results were expressed as means±standart deviations (n=9). The VCs had a relative percent value higher than 1% were considered major volatile compounds. CT1, CT2 and CT3 indicate hawthorn leaves collected at three different times corresponding to immature, mature, and overmature fruit maturity stages, respectively. (a-c) The mean values in the same row showing different small letters were significantly different (* P< 0.05; ** P< 0.01; *** P< 0.001), ns: not significant, P> 0.05.

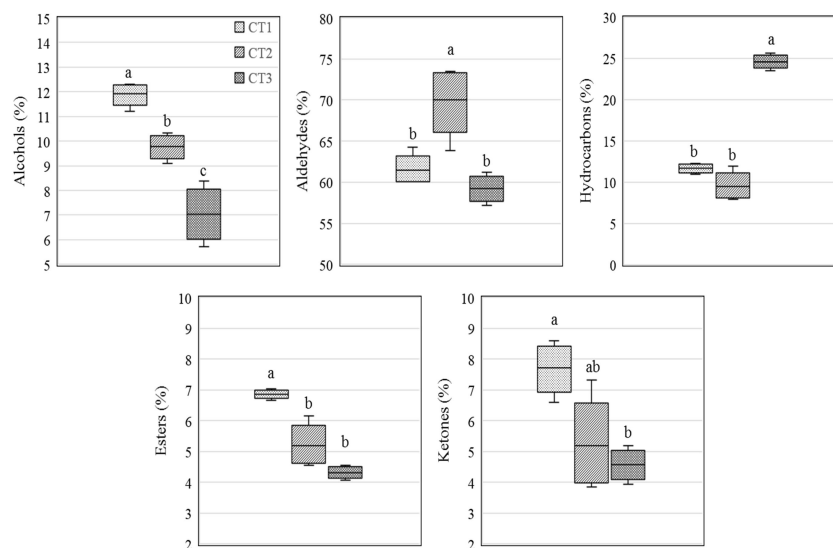


Figure 1. Box plots representing the percentage composition of the groups of VCs (except for compounds with benzene because of having a VC) in the leaves of Sultan hawthorn. CT1, CT2 and CT3 indicate hawthorn leaves collected at three different times corresponding to immature, mature and overmature fruit maturity stages, respectively. The center line of each box represents the mean, and the top and bottom of error bars represent the data's maximum and minimum, respectively (n= 9). ^{a-c} Mean values of hawthorn leaves collected at different times within each VC group were significantly different (P< 0.05).

against the COVID-19 virus (Güler *et al.*, 2017; Antonio *et al.*, 2020; Dursun *et al.*, 2021). Considering the potential health effects of α -farnesene, hawthorn leaves collected in CT3 may be more effective in medicinal usage. *Trans*-4,8-dimethyl-1,3,7-nonatriene, previously reported as a defensive compound against herbivores in bergamot essential oil (Turlings and Tumlinson, 1992), is substantially detected in Sultan hawthorn leaves.

Carotenoid-derived volatiles such as 6-methyl-5-hepten-2-one (sulcatone) and geranylacetone were also identified in hawthorn leaves. The first compound is derived from the catabolism of the chlorophyll phytol chain, and the latter from phytoene (Vogel *et al.*, 2008). Levels of sulcatone and geranylacetone changed significantly from CT1 to CT2.

According to discriminant analysis, PC1

(50.3%) and PC2 (33.3%) explained 83.6% of the total variance (Figure 2). PCA was successfully utilized in the discrimination of hawthorn species by Muradoğlu *et al.* (2021). In this study, we proved that the volatile compounds could also be used to discriminate and characterize hawthorn leaves based on the sampling times, indicating that PCA is a good indicator in such data analysis. CT1-leaf was distinguished from CT2 and CT3 leaves along PC1 having the highest percentages of hexanol, *trans*-2-hexenal, *trans*-2-hexenol, geranylacetone, *cis*-3-hexenol, 6-methyl-5-hepten-2-one, 3-dodecanal, and *cis*-4,8-dimethyl-1,3,7-nonatriene. CT2-leaf with the highest benzaldehyde and acetaldehyde was utterly separated from CT3 along PC2. CT3-leaf was characterized by the highest levels of α -farnesene, *trans,trans*-2,4-heptadienal,

