

## **Original Research Article**

### **Intensity of Pruning With and Without Detachment in Fig Plants in the Semiarid**

#### **Potiguar**

#### **Abstract**

**Aims:** The fig tree produces in branches of the year through the emission of fruits born in the armpits of the leaves and the system of dawn is one of the most common practices among the producers of green fig, in which, they seek to increase the production. The present work had as objective to evaluate the intensity of pruning, with and without detachment of fig plants in the potiguar semiarid.

**Study Design:** The design used was 3x2 factorial (3 - pruning intensity 5, 10 and 15 cm and with and without detachment) and 4 replications, each repetition consisted of 5 plants and only 3 were useful.

**Methodology:** The treatments consisted of: pruning of 5cm and without pruning, pruning of 5cm and with pruning, pruning of 10 cm and without pruning, pruning of 10 cm and with pruning, pruning of 15 cm and without pruning, pruning of 15 cm and with pruning. The following variables were analyzed: fruit weight (g), fruit length and diameter (cm), firmness (N), soluble solids (°Brix), titratable acidity (%), vitamin C (mg 100g<sup>-1</sup>) of fruit plant<sup>-1</sup> and plant<sup>-1</sup> production.

**Place and Duration of Study:** The experiment was conducted in the didactic orchard of the Federal Rural Semiarid University (UFERSA), Mossoró-RN.

**Conclusion:** The use of pruning intensity and shoot height influenced the physical, chemical and productive characteristics of the fig tree in the semi - arid region of.

Keywords - *Ficus carica* L., fruticultura, handling, production.

#### **1. INTRODUCTION**

26 The fig tree (*Ficus carica* L.) is of great importance in the world scenario among  
27 temperate fruit trees, however, many management techniques need to be improved.

28 According to data from [13], the southern and southeastern regions of Brazil are  
29 the large fig producing centers for both in natura consumption and for industry, where  
30 the area planted with fig trees corresponds to 2,591ha, where the southern states  
31 (1,766ha) and Southeast (825ha) are the largest producers, with an average production  
32 of 7,521 and 15,274 kg ha<sup>-1</sup>, respectively.

33 Although the fig tree is considered a plant of temperate regions, it has shown good  
34 adaptation in tropical regions, in this way, the semiarid becomes an alternative for the  
35 productive chain and exploration of new agricultural areas of fig.

36 In the production of production, an intensity of poda, is one of the factors external  
37 which higher influenciam in production and quality of the same to the same, the same to  
38 the same that, for a certain intensity of pruning, one must take into account the local  
39 edaphoclimatic conditions [16].

40 And a procedure widely used by fig producers in order to obtain a prolongation of  
41 the productive period and increase of production for a longer period of time is the use of  
42 the dawn, which according to [4] is one of the practices among the fig producers in  
43 which they seek to increase plant production.

44 This technique favors the emission and growth of new branches, besides the  
45 containment of the canopy, thus maintaining a luminosity in its interior [3].

46 However, it must be done when the shoots have eight pairs of leaves, and the first  
47 shoot (cutting of the apical bud) is done, after which the two new shoots are left at the  
48 apex of the branch [7].

