

Title Post harvest management of fruit rot of chilli using solar tunnel drier
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Abstract

Fruit rot caused by *Colletotrichum capsici* is one of the most serious post harvest disease deteriorating quality of chilli. The chilli fruits which are infected with the pathogen in the field start rotting after harvest during drying. Such fruits fetch fewer prices in the market. An experiment was conducted at Horticulture Research Station Devihosur, Haveri India, to minimize the losses in chilli due to post harvest fruit rot using solar drier for drying. The chillies were stored at different intervals in solar drier, shade and sunlight and then observed for fruit rot severity and colour retention. The results revealed that the fruit rot incidence was greatly reduced (>50%) when dried under solar drier as compared to the natural shade drying and heap drying practiced by the farmers. However drying chillies more than 24 hours in solar tunnel drier resulted in colour fading. In all drying of chillies for 24 hours in solar drier followed by 4 days shade drying gave the best control of the fruit rot as well as retained the best colour of the chillies as per the visual grading.