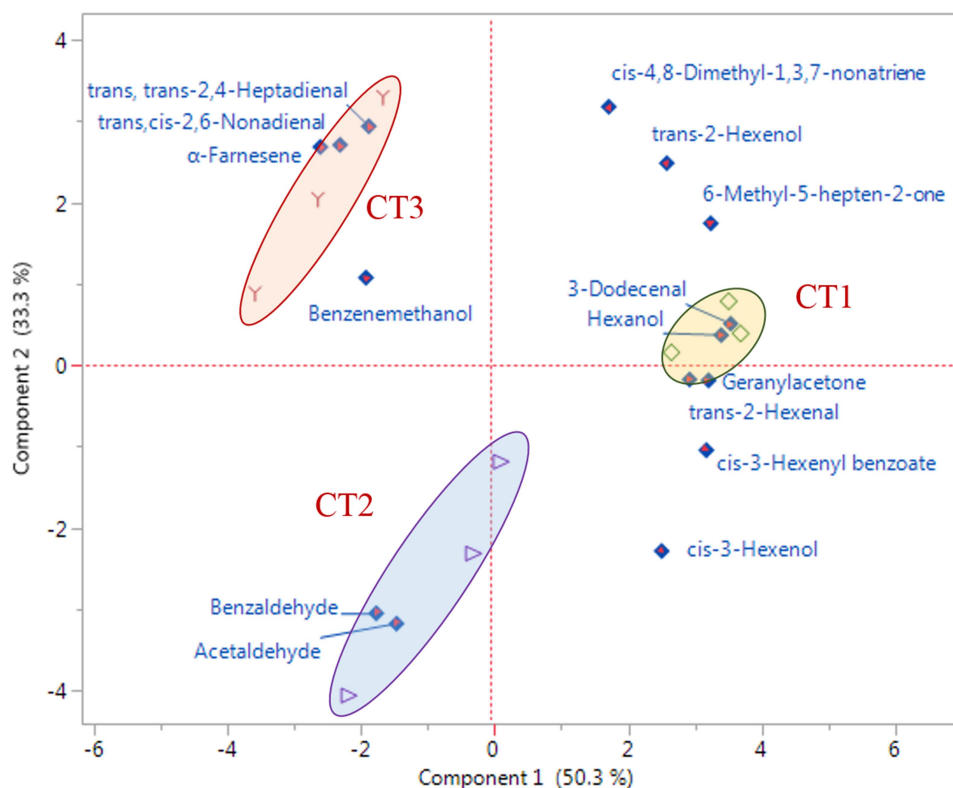


Figure 2. Results of principal component analysis of volatile compounds (numbered as specified in the Table 2) for hawthorn leaves. CT1, CT2 and CT3 indicate hawthorn leaves collected at three different times corresponding to immature, mature and overmature fruit maturity stages, respectively.

**Table 3.** Physicochemical and functional characteristics of infusions.^a

| Parameters | Leaf collection times ^b | | | P value |
|--|------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|---------|
| | CT1 | CT2 | CT3 | |
| Total Solid (g L ⁻¹) | 5.66±0.13 | 5.74±0.12 | 5.52±0.13 | ns |
| Ash (g L ⁻¹) | 0.63±0.07 | 0.58±0.13 | 0.58±0.13 | ns |
| Titrateable acidity (g L ⁻¹) | 1.53±0.09 ^a | 1.06±0.05 ^b | 0.93±0.05 ^c | *** |
| pH | 7.04±0.01 ^c | 7.17±0.01 ^b | 7.34±0.01 ^a | ** |
| L* | 2.84±0.07 ^a | 2.17±0.10 ^b | 2.95±0.17 ^a | *** |
| a* | -1.28±0.10 ^a | -1.06±0.16 ^{ab} | -0.92±0.04 ^b | * |
| b* | 0.99±0.02 ^b | 1.03±0.10 ^b | 1.43±0.09 ^a | *** |
| TPC (mg GAE g ⁻¹ DW) | 29.91±0.11 ^c | 33.25±0.32 ^b | 34.57±0.18 ^a | *** |
| AOA (μmol TE g ⁻¹ DW) | 269.00±1.54 ^c | 278.77±0.97 ^b | 296.68±1.85 ^a | *** |