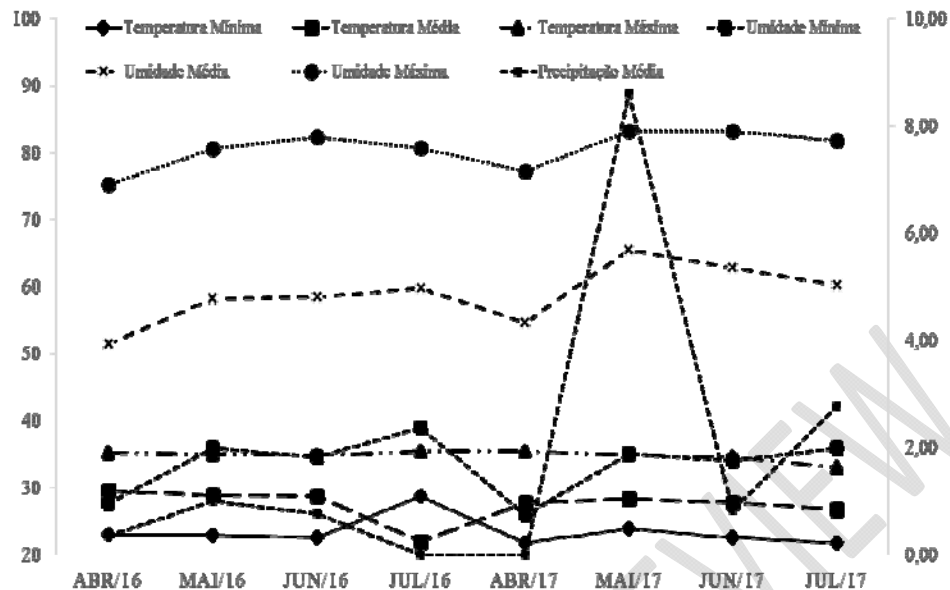
49           Although the fig tree is a rustic plant that can grow, develop and produce in semi-  
50 arid conditions, the management data of this crop are still scarce in these conditions,  
51 besides, it is not possible to use the same technologies that are used in the South and  
52 Southeast regions because they are often conditions of temperature, humidity, insolation  
53 and precipitation are totally adverse.

54           In this way, the objective of this work was to evaluate the intensity of pruning  
55 with and without pruning in fig trees in the semiarid region.

## 56 **2. MATERIAL AND METHODS**

### 57 **2.1 Climatic data**

58           The experiment was conducted in two production cycles, where the first cycle  
59 occurred from April to July 2016 and the second cycle from April to July 2017, in the  
60 didactic orchard of the Federal Rural Semiarid University (UFERSA), located in the  
61 municipality of Mossoró-RN, with a geographical coordinates 5°11 'south latitude,  
62 37°20' long W.Gr., with 18 m altitude, with annual average temperature around  
63 27,50°C, relative humidity of 68,9%, mean annual cloudiness of 4,4 tenths and average  
64 annual precipitation of 673,9 mm, with hot and dry climate, located in the semiarid  
65 region of the Brazilian Northeast [10].



66

67 **Figure 1 - Climatic data of temperature, humidity and precipitation of cycle 1 and**  
 68 **2 of fig production, conducted under different pruning intensities, with and**  
 69 **without rise. UFERSA, Mossoró-RN, 2018.**

## 70 2.2 Treatments, experimental design, and plant growth conditions

71 A fruiting pruning was performed to start a new production cycle. The plants were  
 72 driven with 3 legs (3 secondary branches) throughout the vegetative cycle, and 2  
 73 branches per leg, totaling 6 plant<sup>-1</sup> branches.

74 The plants were pruned in three pruning intensities (5, 10 and 15 cm) in the new  
 75 branches, which emerged above the secondary branches, and when these branches  
 76 presented 8 pairs of leaves, the shoot was performed, others were conducted without  
 77 shoots.

78 The experiment was carried out in a 3x2 factorial scheme, where the first factor  
 79 corresponds to the different pruning intensity (5, 10 and 15 cm), and the second one,  
 80 with 4 replications and 5 plants per treatment, being 3 useful plants.

### 81 **2.3 Physical and physico-chemical characteristics**

82 The vegetative characteristics of the plants were evaluated at the end of the  
83 experiment: fruit weight (g), length and diameter of fruits (cm), number of fruits plant<sup>-1</sup>,  
84 and yield (kg plant<sup>-1</sup>).

85 Post-harvest evaluations of fig fruits were carried out at the Post-Harvest  
86 Physiology Laboratory of the Department of Plant Sciences of the Federal University of  
87 the Semiarid (UFERSA).

88 The physico-chemical analyzes of the fig fruits, such as: soluble solids (°Brix),  
89 firmness (N), titratable acidity (%) and vitamin C (mg 100<sup>-1</sup> g pulp) were performed  
90 according to the methodology [2].

### 91 **2.4 Statistical analysis**

92 Data were submitted to analysis of variance, followed by Duncan's multiple  
93 comparison test for means using the SPSS software. The data were submitted to  
94 analysis of variance by the F test at 5% probability and in case of significance the means  
95 were grouped using the Tukey test at 5% probability.

