

Title Improving postharvest reddening and shelf life of fresh chili (*Capsicum annuum*) using simple evaporative cooler

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Abstract

Chili (*Capsicum annuum*) fruits at mature-green, turning and red stage of three varieties, 9955-15 and CCA321 from AVRDC and local check, were stored either in the brick-walled evaporative cooler (EC) or at ambient. Lower temperatures and higher RH were maintained during EC storage compared to that at ambient. Turning fruits of the three varieties turned red in storage under ambient or EC conditions. For green fruits, EC increased fruit reddening in 9955-15 and CCA321. Colorimetric a^* and lightness (L^*) values indicated normal red color development of the fruits harvested and stored at green or turning stage. Red coloration seemed to be better under EC condition as shown by the higher a^* values than that at ambient. In terms of shelf life attributes, EC storage effectively decreased weight loss of fruits regardless of variety and ripeness stage. Fruit decay was either absent or low during ambient storage. During EC storage, decay incidence differed with variety as it was highest in CCA321 and lowest in 9955-15 fruits. Fruit decay did not differ much with ripeness stage at harvest.