^a The results were expressed as means±standard deviations (n= 9). CT1, CT2 and CT3 indicate hawthorn leaves collected at three different times corresponding to immature, mature, and overmature fruit maturity stages, respectively. DW: Dry Weight. ^b (a-c) The mean values in the same row showing different small letters were significantly different (* P< 0.05; ** P< 0.01; *** P< 0.001), ns: Not significant, P> 0.05.

benzenemethanol and *trans,cis*-2,6-nonadienal. A high negative eigenvector was obtained for benzaldehyde and acetaldehyde, which were the highest in CT2-leaf.

Physicochemical and Functional Properties of Hawthorn Leaf Infusion

This study is the first report on physicochemical and functional properties of infusions from leaves collected from 'Sultan' hawthorn trees at different times. The results of physicochemical analysis in infusion samples are shown in Table 3. The total solid and ash contents of leaf infusions were unchanged by the collection times, but the acidity was significantly varied. From CT1 to CT3, pH increased significantly (P< 0.01) and titrateable acidity decreased. This may be related to utilizing the most acids in the process of respiration or an increase in alcoholic compounds in leaves because of their acid neutralizing capacity. A significant difference in color values of infusion samples was observed (Table 3). The L* (Lightness) and b* (yellowness) values were highest (2.95 and 1.43, respectively) at CT3 and the negative a* (greenness) value (1.28) was at CT1. Color values of leaf samples were also in line with the color of hawthorn fruit (Dursun *et al.*, 2021).

Total Phenolic Contents (TPCs) and Antioxidant activities (AOCs) of hawthorn leaf infusions are given in Table 3. The TPC increased significantly from CT1 to CT3, ranging from 29.91 to 34.57 mg GAE g⁻¹ DW. The TPC values identified in leaf samples were within the ranges (12.41 to 82.74 mg GAE g⁻¹ DW) obtained for leaves taken from 14 different hawthorn varieties (Alirezalu *et al.*, 2018). Sultan hawthorn leaf exhibited considerable antioxidant activity with values ranging from 269.00 to 296.68 μmol TE g⁻¹ dry weight. The AOCs of leaf samples was also within ranges (75 to 379 μmol TE g⁻¹) obtained in 3 different *C. azarolus* var. *aronia* leaves (Özyürek *et al.*, 2012). The hawthorn leaf had higher TPC and antioxidant activity values in CT3 than in CT1 and CT2. Pavlovic *et al.* (2019) reported that hawthorn leaves had higher radical scavenging activities than hawthorn fruits. In addition, intake of polyphenol (1170 mg/day) is reported to be effective against cardiovascular diseases (Del Bo *et al.*, 2019). Thus, the consumption of 5 g Sultan hawthorn leaf powder from CT3 could provide nearly 50% of the required content associated with chronic disease.

CONCLUSIONS

This study determined the volatile compounds, phenolic content, antioxidant activity, and chemical composition in leaves

of Sultan hawthorn according to the fruit ripening stage. Total phenolic content and antioxidant activity increased significantly from CT1 to CT3 corresponding to immature to overmature fruit developmental stages. Based on discriminant analysis, volatile compounds classified Sultan hawthorn leaves according to the collection times. The findings from the present study have provided important information on the changes in leaf volatile compounds level, phenolic content, and antioxidant activity of Sultan hawthorn, the first standard cultivar in Turkey, according to fruit maturity stages. We envisage that the information will help decide the best time to harvest Sultan hawthorn leaves for use in folk medicine and food additives.