## 96 **3. RESULTS**

97 It was verified that at the level of  $p < 0,05$  of probability by the test of Tukey, that  
98 the variables: fruit mass, fruit length and diameter, firmness, soluble solids, titratable  
99 acidity and vitamin C, were not influenced by the different intensity of pruning applied,  
100 however, the variables total number of fruits plant<sup>-1</sup> and total plant<sup>-1</sup> production,  
101 presented significant responses in cycle 1 (Table 3), then the data were submitted to the  
102 unfolding.

103 However, evaluating the splitting system, the physical-chemical variables showed  
104 to be significant when submitted or not to the rise. In cycle 2, it is verified that the

105 variables firmness, titratable acidity and vitamin C, were significant when submitted to  
 106 different pruning intensity, whether or not they were conducted in a clearing system.  
 107 The other variables were not influenced by the intensity of pruning, nor of the  
 108 emergence in cycle 2.

109 The results obtained with the fig plants show that when the plants were submitted  
 110 to different intensities of pruning, there was no influence of pruning intensity on fruit  
 111 mass (Table 1), however, showed a significant effect on cycle 1, when it was conducted  
 112 in the system with no rise. In this way, fig trees driven without, presented the best fruit  
 113 mass values, where the maximum value reached was 30g. In cycle 2, there was no  
 114 significant effect independent of the intensity of pruning and whether or not it was  
 115 conducted with rise.

116 **Table 1 - Fruit mass (MF), length, diameter, firmness and soluble solids (SS) of fig**  
 117 **fruit cv. Roxo de Valinhos submitted to different intensities of pruning, with and**  
 118 **without detachment, conducted in two productive cycles. UFRSA, Mossoró-RN,**  
 119 **2018.**

	MF (g)		Length (cm)		Diam (cm)		Firm (N)		SS (°Brix)	
	Cycle I	Cycle II	Cycle I	Cycle II	Cycle I	Cycle II	Cycle I	Cycle II	Cycle I	Cycle II
Pruning a 5 cm	27,09a	29,90a	3,59a	3,49a	3,96a	4,19a	12,74a	5,03b	19,03a	14,59a
Pruning a 10 cm	28,34a	29,24a	3,67a	3,49a	4,08a	4,15a	12,44a	4,06a	18,96a	14,66a
Pruning a 15 cm	25,91a	30,44a	3,64a	3,53a	4,00a	4,25a	13,57a	7,17b	18,20a	14,53a
Mean	27,11	29,86	3,63	3,5	4,01	4,2	12,91	5,42	18,73	14,59
With rise	24,23b	29,13a	3,47b	3,51a	3,86b	4,13a	13,91a	4,90b	17,07b	14,59a
No rise	30,00a	30,58a	3,79a	3,49a	4,17a	4,26a	11,92b	5,94a	20,39a	14,59a
Mean	27,11	29,86	3,63	3,5	4,01	4,2	12,91	5,42	18,73	14,59

CV (%)      13,08      12,37      8,05      4,64      6,32      3,6      9,63      13,86      6,61      2,23

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120 Means followed by different letters in the same column differ significantly according to  
 121 the Tukey test at 5% probability. NS: not significant; \*, \*\*: significant at 5% or 1%  
 122 probability, respectively, according to test F.

123

124 For the length of fig fruits (Table 1) independent of pruning intensity, both cycle  
 125 1 and cycle 2, there was no effect of the evaluated treatments. However, in cycle 1,  
 126 when the plants were conducted without staggering, a maximum value of 3,79cm was  
 127 obtained.

128 According to Table 1, the diameter of the fig fruit in cycle 1 and 2 did not show  
 129 statistical difference when submitted to different pruning intensity and the maximum  
 130 value reached corresponded to 4,25cm. However, a significant effect was observed in  
 131 plants with no emergence in cycle 1, where it presented the highest values of fruit  
 132 diameter (4,17cm).

133 According to Table 1, the firmness characteristic of fruits, in cycle 1 of  
 134 production, did not find an effect when the plants were submitted to different pruning  
 135 intensities.

136 While in cycle 2, plants with pruning intensity of 15cm presented the highest  
 137 firmness value, 7,17N. However, when the plants were submitted to emergence (cycle  
 138 1), there was a significant effect where a maximum value of 13,91N can be observed.

