

POST-HARVEST HANDLING, PROCESSING AND QUALITY CONTROL OF MOLLUSCAN PRODUCTS

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ABSTRACT

The scientific exploitation of the molluscan sea food and its proper processing and quality assurance is very important in the national economy of India. Molluscan meat forms one of the best and cheapest sources of protein. In order to assure high quality of the products, emphasis should be put on post-harvest handling, processing and quality control of molluscan products, as these items are often involved in various types of food poisoning. India exported about 1100 tons of molluscan products valued at Rs. 30,200,000 in 1993. Japan is the major importer of frozen, dehydrated, dried, and canned molluscs. This paper addresses quality problems in processed molluscan products. The current situation is reviewed in the form of annexes, dealing with heavy metal levels in some of the canned mollusc products, microorganisms, pesticide residues, Paralytic Shellfish Poisoning (PSP), and Indian & international quality standards. A recommended Code of Practice concerning handling of the catch, icing, post-harvesting procedures, and storage, including depuration and hygiene measures, is described in detail for the molluscan products.