

## Essential oil composition of an aromatic medicinal herb *Artemisia annua* L. at different growth stages

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Chemical composition of the essential oils obtained from the aerial parts of *Artemisia annua* at vegetative, pre-bloom, bloom and post-bloom stages were determined using GC and GC/MS analysis. The yields of the essential oil were 0.14, 0.34, 0.64 and 0.54% (w/w) respectively at different growth stages. A total of sixty seven compounds were identified in analyzed essential oils. Oxygenated monoterpenes (39.0-57.0%) constitute the main fraction of the oils followed by sesquiterpene hydrocarbons (11.8-26.2%) and monoterpene hydrocarbons (4.2-15.1%). The main compounds identified in all analyzed samples were camphor (28.6-31.7%), 1,8-cineole (2.1-20.8%), germacrene D (3.8-12.0%),  $\beta$ -caryophyllene (2.8-6.9%), trans- $\beta$ -farnesene (0.7-4.5%),  $\alpha$ -pinene (0.5-2.4%), p-cymene (0.8-2.3%) and terpinen-4-ol, (0.9-2.1%). Considerable quantitative variations in both, oil yields and chemical compositions at different growth stages were found.

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