REFERENCES

- Alirezalu, A., Salehi, P., Ahmadi, N., Sonboli, A., Aceto, S., Maleki, H.H. and Ayyari, M. 2018. Flavonoids Profile and Antioxidant Activity in Flowers and Leaves of Hawthorn Species (*Crataegus* spp.) from Different Regions of Iran. *Int. J. Food Prop.*, **21**: 452-470.
- Antonio, A., Wiedemann, L. S. M. and Veiga, V. F. 2020. Natural Products' Role against COVID-19. *RSC Adv.*, **10**: 23379-23393.
- AOAC. 2000. Official Methods and Recommended Practices of the Association of Official Analytical Chemists International. 17th Edition, AOAC International.
- Chang, Q., Zuo, Z., Harrison, F., and Chow, M. S. S. 2002. Hawthorn. *J. Clin. Pharmacol.*, **42**: 605-612.
- Del Bo, C., Bernardi, S., Marino, M., Porrini, M., Tucci, M., Guglielmetti, S., Cherubini, A., Carrieri, B., Kirkup, B., Kroon, P., Zamora-Ros, R., Liberona, N. H., Andres-Lacueva, C. and Riso, P. 2019. Systematic Review on Polyphenol Intake and Health Outcomes: Is There Sufficient Evidence to Define a Health-Promoting Polyphenol-Rich Dietary Pattern. *Nutrients*, **11**: 1355.
- Di Pierro, F., Derosa, G., Maffioli, P., Bertuccioli, A., Togni, S., Riva, A., Allegrini, P., Khan, A., Khan, S., Khan, B. A., Altaf, N., Zahid, M., Ujjan, I. D., Nigar, R., Khusk, M. I., Pholpoto, M., Lail, A., Devrajani, B. R. and Ahmet, S. 2021. Possible Therapeutic Effects of Adjuvant Quercetin Supplementation against Early-Stage COVID-19 Infection: A Prospective, Randomized, Controlled, and Open-Label Study. *Int. J. Gen. Med.*, **14**: 2359-2366.
- Dursun, A., Çalışkan, O., Güler, Z., Bayazit, S., Türkmen, D. and Gündüz, K. 2021. Effect of Harvest Maturity on Volatile Compounds Profiling and Eating Quality of Hawthorn (*Crataegus azarolus* L.) Fruit. *Sci. Hortic.*, **288**: 110398.
- EMA. 2021. Hawthorn Leaf and Flower. https://www.ema.europa.eu/en/documents/herbal-summary/hawthorn-leaf-flower-summary-public_en-0.pdf
- Fong, H. H. S. and Bauman, J. L. 2002. Hawthorn. *J. Cardiovasc. Nurs.*, **16**: 1-8.
- Güler, Z., Dursun, A. and Özkan, D. 2017. Volatile Compounds in the Leaf of Plane Tree (*Platanus orientalis*) with Solid Phase Microextraction (SPME) Technique. *Int. J. Second. Metab.*, **4**: 167-176.
- Güler, Z., Karaca, F. and Yetisir, H. 2013. Volatile Compounds in the Peel and Flesh of Cucumber (*Cucumis sativus* L.) Grafted onto Bottle Gourd (*Lagenaria siceraria*) Rootstocks. *J. Hort. Sci. Biotech.*, **88**: 123-128.
- Hatanaka, A. 1993. The Biogenesis of Green Odour by Green Leaves. *Phytochem.*, **34**: 1201-1218.
- Keser, S., Celik, S., Turkoglu, S., Yilmaz, O. and Turkoglu, I. 2014. The Investigation of Some Bioactive Compounds and Antioxidant Properties of Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna* subsp. *monogyna* Jacq). *J. Intercult. Ethnopharmacol.*, **3**: 51-55.
- Lakache, Z., Tigrine-Kordjani, N., Tigrine, C., Kameli, A. and Meklati, B. Y. 2014. Volatile constituents, phenolic compounds, and antioxidant activity of *Crataegus azarolus* leaves and flowers growing in Algeria. *Chem. Nat. Compd.*, **50**: 1132-1135. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10600-014-1183-6>
- Liu, P., Kallio, H. and Yang, B. 2011. Phenolic compounds in hawthorn



