

Nutrient composition and anti-nutritional factors in selected vegetable soybean (*Glycine Max* [L.] Merr.)*

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Received 15 June 1990; accepted 20 July 1990

Key words: soybean (*Glycine max*. [L.] Merr.), vegetable, protein content, trypsin inhibitors, phytate and minerals, genetic variation

Abstract. The genetic variation in the nutrient composition and anti-nutritional factors of 17 vegetable soybean genotypes were determined and a wide variation in protein %, total phosphorus (TP_i) and available phosphorus (AP) was found among these genotypes. Variations in Ca, K, Fe, Mn, and Cu were also documented. Variation was also found for trypsin inhibitor (TI) activity and Phytate (PA) content. A highly significant and negative correlation ($r = -0.533$, $P < 0.01$) was observed between TI and total protein. Strong positive correlation ($r = 0.90$) was also found between TP_i and AP. Several genotypes (Sooty, Emperor, Wilson-5, PI 416771, PI 417322) showed good nutritional potential and can be used in the breeding program. High protein %, TP_i, and minerals are desirable qualities for vegetable-type soybeans that make it as food with high nutrient density. Studies on the nutritional evaluation of immature vegetable type soybean seeds at different reproductive stages are also underway.

Introduction

Consumers across the United States concerned with health and physical fitness are exploring alternative vegetable crops that can be incorporated into their diets. Legume seeds are important suppliers of protein in diets. They are also important sources for oils and carbohydrates. It is the relative proportions of these constituents that largely determine the nutritional quality of the seeds [38], e.g. a large content of both protein and oil is desirable. However, it has been documented that protein and oil are negatively correlated [14, 20, 21, 24].

Although the soybean (*Glycine max* L.) has high protein content and is used as an alternative to animal protein. However, the nutritive value of

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soybean protein is poor due to deficiency of the sulfur-containing amino acids, particularly methionine [9, 25]. Protease inhibitors are the anti-nutritional factors found in soybean [15, 35]. It has been reported that when animals were fed heat-treated soybean, better growth and maximum protein efficiency ratio (PER) were found [6, 16].

Phytic acid (PA), myo-inositol 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 hexaphosphate, is the storage form of phosphorus (P_i) in soybean seeds [5, 8, 36, 37]. The PA binds with nutritionally-important metals, especially zinc (Zn), calcium (Ca), manganese (Mn), and magnesium (Mg), and forms a phytate-metal complex that possibly contributes to nutritional deficiencies in nonruminant animals. The growing interest in soybean as a source of protein has spurred an interest in its PA content. Several studies have shown significant varietal differences in the accumulation of PA in soybean seeds [34, 36]. If significant variation in seed PA and minerals exist among the vegetable soybean genotypes, a breeding program aimed at reducing PA and increasing the availability of minerals of the vegetable soybean seed should be feasible.

Vegetable-type soybeans are already popular as a food in the Orient, where the incidence of heart disease is low [1]. Also it has been reported that vegetable-type soybeans are superior to grain-type varieties in flavor, texture, cooking [23], and low in trypsin inhibitor (TI) activity [12]. Little is known about the nutritional quality of vegetable soybean and no study has been reported on genetic variations in TI and PA among vegetable soybean genotypes.

The present study was conducted to evaluate the nutritional quality of the selected vegetable soybean. The variations in protein, total phosphorus, available phosphorus, and minerals were determined. Also, the variation in anti-nutritional factors, namely TI and PA was investigated.

Materials and methods

Seventeen vegetable soybeans genotypes, 6 cultivars (Ware, Emperor, Sango, Kingston, Sooty, and Wilson-5), and 11 plant introductions (PIs 416982, 416771, 417288, 417322, 417052, 417213, 417310, 423759, 423852, 222397 and 171437) were selected based on seed size, maturity group and seed availability during the experiment [28]. Conventional tillage practices were used along with 227 Kg ha⁻¹ P and K fertilizers, which followed soil test recommendations. Three replications of each entry were planted in four row plots, in a randomized complete block design, on May 30, 1988; at the Randolph Research Farm, Virginia State University, Petersburg, Va. Each four-row plot was 4 m long and 3.60 m wide, with spacing of 90 cm between rows. A

seeding rate of 23 seeds per meter was used. At physiological maturity (R8) [10] each entry was evaluated by harvesting the two center rows of each plot. The harvested materials were threshed and samples of seed were taken, ground in a centrifugal grinding mill, and passed through a 0.5 mm pore size screen. The oil was extracted with hexane using a Goldfish apparatus, and the defatted samples were used to determine total protein, trypsin inhibitor activity, total phosphorus, phytate, and minerals (Ca, Fe, Mn, K, and Cu). Total protein was analyzed by the Kjeldahl method [2].

