

Title Influence of hawking on the quality of fresh-cut fruits
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Abstract

There is an emerging market and increasing demand for fresh-cut fruits and vegetables (FCFV) due to nutrition awareness and urbanization in Nigeria. As FCFV began to be welcomed in the market, however the challenges for quality have been emerging. In the open market, the practice is to cut fruits, pack in low-density polyethylene pouches and hawk for a period of 8-10 h. The influence of hawking on quality indices and nutritional content of fresh-cut fruits (pawpaw, pineapple and watermelon) were evaluated after mild processing and after 8 h of hawking in the market. Pawpaw and watermelon cuts had soggy look, while browning was observed at the edges of pineapple slices after the hawking period. There was no significant ($p \leq 0.05$) change in the values of total soluble solids in the three fruits after hawking. However, loss of 7%, 11% and 13% in vitamin C content were observed in the fresh-cuts of pawpaw, pineapple and watermelon fruits, respectively. Loss in total carotenoid content were highest in pineapple (17%), while less than 5% was observed in pawpaw and watermelon. There was 2-5% loss in total phenol content in all the fruits that were evaluated. These changes could be due to exposure to high temperatures during hawking. Differences in post-cut life of group of fruits based on visual appearance were reported. Building in cooling facilities during hawking can minimize reduction in quality of fresh-cut fruits in the open market.