139 For the solid soluble characteristics (Table 1), there was no significant effect  
 140 under the treatments evaluated regardless of the pruning intensity and the production  
 141 cycle, where the means corresponded to 18,73 and 14,59°Brix. However, when

142 evaluating the emergence effect, plants conducted without emergence (cycle 1) had a  
143 maximum SS value of 20,39°Brix.

144 Evaluating the titratable acidity characteristic (Table 2), there was no difference  
145 between the treatments of pruning intensity, nor when submitted or not to the rise in  
146 cycle 1, and the average corresponded to 0,18%. In cycle 2, there is a significant effect,  
147 so the variable was submitted to the data unfolding.

148 According to Table 2, the vitamin C variable showed no significant effect on  
149 cycle 1, when submitted to different pruning intensities and conducted with and without  
150 rise, where the mean value corresponded to 22,11 mg 100g<sup>-1</sup> of pulp in both factors.  
151 While in cycle 2, there was a significant effect of the evaluated treatments, thus, the  
152 variable was submitted to the data unfolding.

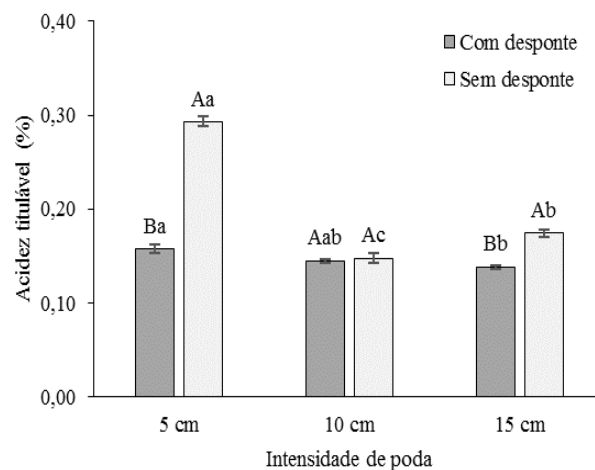
153 **Table 2 - Titratable acidity (AT) and vitamin C, of fig tree fruits cv. Roxo de**  
154 **Valinhos submitted to different intensities of pruning, with and without**  
155 **detachment, conducted in two productive cycles. UFRSA, Mossoró-RN, 2018.**

	AT		Vit C	
	Cycle I	Cycle II	Cycle I	Cycle II
Pruning a 5 cm	0,18a	0,23	22,06a	16,83
Pruning a 10 cm	0,19a	0,16	22,51a	20,58
Pruning a 15 cm	0,18a	0,15	21,75a	23,88
Mean	0,18	0,18	22,11	20,43
With rise	0,18a	0,15	22,05a	21,5
No rise	0,18a	0,21	22,16a	19,36
Mean	0,18	0,18	22,11	20,43
CV (%)	13,67	4,68	14,15	6,62

156 Means followed by different letters in the same column differ significantly according to  
 157 the Tukey test at 5% probability. NS: not significant; \*, \*\*: significant at 5% or 1%  
 158 probability, respectively, according to test F.

159

160 From the unfolding of the studied variables, it was verified that the fig plants  
 161 (Figure 2), when they were conducted without the shoot and in the pruning intensity of  
 162 5 cm, reached approximately 0,30% of acidity, while the plants conducted with rise and  
 163 independent of pruning intensity, presented mean values of 0,18% (cycle 2).



164

165 **Figure 2 - titratable acidity content, unfolding of the interaction of fig fruits**  
 166 **conducted under different pruning intensity, with and without rise, in cycle 2 of**  
 167 **production. UFERSA, Mossoró-RN, 2018.**

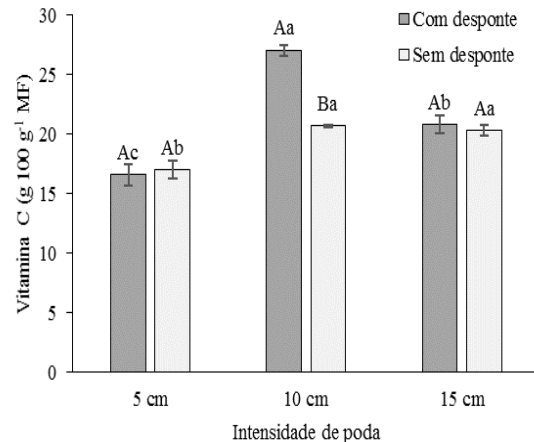
168 \*Uppercase letters compare the type of dawn. Lowercase letters compare averages  
 169 between pruning intensity. Tukey test at 5% probability

