Variability for traits of agronomic importance in accessions of *Maytenus ilicifolia*

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**Keywords:** agronomic traits; Maytenus.

**Introduction:** *Maytenus ilicifolia* (espinheira-santa) is a medicinal plant from Brazil that is threatened of extinction. The cultivation contributes to the germplasm conservation of this species and it's an alternative of production for small farms. Among the important agronomic traits, are stand out branching from the base and plant height. The objective of this study was to evaluate these traits in espinheira-santa accessions of the germplasm bank of Embrapa Cima Temperado/IFSul-rio-grandense - CAVG.

**Methodology:** The number of branches from the base and the height of plant were evaluated in eight accessions of *Maytenus ilicifolia*: 116, 117, 122 and 123, from Canguçu and 129 135, 136 and 137, from Piratini. The experimental design was randomized blocks with four replicates and variable number of plants per plot (n = 150). The data were subjected to analysis of variance and significance was determined by F test at 5% level of probability. Means were compared using Scott & Knott test at 5%.

**Results/Discussion:** It was identified significance for both traits by F test. The number of branches from the base ranged from zero to 35 (mean square = 30.75) and accessions that showed the highest values were 122, 135 and 137, respectively with means 10, 12 and 12 branching from the base. Plant height ranged on average from 70 to 176.5 cm (mean square = 2205.98) and accession 129 showed the lowest height (77.8 cm), differing from the others.

**Conclusion:** There is variability to the evaluated traits. For branching from the base, in the accessions 122, 135 and 137 there are genotypes that have potential for selection. With the exception of accession 129, all others were favorable for the trait plant height.

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