Determination of trypsin inhibitors activity

Trypsin inhibitor activity was determined according to the method of Kakade *et al.* [22] using 2-N-Benzoyl-DL arginine p-nitroanilide as substrate. One trypsin unit corresponds to an increase of 0.01 absorbance at 410 nm/10 ml of the reaction mixture under the conditions defined by Kakade *et al.* [22]. Trypsin inhibitor activity is defined as the number of trypsin units inhibited.

Determination of phytate and total phosphorus

Extraction of phytate was done according to the procedure of Camire and Clydesdale [4] and modified by Mohamed *et al.* [29]. The phytate was purified on an anion exchange resin (Dowex - $1 \times 8 \text{ Cl}^-$) to remove inorganic phosphorus and di, tri and tetra phosphate of inositol. The phytate was eluted from the anion exchange using 1 M NaCl. The eluent was used to determine phytate as described by Mohamed *et al.* [29].

Chromogenic solution was used to determine total phosphorus in digested vegetable soybean samples, as described by Hafez *et al.* [18].

Determination of Ca, K, Fe, Mn, and Cu

Vegetable soybean meal was digested using peroxy monosulfuric acid as described in Hach *et al.* [13]. The digested samples were diluted to 100 ml using deionized distilled water. Atomic Absorption Spectrophotometer model 357 (instrumentation laboratory, Wilmington, MA) was used to determine these minerals, as described by Sotera and Stux [40].

The data from the chemical analyses were statistically analyzed, and the means were separated using the least significant differences (LSD) test at the 5% level of significance. Simple linear correlations were also calculated using the MSTAT statistical package.

Results and discussion

Analysis of variance of crude protein (CP), trypsin inhibitor activity (TI), phytate (PA), total phosphorus (TP_i), available phosphorus (AP_i) and minerals of selected vegetable soybean genotypes are reported in Table 1. Highly significant differences for all variables were documented.

As shown in Table 2, variations in the CP, and PA contents, and in TI activity were found among the selected vegetable soybean genotypes. The mean CP content of the tested genotypes was 43.32%; the values ranged from 36.92 for PI 222397 small-sized seeds to 47.87% for Sooty small-sized seed (Table 2). Both Sooty and Wilson-5 from MG IV had the highest % CP and PIs 222397 and 423759 from MG VI had the lowest. No significant difference in CP was found between small and large-sized seeds. However, based on maturity group a significant variation in CP was found among the three MGs used in the study. MG IV had the highest % CP (45.14%), while MG VI (41.11%) was the lowest. The high value of CP observed in MG IV may be explained on the basis that vegetative growth is still active in this maturity group during flowering. The active growth may provide high energy through the period of seed development which can be diverted toward protein synthesis. At the MG V and MG VI, vegetative growth is ceased after the initiation of reproductive stage which may limit the amount of energy that can be diverted to protein. The protein value reported here is higher than that reported from some other varieties of vegetable soybean and grain type soybean [7, 9, 11, 14] and that may be due to environmental factors and/or varietal differences [11, 42]. However, the mean % CP observed in this study was in the same range as the mean % CP grain soybean which has been analyzed in our laboratory. The mean % CP of vegetable soybean varieties (45.14%) was significantly ($P < 0.05$) higher than the mean % CP that was calculated for the PIs (43.32%).

