

Title Improvement of handling equipments for commercial operations of fresh-cut pineapple

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Abstract

Fresh-cut fruits is a growing sector of the food industry in many parts of the world. Its success depends greatly on several factors, especially the quality and consumers' confidence. Products are prepared in ready to-eat form whilst retaining the organoleptic characteristics of fresh fruits in terms of aroma, flavour, taste, colour and texture. Appropriate method of preparation is obligatory in order to maintain their freshness. The preparation involves cleaning, washing, trimming, coring, slicing and other related steps of which many of these processes hasten the products to perish. Uniformity, time and labour consuming always been raised by the cut fruit operators especially for the bulk handling. Imported machines for the processing of cut fruits are available in the markets. However, high cost and suitability of the machine to the local fruits hinder the active use of the machine especially by small scale fruit operators. Intensive research had been conducted in developing suitable mechanized system for commercial handling of fresh cut pineapple comprising of stalk and crown cutter, skin peeler, flesh slicer and centrifugal drip dryer. The newly developed machines were successfully been tested during the recent commercial handling trial of fresh-cut pineapple to Perth, Australia. Uniform cutting of the stalk and crown had contributed to the stability of the fruits upon subjected to skin peeler machine. The skin peeler machine was integrated with blade cutter which cut the flesh into two portions. Uniform semicircle cutting shape and size will be produce upon subjected the individual portion flesh slicer machine. Centrifugal drip dryer machine facilitate in removing the excess water after the cut pieces were subjected to pretreatment solutions before undertaking the packing process.