

Title Value addition of litchi and longan
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Abstract

The fruit and vegetable sector has a vital role in farm income enhancement, poverty alleviation, food security, and sustainable agriculture in Asia, especially in developing countries. This sector, however, suffers greatly from postharvest losses (25-40%) after leaving the farm gate. Moreover, International markets reject fruits and vegetables containing unauthorized pesticides, with pesticide residues exceeding permissible limits, and with inadequate labelling and packaging. Therefore, we need to look at food wastages and their prevention, improvement in value addition through adoptable processes, harnessing untapped food resources, utilizing by-products and assuring food quality and safety. Value addition can be accomplished at every stage of products, right from farm gate to consumer plate. We have a habit of concentrating only on major fruit based products and ignoring the potential of underexploited fruit products in the context of value addition. Thus to give variety and dimension to the taste of the consumer, innovative items are always asked for in the present day value addition programme.

Litchi and longan, being the member of Sapindaceae family, are some of the finest fruit from South East Asia. They are usually eaten fresh. Due to very short shelf-life (two to three days) of these fresh fruits, their uses can be extended by processing them into various products. However, very negligible quantities of litchi and longan fruits are being utilized globally for preservation and processing to get the different products out of the season. Due to short harvesting season and very high perishability, litchi can be processed into canned, squash, cordial, syrup, RTS, jam, jellies, juice, dried or dehydrated products, frozen in syrup (with or without stone). Closely allied to the litchi, the longan has been referred to as the “little brother of the litchi”. Due to high perishability of the fresh fruit, longan is being processed into different forms including dried (either intact or with pericarp removed), canned, nectar and frozen. This paper also illustrates different processing technologies commonly employed in India and abroad, discusses issues and constraints to improve management of processing operations, and will highlight strategies to overcome these constraints.