Significant differences in TI activity was observed among tested vegetable soybean genotypes (Table 2). TI activity among the tested genotypes ranged from 24.71 for PI 416777 from MG VI to 47.06 TI units/mg meal for PI 222397 from MG VI. The grand mean of TI activity (30.39 units/mg meal) for tested genotypes was lower than that reported by Hafez [14] but similar to that reported by Gupta and Deodhar [12]. Vegetable soybean cultivars had relatively higher TI activity (31.50 units/mg meal) than that of PIs (26.99 units/mg meal). The small-sized seeds showed significantly ($P < 0.05$) higher grand mean of TI activity (31.85 units/mg meal) than did large-sized seeds (29.09 units/mg meal). Among the maturity groups, the TI activity was 31.50, 27.27, and 32.72 units/mg meal for MG IV, V, and VI, respectively. A highly significant ($P < 0.01$) and negative correlation ($r = -0.533$) was

Table 1. Analysis of variance of total protein, trypsin inhibitors activity, phytate, total phosphorus, Ca, K, Fe, Cu and Mn of selected vegetable soybeans

| Source of Variation | df ^a | Mean square | | | | | | | | |
|---------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------|-------------|-----------|----------|----------|
| | | CP ^b | TI ^c | TP _i ^d | AP _i ^e | PA ^f | Ca | K | Fe | Mn |
| Replications | 2 | 34.81** | 12.45** | 7.65** | 4.87** | 17.28** | 1870.79** | 443.19** | 32.61** | 4.98** |
| Genotypes | 16 | 2.53** | 75.70** | 46.93** | 283.66** | 108.62** | 986738.88** | 1259.56** | 494.42** | 283.66** |
| Error | 32 | 0.26 | 0.26 | 0.12 | 0.07 | 0.17 | 12.54 | 2.20 | 1.63 | 0.07 |
| | | | | | | | | | | 0.35 |

** Significant at the 0.05 and 0.01 probability levels, respectively.

^a Degree of freedom. ^b Crude protein. ^c Trypsin inhibitors. ^d Total phosphorus. ^e Available phosphorus. ^f Phytate.

Table 2. Percentage crude protein (16% nitrogen), trypsin inhibitors activity and phytate content of selected vegetable soybeans

| Genotypes | MG ^a | Seed size | CP ^b (g/100 gm meal) | TI ^c (units/mg meal) | PA ^d (mg/g meal) |
|--------------|-----------------|-----------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Ware | IV | Lg | 43.49 | 32.43 | 29.27 |
| Emperor | IV | Lg | 46.50 | 32.68 | 21.91 |
| Sango | IV | Lg | 38.35 | 34.85 | 35.45 |
| Kingston | IV | Sm | 46.78 | 31.34 | 40.05 |
| Sooty | IV | Sm | 47.87 | 29.37 | 30.95 |
| Wilson-5 | IV | Sm | 47.83 | 28.30 | 38.36 |
| PI 416982 | V | Lg | 44.81 | 31.59 | 25.01 |
| PI 417288 | V | Lg | 42.18 | 27.71 | 31.80 |
| PI 417322 | V | Lg | 45.83 | 27.50 | 32.16 |
| PI 417052 | V | Sm | 41.18 | 27.50 | 40.67 |
| PI 423759 | V | Sm | 38.94 | 33.55 | 26.03 |
| PI 416771 | V | Sm | 46.76 | 24.71 | 18.80 |
| PI 417213 | VI | Lg | 42.73 | 30.79 | 32.89 |
| PI 417310 | VI | Lg | 43.88 | 28.70 | 33.35 |
| PI 423852 | VI | Sm | 40.22 | 25.08 | 30.49 |
| PI 222397 | VI | Sm | 36.92 | 47.06 | 35.60 |
| PI 171437 | VI | Sm | 41.79 | 29.69 | 29.26 |
| CV % | | | 1.18 | 1.63 | 1.30 |
| LSD (< 0.05) | | | 0.85 | 0.85 | 0.24 |

^a Maturity group. ^b Crude protein. ^c Trypsin inhibitors. ^d Phytate.

observed between protein and TI activity. This study indicated that by selecting for higher protein lower TI activity will be expected and higher protein digestibility will be achieved [16, 17]. Variation in TI activity in grain-type soybean has been investigated [15, 29, 32, 33, 39]. The inheritance of different classes of trypsin inhibitor in vegetable soybean is under study.

