

IMPROVED YIELD IN THE CANNING OF PRAWNS

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Recent years have witnessed the decline of the prawn canning industry in India. (Exports of canned prawns have come down to 204 m. tonnes in 1978 from 2,200 m. tonnes in 1973.) The major reason for this decline is the non-profitability of canning operations [contributed by high cost of raw prawns and empty cans.] One way to improve profitability is to realise better yields by avoiding blanching losses. (It is generally accepted that the yield of canned prawn is 45% of the peeled meet.) Experiments conducted in the CIFT Laboratory have shown that use of phosphates for treatment of raw prawn meat can result in an increase of 5% in canned product. The method thus worked out is to treat the raw prawn meat with a mixture of phosphates in solution followed by blanching. Incidentally this treatment also results in better size grade of the product.

The treatment solution consists of 70 g. of sodium tripolyphosphate, 10 K_2HPO_4 , 20 g. of NaH_2AO_4 and 20 g. of $NaCl$ dissolved in one litre of water. This solution can be used for the treatment of 10 Kg. of prawn meat. Treated prawns are blanched for slightly higher time -one minute more than the controls. Canned prawns manufactured as per the above method have shelf life as good as the untreated ones. Treated products have better juiciness compared to controls. Commercial scale trials showed that the procedure gives good results with at least 11% saving in raw material. The chemicals used shall be food grade and are approved under the list of GRAS chemicals according to the FDA, U.S.

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