Amarelinha do Amapá: a carotenoid-rich cassava cultivar

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ABSTRACT. Eight cassava (Manihot esculenta Crantz) cultivars, of which four are indigenous to the Amazon region, along with an interspecific hybrid, were assessed for their carotenoid content. They were propagated and are maintained in the living Manihot collection at the University of Brasilia. The cultivar “Amarelinha do Amapá”, which was collected from the State of Amapá, was found to have a very high content of β-carotene: 27 mg per 100 g, which is more than 50-fold higher than in other cassava cultivars. This cultivar, which also has excellent palatability, could be an important source of β-carotene for cassava breeding.

Key words: β-carotene; Domestication; Genetic diversity; Indigenous cultivars; Palatability; Vitamin A