The data of PA, TP_i and AP_i of 17 vegetable soybean genotypes are reported in Tables 2 and 3. Extensive variation in the concentration of PA was observed among genotypes. The phytate content for the genotypes ranged from 18.8 for PI 416771 small-sized seeds from MG V to 40.67 mg/gm meal for PI 416052 small-sized seeds from MG V. The mean PA content of vegetable soybean (31.69 mg/gm meal) was higher than that reported for grain soybean [3, 4, 34, 36]. The mean of PA for cultivars (32.52 mg/gm meal) was significantly ($P < 0.05$) higher than that reported for PIs (30.66 mg/gm meal). The mean of PA content for small-sized seeds (32.47 mg/gm meal) was significantly ($P < 0.05$) higher than the mean of large-sized seeds (30.28 mg/gm meal) genotypes. The mean of PA content for MG V (29.08 mg/gm meal) was significantly ($p < 0.05$) lower than that calculated for MG IV and VI (32.67, 32.36 mg/gm meal respectively).

It was also observed that these selected genotypes differ significantly in

Table 3. Total phosphorus, available phosphorus, Ca, Fe, Mn, K, and Cu of selected vegetable soybeans

| Genotype | MG ^a | Seed size | TP ^b (mg/g meal) | AP _i ^c (mg/g meal) | Ca (μg/g meal) | K (μg/g meal) | Fe (μg/g meal) | Cu (μg/g meal) | Mn (μg/g meal) |
|-----------|-----------------|-----------|--------------------------------|---|-------------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Ware | IV | Lg | 18.78 | 10.55 | 2817.8 | 178.4 | 48.1 | 34.1 | 28.2 |
| Emperor | IV | Lg | 12.77 | 6.61 | 2113.0 | 124.1 | 46.2 | 49.2 | 22.2 |
| Sango | IV | Lg | 28.33 | 18.36 | 1676.1 | 85.9 | 26.5 | 8.8 | 5.7 |
| Kingston | IV | Sm | 20.34 | 8.98 | 2413.7 | 101.6 | 40.5 | 32.1 | 5.9 |
| Sooty | IV | Sm | 23.63 | 14.92 | 2782.7 | 128.5 | 55.7 | 35.1 | 10.4 |
| Wilson-5 | IV | Sm | 21.60 | 10.81 | 1326.9 | 98.9 | 50.8 | 36.1 | 7.8 |
| PI 416982 | V | Lg | 19.20 | 12.16 | 2546.8 | 134.0 | 42.3 | 26.4 | 10.5 |
| PI 417288 | V | Lg | 19.69 | 10.74 | 1475.8 | 104.9 | 51.2 | 35.5 | 3.9 |
| PI 417322 | V | Lg | 24.38 | 15.00 | 1477.2 | 108.2 | 35.0 | 51.2 | 68.4 |
| PI 416771 | V | Sm | 16.06 | 10.77 | 3262.9 | 131.8 | 79.0 | 39.4 | 28.8 |
| PI 417052 | V | Sm | 15.22 | 3.78 | 1954.3 | 100.8 | 67.5 | 33.5 | 6.3 |
| PI 423759 | V | Sm | 21.04 | 13.72 | 2743.9 | 129.9 | 44.9 | 33.7 | 43.5 |
| PI 417213 | VI | Lg | 27.14 | 17.79 | 2502.4 | 118.1 | 34.3 | 21.8 | 9.0 |
| PI 417310 | VI | Lg | 20.66 | 11.12 | 2468.5 | 113.8 | 42.8 | 36.6 | 5.5 |
| PI 423852 | VI | Sm | 20.24 | 11.57 | 2918.6 | 112.8 | 40.1 | 26.0 | 8.6 |
| PI 222397 | VI | Sm | 22.13 | 12.38 | 2829.4 | 111.5 | 32.1 | 34.8 | 4.3 |
| PI 171437 | VI | Sm | 22.68 | 14.58 | 2310.3 | 113.0 | 43.8 | 31.3 | 7.3 |
| CV % | | | 1.68 | 2.38 | 0.15 | 1.26 | 2.79 | 0.85 | 0.75 |
| LSD | | | 0.58 | 0.11 | 5.89 | 0.86 | 2.1 | 20.15 | 0.20 |

^a Maturity group. ^b Total phosphorus. ^c Available phosphorus.