170

171 With the unfolding of the variables, it was verified that the fig trees, conducted  
 172 with rise and in the intensity of pruning of 10cm, reached the highest vitamin C values,

173 about 27 mg 100g<sup>-1</sup> pulp (Figure 3). While the plants pruned with 5cm and conducted  
 174 with and without detachment, presented the lowest values of vitamin C.

175



176

177 **Figure 3 - Vitamin C content after unfolding of the interaction of fig fruits**  
 178 **conducted under different pruning intensity, with and without rise, in cycle 2 of**  
 179 **production. UFERSA, Mossoró-RN, 2018.**

180 \*Uppercase letters compare the type of dawn. Lowercase letters compare averages  
 181 between pruning intensity. Tukey test at 5% probability.

182

183 For the characteristic total number of fruits plant<sup>-1</sup>, hove significant interaction  
 184 between the treatments evaluated in cycle 1, thus, the variable was submitted to the data  
 185 unfolding, both in the characteristic pruning intensity, as well as to the emergence  
 186 effect.

187 In cycle 2, no effect of the evaluated treatments was observed, and the maximum  
 188 value found was 238,63 and 254, plant<sup>-1</sup> fruits, when they conducted the plants in  
 189 pruning intensity of 15cm and without rise, respectively.

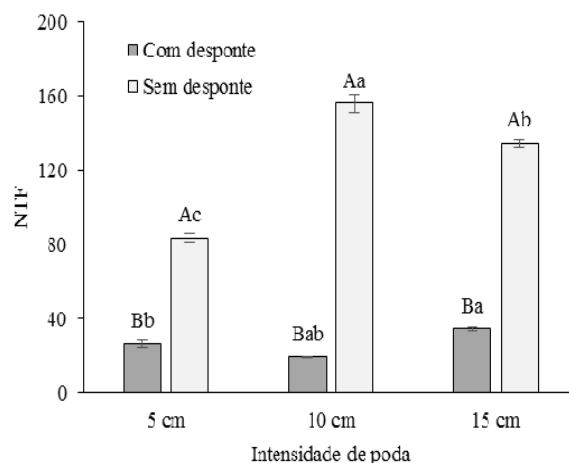
190 **Table 3 - Total number of fruits and total production plant<sup>-1</sup>, fig cv. Roxo de**  
 191 **Valinhos submitted to different intensities of pruning, with and without**  
 192 **detachment, conducted in two productive cycles. UFERSA, Mossoró-RN, 2018.**

	NTF		PTF	
	Cycle I	Cycle II	Cycle I	Cycle II
Pruning a 5 cm	55,13	228,75a	1,445	4,845a
Pruning a 10 cm	87,75	230,63a	2,812	4,281a
Pruning a 15 cm	84,75	238,63a	2,538	4,715a
Mean	75,88	232,67	2,264	4,613
With rise	26,92	211,33a	0,814	4,150a
No rise	124,83	254,00a	3,715	5,077a
Mean	75,88	232,67	2,264	4,613
CV (%)	6,63	22,35	28,28	23,64

193 Means followed by different letters in the same column differ significantly according to  
 194 the Tukey test at 5% probability. NS: not significant; \*, \*\*: significant at 5% or 1%  
 195 probability, respectively, according to the F test.

196

197 Figure 4, shows the results of the data and it is verified that the fig trees, when  
 198 they were conducted without detachment and in the pruning intensity of 10 cm, reached  
 199 the highest values of plant-1 fruits (160 fruits), followed by intensity of 15 cm (130  
 200 fruits) and 5cm (80 fruits), respectively.



201

202 **Figure 4 - Number of total fruit plant-1, after unfolding of the interaction of fig**  
 203 **fruit conducted under different pruning intensity, with and without rise, in cycle 1**  
 204 **of production. UFERSA, Mossoró-RN, 2018.**

205 \* Uppercase letters compare the type of dawn. Lowercase letters compare averages  
 206 between pruning intensity. Tukey test at 5% probability.

