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Comparison of Tar Produced by Traditional and Laboratory Methods

Yusuf Kurt and Kani Isik*

Akdeniz University, Science Faculty, Biology Department, 07058, Campus/Antalya, Turkey
E-mail : yusufkurt@akdeniz.edu.tr, kani@akdeniz.edu.tr

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ABSTRACT Ethnobotanical uses of plant species varies depending on the knowledge and geography of civilizations, and also prevailing diseases or nuisances in a given time and region. Although parts of annual and/or biennial plants generally have been preferred for ethnobotanical purposes, secondary products such as tar or wood extractives of forest trees have also been used as a natural medicine and coating material. This study compares constituents of tars produced from wood by traditional methods and modern laboratory methods in *Cedrus libani* Achille Richard. In terms of their qualitative and quantitative chemical properties, significant differences were observed between the wood extractives produced by the two methods. Quality of wood used for extraction, extraction temperature and duration also appear to be among the several factors that influence the chemical quality and quantity of extracts. The extent of contribution of each of these factors, either alone or by combination, is not clearly known. In addition, although the products extracted by either method are used for similar purposes, the level of biological effectiveness of each of them and specific chemicals responsible for such effectiveness need to be determined.