- (*Crataegus grayana*) fruits and leaves and changes during fruit ripening. *J. Agric. Food Chem.*, **59**: 11141-11149. <https://doi.org/10.1021/jf202465u>
16. Liu, Y., Jiang, X., Cui, Z., Wang, Z., Qi, Q. and Hou, J. 2019. Engineering the oleaginous yeast *Yarrowia lipolytica* for production of α -farnesene. *Biotechnol. Biofuels.*, **12**: 296. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s13068-019-1636-z>
 17. Lund, J.A., Brown, P. N. and Shipley, P.R. 2017. Differentiation of *Crataegus* spp. guided by nuclear magnetic resonance spectrometry with chemometric analyses. *Phytochem.*, **141**: 11-19. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.phytochem.2017.05.003>
 18. Masatcioglu, M.T., Yalcin, E., Kim, M., Ryu, G.H., Celik, S. and Köksel, H. 2013. Physical and chemical properties of tomato, green tea, and ginseng-supplemented corn extrudates produced by conventional extrusion and CO₂ injection process. *Eur. Food Res. Technol.*, **237**: 801-809. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00217-013-2053-3>
 19. Morgan, E.D. 2018. Handbook of Natural Pesticides: Volume VI: Insect Attractants and Repellents, CRC Press, Boca Raton.
 20. Muradoglu, F., Gursoy, S. and Guler, E. 2021. Multivariate analysis revealed the morphological variability among *Crataegus* species. *YYU J. Agr. Sci.*, **31**(4): 961-972. <https://doi.org/10.29133/yyutbd.974538>
 21. Ozderin, S. and Fakir, H. 2015. Some Botanical Properties of Hawthorn (*Crataegus* L. spp.) Taxa Naturally Distributed in the Western Anatolia Part of Turkey. *Int J Agric Innov Res.*, **4**(3): 567-572.
 22. Ozderin, S., Fakir, H. and Donmez, I.E. 2016. Chemical Properties of Hawthorn (*Crataegus* L. spp.) Taxa Naturally Distributed in Western Anatolia Part of Turkey. *Şumar List.*, **140**: 7-8.
 23. Özyürek, M., Bener, M., Güçlü, K., Dönmez, A. A., Süzgeç-Selçuk, S., Pırıldar, S., Meriçli, A. H. and Apak, R. 2012. Evaluation of Antioxidant Activity of *Crataegus* Species Collected from Different Regions of Turkey. *Rec. Nat. Prod.*, **6**: 263-277.
 24. Pandey, K. B. and Rizvi, S. I. 2009. Plant Polyphenols as Dietary Antioxidants in Human Health and Disease. *Oxid. Med. Cell Longev.*, **2**: 270-278.
 25. Pavlovic, J., Mitić, S., Mitić, M., Kocić, G., Pavlović, A. and Tošić, S. 2019. Variation in the Phenolic Compounds Profile and Antioxidant Activity in Different Parts of Hawthorn (*Crataegus pentagyna* Willd.) during Harvest Periods. *Polish J. Food Nutr. Sci.*, **69**: 367-378.
 26. Re, R., Pellegrini, N., Proteggente, A., Pannala, A., Yang, M. and Rice-Evans, C. 1999. Antioxidant Activity Applying an Improved ABTS Radical Cation Decolorization Assay. *Free Radic. Biol. Med.*, **26**: 1231-1237.
 27. Riu-Aumatell, M., Lopez-Tamames, E. and Buxaderas, S. 2005. Assessment of Volatile Composition of Juices of Apricot, Peach, and Pear According to Two Pectolytic Treatments. *J. Agric. Food Chem.*, **53**: 7837-7843.
 28. Robertson, G. W., Griffiths, D. W., Woodford, J. A. T., Birch, A. N. E., Pickett, J. A. and Wadhams, L. J. A. 1993. A Comparison of the Flower Volatiles from Hawthorn and Four Raspberry Cultivars. *Phytochem.*, **33**: 1047-1053.
 29. Sticher, O. and Meier, B. 1997. Hawthorn (*Crataegus*): Biological Activity and New Strategies for Quality Control. In: "Phytomedicines of Europe Chemistry and Biological Activity", (Eds.): Lawson, L. D. and Bauer, R. American Chemical Society, Washington DC, PP. 241-262.
 30. Turlings, T. C. and Tumlinson, J. H. 1992. Systemic Release of Chemical Signals by Herbivore-Injured Corn. *Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA.*, **89**: 8399-8402.
 31. Vogel, J. T., Tan, B.C., McCarty, D. R. and Klee, H. J. 2008. The Carotenoid Cleavage Dioxygenase 1 Enzyme Has Broad Substrate Specificity, Cleaving Multiple Carotenoids at Two Different Bond Positions. *J. Biol. Chem.*, **283**: 11364-11373.
 32. Wang, X., Zeng, L., Liao, Y., Li, J., Tang, J. and Yang, Z. 2019. Formation of α -Farnesene in Tea (*Camellia sinensis*) Leaves Induced by Herbivore-Derived Wounding and Its Effect on Neighboring Tea Plants. *Int. J. Mol. Sci.*, **20**: 4151.
 33. Wloch, A., Kapusta, I., Bielecki, K., Oszmiański, J. and Kleszczyńska, H.

