Sprouts are a low-cost fresh vegetable that can be grown indoors in any season and can contribute many nutrients to the diet. The purpose of this study was to evaluate the effect of sprouting on nutrimental composition and total saponin content of huauzontle (Chenopodium nuttalliae Saff.), calabacita (Cucurbita pepo L.), canola (Brassica napus L.) and amaranth (Amaranthus leucocarpus S. Watson syn. hypochondriacus L.) sprouts. A proximal analysis and quantification of saponins were performed in seeds and sprouts from the four species. The protein content in canola sprouts was higher than in the corresponding seeds but did not vary in huauzontle, zucchini and amaranth. Lipid content in canola, huauzontle and amaranth seeds decreased in the sprouts, but in zucchini it increased. Saponin content in sprouts was: 2,873.23 in huauzontle, 155.40 in squash, 429.81 in canola, and 491.45 mg 100·g⁻¹ dry weight in amaranth. Saponin content in seeds was: 5,280.57, 0.00, 35.77 and 42.84 mg 100·g⁻¹ dry weight, respectively. The levels of saponin content found in seeds and sprouts of the four species studied are not toxic for human beings. The nutrient value was better in canola sprouts than in huauzontle, amaranth and zucchini. Taste was better in huauzontle and amaranth than in canola and zucchini.

Keywords
Sprouting, proximal analysis, saponin, seeds.