TP_i. The mean of TP_i was 20.82 mg/gm meal. The cultivar Sango from MG IV and PI 417213 from MG VI had the highest TP_i and Emperor from MG IV, and PI 417052, from MG V had the lowest. In general, there was no significant variation in the mean of TP_i of cultivars (20.91 mg/gm meal) and PIs (20.74 mg/gm meal). However, significant differences between small and large-sized seed were found. MG VI had a higher mean of TP_i (22.57 mg/gm meal) followed by MG IV, and MG V (20.91, 19.27 mg/gm meal, respectively). The mean of TP_i for vegetable-type soybeans was higher than that reported in the literature for grain-type soybeans [34]. A moderately significant positive correlation ($r = 0.383$) was observed between TP_i and PA. This correlation coefficient observed in our study was lower than that reported by Raboy *et al.* [34] which may be due to varietal differences, environmental conditions and/or type and amount of fertilizer applied during the course of the study [42]. The data also showed wide variation in AP_i among selected genotypes. The mean of AP_i was 11.97 mg/gm meal and values ranged from 3.78 mg/gm meal for PI 417052 from MG V to 18.36 mg/gm meal for Sango from MG IV. Higher significant ($P < 0.05$) AP_i for large-sized seed (12.66 mg/gm meal) than small-sized seeds (11.23 mg/gm meal) was observed. MG IV had higher AP_i than MG VI and MG V (13.48 vs 11.69 and 11.03, respectively). Strong positive correlation ($r = 0.90$) was found between TP_i and AP. The effects of food processing on phytate and other phosphorus compounds have been a subject of investigation [18, 27, 31, 37, 41]. Cooking decreases both water soluble and acid-extractable phytate in legumes [26] and causes only small changes in the ratio of phytate phosphorus/total phosphorus. Reddy *et al.* [37] did not observe any breakdown of phytate during cooking of black bean seeds. However, Hafez *et al.* [18] reported 50% reduction in phytate content of soybean seed exposed to microwave heating treatment. It has been noticed that overheating soybean seeds by microwave treatment caused reduction in the quality of soybean protein. From this discussion, it can be concluded that reducing phytate content through breeding is the best method to improve the bioavailability of minerals in diets containing vegetable soybean or soymeal.

Significant differences were observed among the genotypes for all tested minerals (Table 3). Variation in Ca content was found with a grand mean of 2330.6 $\mu\text{g/gm}$ meal, and ranged from 1326.9 $\mu\text{g/gm}$ meal for Wilson-5 to 3262.9 $\mu\text{g/gm}$ meal for PI 416771. The mean Ca content of the cultivars (2188.33 $\mu\text{g/gm}$ meal) was lower than that calculated for PIs (2408.19 $\mu\text{g/gm}$ meal). The mean of Ca content of small-sized seeds (2453.0 $\mu\text{g/gm}$ meal) was significantly ($P < 0.05$) higher than that for large-sized seeds (2221.8 $\mu\text{g/gm}$ meal). Calcium content was also affected by Maturity group. Maturity group VI showed a higher mean of Ca (2605.8 $\mu\text{g/gm}$ meal) than that for

MG V and MG IV (2243.5, 2186.9 $\mu\text{g/gm}$ meal, respectively). The mean of Ca content of vegetable soybean observed in this study is comparable to those values reported for grain soybean [34]. Given that American diet typically is lower in Ca than the recommended dietary allowances [30], the high Ca content of vegetable soybean recommends it as a food with high nutrient density.