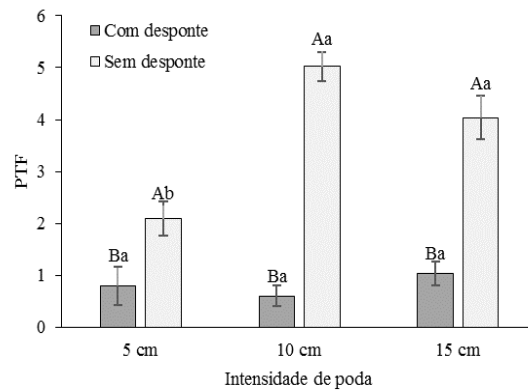
207

208 According to Table 3, for the variable total production of plant-1 fruits, it was  
 209 verified that there was no significant effect on cycle 2 of production when the plants  
 210 were submitted to different intensities of pruning, nor for the presence or absence of the  
 211 to rise. However, at the end of the experiment the average production value of 4,61 kg  
 212 plant<sup>-1</sup> was obtained.

213 The significant effect on cycle 1, provided the unfolding of the data studied  
 214 (Figure 5), and as a result, fig trees independent of the pruning intensity and in the  
 215 absence of emergence obtained a maximum value of 5,07 kg plant<sup>-1</sup> in plants of fig  
 216 trees conducted in pruning intensity of 10cm and without rise.

217 The plants conducted with emergence and in the different intensity of pruning,  
 218 showed results of production below 1kg.

219



220

221 **Figure 5 - Production of total fruit plant<sup>-1</sup> (kg), after unfolding of the interaction of**  
 222 **fig fruits conducted under different pruning intensity, with and without rise, in**  
 223 **cycle 1 of production. UFERSA, Mossoró-RN, 2018.**

224 \*Uppercase letters compare the type of dawn. Lowercase letters compare averages  
 225 between pruning intensity. Tukey test at 5% probability

#### 226 4. DISCUSSION

227 These same physical characteristics (weight and length of fruits) were studied by  
 228 [17], which found corresponding values of 38,56g and 5,30cm, respectively, when  
 229 evaluating the selection of fig leaf mutants of the cultivar Roxo de Valinhos, which are  
 230 higher than those found in the present study.

231 The values obtained in the present work are similar to those found by [6], when  
 232 they studied the system of emergence in the production of green figs 'Roxo de  
 233 Valinhos', where it obtained a length of 3,77cm in plants without rise and 3,81cm in  
 234 plants with rise.

235 According to [6] the characteristics of fruit size can be influenced by the  
 236 appearance that occurs in the plants, thus, as the number of shoots in the plants

237 increases, the average diameter of the fruits increases, due to the uniformity generated  
238 by this system of driving.

239 The results found are contrary to the comparisons made, because in the semi-arid  
240 conditions, the use of the rise, provided fruits of smaller diameters.

241 For the chemical characteristics, we verified that the values are superior to those  
242 found by [14] found average values of firmness for fig fruits of 10,58N.

243 In the soluble variable, studying different fig varieties, [19] obtained results close  
244 to those found here, which ranged from 17° to 18,43°Brix.

245 While [12] evaluating fig trees with and without deponde did not find statistical  
246 difference on the evaluated variables, agreeing with the data found in this work in cycle  
247 2.

248 These differences are explained by [6] that highlight the factors cultivar, climatic  
249 conditions and harvesting season, that can cause changes in the values of SST.

250 The values found here for titratable acidity are similar to the values found by [12]  
251 that ranged from 0,20% to 0,23%, when the plants were pruned at different times. While  
252 [17] obtained inferior results (0,15%) in mutant selections of the cultivar Roxo de  
253 Valinhos.

254 According to [8] the acidity is modified by changes in the concentrations of the  
255 organic acids that occur during the growth and differentiates in each type of fruit.

256 In fig and greenhouse cultivation, [11]found vitamin C values of only 12,12 and  
257 10,39mg 100g<sup>-1</sup> of pulp, respectively, and according to the same author, figs did not  
258 present high levels of vitamin C as occurs in other fruits such as cashew, acerola others.

