

Title Postharvest Life of Red Chili (*Capsicum annuum* L.) with and without Fruit Stalk and Cultivar Responses to Different Storage Conditions

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Abstract

Red fruit with and without stalk or peduncle of chili cultivars 9955-15, CCA321 and local variety were kept in the open or in 25 micron-thick polypropylene bag as modified atmosphere pack (MAP) at ambient (25-36°C, 48-89% RH). Fruit stored in simple evaporative cooler (EC) (26-30°C, 83-93% RH) was included. Fruit stalk removal had no effect on weight loss in MAP which was more effective than EC in maintaining fresh weight. During ambient or EC storage, stalk removal increased weight loss of CCA321 fruit but not in other cultivars. Shriveling was favored at ambient and further increased when stalk was removed in the local cultivar. In 9955-15, stalk removal seemed to reduce shriveling and weight loss during EC storage. During MAP holding, shriveling was absent except in CCA321 fruit without stalk but the latter had much reduced decay than the other treatments. Decay incidence was very high in MAP while 1 at ambient or EC, it was either absent or very minimal. Fruit color (a^* and L^* values) did not differ much from initial levels. Soluble solids content increased with storage regardless of cultivar, presence or absence of stalk and storage condition.