2013. Activity of Hawthorn Leaf and Bark Extracts in Relation to Biological Membrane. *J. Membrane Biol.*, **246**: 545-556.
34. Zhang, L., Zhang, J., Chen, L., Liu, T., Ma, G. and Liu, X. 2018. Influence of Manufacturing Process on the Contents of Iron, Copper, Chromium, Nickel and Manganese Elements in Crush, Tear and Curl Black Tea, Their Transfer Rates and Health Risk Assessment. *Food Control.*, **89**: 241-249.

ترکیبات فرار، محتوای فنلی و ظرفیت آنتی اکسیدانی در برگ های زالزالک سلطانی (*Crataegus azarolus* L)

د. ترکمن، ا. دورسون، ا. چالیشکان، م. کوسال کورک، و ز. گولر

چکیده

امروزه به گیاهانی مانند زالزالک (*hawthorn*) که منبع غنی از متابولیت های ثانویه (ترکیبات فرار و فنلی) در برگ های خود هستند و اثرات مفیدی بر سلامتی دارند، توجه زیادی می شود. در این پژوهش، ترکیبات فرار (VCs)، محتوای فنلی کل و فعالیت های آنتی اکسیدانی برگ زالزالک سلطانی که در سه زمان مختلف بر اساس مراحل بلوغ میوه (نابالغ، بالغ و بیش از حد بالغ) جمع آوری شده بود، بررسی شد. هدف اصلی ما تعیین این بود که آیا مشخصات مواد فرار، محتوای فنلی کل و فعالیت آنتی اکسیدانی بسته به زمان نمونه برداری برگ تغییر می کند یا خیر. در مجموع VC ۷۸ در برگ ها شناسایی شد که ۱۱ مورد برای اولین بار بود. با پیشرفت در رسیدن و بلوغ میوه، مقدار بیشتر VC ها تغییر کرد، محتوای فنلی و فعالیت آنتی اکسیدانی آن ها افزایش یافت و اسیدیته کم شد. ترآلدئید و α -فارنسن VC های اصلی بودند که ۶۱٪ از کل VC های شناسایی شده در برگ را در مرحله "بیش از حد بالغ" تشکیل می دادند. تجزیه و تحلیل اجزای اصلی با موفقیت ترکیبات فرار در برگ زالزالک را در طول مراحل بلوغ میوه جداسازی کرد. این پژوهش برای اولین بار مروری کلی بر متابولیت های ثانویه برگ های کولتیوار زالزالک سلطانی در مراحل بلوغ میوه ارائه کرد. برگ زالزالک جمع آوری شده در مرحله میوه "بیش از حد بالغ"، پتانسیل بالایی در متابولیت های ثانویه و ظرفیت آنتی اکسیدانی دارد.