

Title:	A process for the preparation of antioxidants from <i>Hibiscus sabdariffa</i> calyces
Abstract:	<p>The present invention relates to a process for the preparation of antioxidants from <i>Hibiscus sabdariffa</i> calyces. Rosella (<i>Hibiscus sabdariffa</i>) is an annual shrub which is commonly used to make jellies jams and beverages. Flowers are 5" wide, yellow or buff coloured and turn pink as they wither at the end of the day. The red calyx consists of 5 sepals with a ring of epicalyxes from 8 to 12 bracts around the base and fully encloses the velvety capsule, which is about ½ to ¾ inch long. Roselle is native from India to Malaysia. It has been widely distributed in the tropics and sub-tropics and cultivated in Africa, West Indies and Central America. Rosella is attracting the attention of food and beverage manufacturers and pharmaceutical concerns to the possibilities of its use as a natural food product and as a colourant to replace some synthetic ones. Fresh calyces contain water-soluble acids like citric acid, d-malic acid, tartaric acid and hibiscus acid (lactone of hydroxycitric acid) (The Wealth of India, 1982). Recently, the biological activities of anthocyanin, such as antioxidant activity, protection from atherosclerosis and anticarcinogenic activity have been investigated and shown to have beneficial effects in the treatment of diseases (Pi-Jen Tsai et al., Food Res. International, 35, 351, 2002). Being high in anthocyanin, Roselle calyces can be explored as a natural colorant as well as a good source of antioxidants.</p>