259 According to [1], the reduction of the vitamin C content, which occurs during fruit  
260 maturation, is due to the action of the enzyme ascorbic acid oxidase (ascorbate oxidase),  
261 which occurs in fruits in a higher way.

262 Because it is a fruit that quickly ripens, the fig fruit becomes highly perishable, in  
263 this way, as they mature there is the loss of the vitamin C content.

264 Regarding the productive aspect, it was verified that in studies of [9] a number of  
265 fruits-plant<sup>1</sup> superior to those obtained in this work in cycle 1, where the production  
266 ranged from 138,16 to 184,25 plant<sup>-1</sup> fruits, already in cycle 2, the data were higher than  
267 the values obtained by same.

268 On the other hand, [15] obtained a higher number of plant<sup>-1</sup> fruits (203) in cycle 2,  
269 when the plants were pruned in August and conducted with 8 branches, however, when  
270 compared with the present work, it is verified that it is greater than Cycle 1, however, is  
271 less than production cycle 2.

272 While [5] when evaluating the system in the production of green figs Roxo de  
273 Valinhos, obtained a production of 189,94 plant<sup>-1</sup> fruits, which represents a production  
274 below the values obtained here.

275 The values obtained by [9], when they submitted the fig plants to different  
276 pruning seasons (April to September), are inferior to those obtained in the present work  
277 in both cycle 1 and cycle 2, where it obtained a production varying from 1,25 to 2,00 kg  
278 plant<sup>-1</sup>.

279 [15] when planting fig trees at different pruning times, but in a protected  
280 environment, similar results were obtained to the present work, since the plants  
281 presented a plant<sup>-1</sup> production of 4,50 and 5,73 kg in May and August, respectively.

282 This high difference in number of fruits and fig production in semi-arid conditions  
283 may be related to the fact that the plants that did not show rise, obtained a greater  
284 growth of the branches, thus implying a larger production in number of nodes, and  
285 consequently greater number of fruits plant<sup>-1</sup> and production<sup>-1</sup>.

286 Corroborating with [5], because it mentions that the plants without emergence  
287 have a lower final length of the branches and that of the internodes (as they are  
288 blossomed) in comparison with the non-emergent plants, resulting in lower final growth  
289 of the vegetative parts.

290 While the plants that suffered the emergence, suffered a stress and were not able  
291 to recover and to have a normal development due to the climatic conditions, since a very  
292 high maximum temperature (above 35°C), according to Figure 1, in the which is  
293 harmful to the culture.

294 It is also worth noting that the use of fig trees without a rise results in lower labor  
295 costs in the plant's operations [5]

296 The high precipitation in cycle 2, favoring a good water availability for the fig  
297 plants, may have contributed to high yield. The low production in cycle 1, avoided  
298 exaggerated expenses of accumulated reserves in the plants, which may have favored  
299 once again the high production in cycle 2.

300 [18] Points out that the branches that form the canopy of fig trees are reserve  
301 organs, which can increase productivity, and factors such as water and soil cover also  
302 contribute to the productive increase.

303 This high yield in number of fruits plant<sup>-1</sup> and plant<sup>-1</sup> production, in cycle 2 in  
304 relation to cycle 1, may be related to the fact that the fig tree presented high relative

305 humidity, high temperature and, especially, good availability of water in the soil , as can  
306 be seen in Figure 1.

307 [20] Mentions that a good availability of water and nutrients favors the growth  
308 and development of the crop, making it much more efficient, thus obtaining a higher  
309 productivity. And according to this same author, the climatic aspects are very variable  
310 according to each region, thus influencing the growth, development and production of  
311 the fig trees.

## 312 **5. CONCLUSIONS**

313 The use of pruning and pruning intensity influenced the physical-chemical  
314 characteristics of the fig tree in the western Potiguar conditions.

315 The management of unpeeled fig trees with 10cm pruning intensity in semi-arid  
316 conditions is the most suitable for the number of fruits plant<sup>-1</sup> and fig-tree (kg plant<sup>-1</sup>).

317 The use of the top is not efficient for fig driving in the West Potiguar.

## 318 **COMPETING INTERESTS**

319 Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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