A wide variation in K was observed in vegetable soybean, especially more between cultivars than that between PIs. The K content ranged from 85.9 $\mu\text{g/gm}$ meal for Sango to 178.4 $\mu\text{g/gm}$ meal for Ware with a mean of 116.8 $\mu\text{g/gm}$ meal. The mean of K for large-sized seed (120.0 $\mu\text{g/gm}$ meal) was greater than that for small-sized seed (114.5 $\mu\text{g/gm}$ meal). MG IV and V showed higher mean K than MG VI. Moderate variations in Fe content are recorded in Table 3. Iron ranged from 26.5 $\mu\text{g/gm}$ meal for Sango to 79.0 $\mu\text{g/gm}$ meal for PI 416771, with a mean of 45.8 $\mu\text{g/gm}$ meal. Mean Fe for small-sized seeds (51.8 $\mu\text{g/gm}$ meal) was significantly greater than for large-sized seeds (40.4 $\mu\text{g/gm}$ meal); also the mean of Fe of MG V was significantly higher than that of MG IV and MG VI. Variation in Cu also was found; the lowest value was recorded for Sango at 8.8 $\mu\text{g/gm}$ meal. Most of the other genotypes had significantly ($P < 0.01$) higher values which ranged from 21.8 $\mu\text{g/gm}$ meal for PI 417213 to 51.2 $\mu\text{g/gm}$ meal for PI 417322. The mean Cu for small-sized seeds (39.4 $\mu\text{g/gm}$ meal) was significantly ($P < 0.05$) higher than did large-sized seeds (30.96 $\mu\text{g/gm}$ meal). However, no significant difference in Cu content was found among maturity groups. Manganese (Mn) showed a wider variation among genotypes than the other selected elements. The mean of Mn was 16.3 $\mu\text{g/gm}$ meal and values from 3.9 $\mu\text{g/gm}$ meal for PI 417288 to 68.4 $\mu\text{g/gm}$ meal for PI 417322. Large-sized seeds showed higher Mn concentration than did small-sized ones. According to maturity, MG V had an exceptionally higher mean at 26.9 $\mu\text{g/gm}$ meal. Contrarily, MG VI had a very low mean of 6.9 $\mu\text{g/gm}$ meal.

Moderately significant negative correlation ($r = -0.459^{**}$, -0.524^{**} , and -0.389^{**}) were found between PA and Ca, K, and Mn respectively (Table 4). Also, a highly significant negative correlation ($r = -0.750^{**}$) was found between TP_i and Cu, and significant and negative correlations ($r = -0.540^{**}$ and -0.644^{**}) were also found between both Fe and Cu and AP. Among the tested minerals, a moderately positive correlation ($r = 0.596^{**}$) was found between Ca and K. Similarly significant positive correlations ($r = 0.339^{**}$ and 0.567^{**}) were found between K and Cu and Fe and Cu. The high content of protein, TP_i , Ca, Fe, and Mn in vegetable soybean is recommended it as a food with high nutrient density. The forgoing discussion shows that great variations exist among the tested

Table 4. Simple Linear Correlation coefficients among chemical composition of selected vegetable soybean genotypes

| Chemical composition | Chemical composition | | | | | | | |
|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| | TP ^a | PA ^b | TP _i ^c | AP _i ^d | Ca | K | Fe | Mn |
| CP ^e | -0.533** | -0.154 ^{NS} | -0.264 ^{NS} | -0.209 ^{NS} | -0.103 ^{NS} | 0.192 ^{NS} | 0.439** | 0.171 ^{NS} |
| TI | | 0.243* | 0.214 ^{NS} | 0.126 ^{NS} | 0.123 ^{NS} | 0.016** | -0.463** | -0.183 ^{NS} |
| PA | | | 0.383** | -0.047 ^{NS} | -0.459** | -0.524** | -0.276* | -0.384** |
| TP _i | | | | 0.900** | -0.189 ^{NS} | -0.283* | -0.627** | -0.026** |
| AP _i | | | | | 0.013 ^{NS} | -0.051 ^{NS} | -0.542** | 0.136 ^{NS} |
| Ca | | | | | | 0.586** | 0.221 ^{NS} | 0.032 ^{NS} |
| K | | | | | | | 0.339* | 0.310* |
| Fe | | | | | | | 0.263** | 0.042 ^{NS} |
| Cu | | | | | | | 0.569** | -0.205 ^{NS} |

NS, *, ** Not significantly different or significantly different from zero at the 0.05 and 0.01 probability levels, respectively.

^a Trypsin inhibitors. ^b Phytate. ^c Total phosphorus. ^d Available phosphorus. ^e Crude protein.

soybean genotypes for CP, TP_i, Ti activity, PA, AP_i, and selected minerals. Genotypes Sooty, Emperor, Wilson-5, PI 416771, PI 417322 possessed good nutritional quality and they can be used in the breeding program.

In conclusion, through hybridization and selection, the gene(s) responsible for the desirable nutritional quality observed in these genotypes could be incorporated into other genotypes which possess the desirable agronomic traits. Eventually, develop a superior cultivar for consumer use. Studies on the nutritional quality of immature seeds of vegetable-type soybean at different reproductive stages to determine the best stage that can be used for human consumption are underway.

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