

ABSTRACT

A survey of the quality of imported and locally produced maldive fish was made for the development of a national standard for this product. The chemical, microbiological and sensory quality of the products were investigated. The relationship between moisture content, salt content, water activity and expected mould-free shelf-life was determined using a method recently established by workers who studied these aspects in dried, salted marine products.

The traditionally adopted technique was studied in detail and the specific areas which need improvement were identified. An increase in the salt content of local products and an improvement of the slow-drying rates which take place at the initial stages of processing, are recommended. Modifications are suggested to achieve these improvements.

A maximum limit of 16.0 per cent for the moisture content, together with a salt content of 4.0 per cent is suggested as a workable moisture/salt combination which would ensure good quality and a mould-free condition during the expected shelf-life period.