

Process optimization for dehydrated brinjal (*Solanum melogena*) to improve sensory and keeping quality

Processing conditions were established to produce a ready to use product from brinjal (*Solanum melogena*) by dehydrating using cabinet air dryer. Immersing the wedge shape pieces of 3 mm thickness and 5mm long in 0.15%SMS and 0.5% Citric Acid solution for 45 minutes and hot water blanching at 60°C for 3 minutes was successful as a pretreatment to improve the physical properties of the dehydrated product. Drying at 55°C for 10 hours was sufficient to reduce the moisture content from 78% to 8% and to obtain a shelf stable product with good physicochemical properties. Dehydrated product packed in pouches made of LDPE (0.04 mm thickness) could be stored at $29 \pm 2^\circ\text{C}$, $78 \pm 2\%$ RH for months without microbial and chemical deterioration and also significant changes in the moisture content, product colour and re-hydration ratio.