

READY-TO-SERVE FISH CURRY IN FLEXIBLE POUCHES



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Ready-to-serve fish curry in flexible pouches

Value addition and diversification to satisfy the ever changing and diverse demands from the importing countries as well as urban consumers at home are some of the major challenges faced by the Indian fish processing industry. Value addition is the most talked about word in the fish processing industry these days because of the increased realisation of foreign exchange and high unit value of such products. One such value-added product developed at CIFT is fish curry processed in flexible pouches.

Fish curry in a ready-to-consume form processed in metal cans is an item in the overseas markets. Sardine, seer, mackerel, herring etc. are available in curried form in cans. However, the metal cans used as containers impose several restrictions on the viability of the process. Firstly, metal cans impart an undesirable taste to the product on storage. Secondly, as far as India is concerned, tinsplate for making cans is imported and hence it is disadvantageous economically. Aluminium containers available in India also are not suitable for this purpose because of the poor mechanical strength and high incidence of leakage through seams. Flexible pouches till now available in the country were not heat stable and suffered from several other disadvantages like poor seal strength, poor barrier properties, pin holing etc.

The earlier attempts on popularising a ready-to-serve fish curry could not meet with success because of the above limitations imposed by the metal containers. Now, the CIFT has successfully developed a suitable three-layer configuration of

flexible pouches which can perform the packaging function equally well as metal cans, and is free from the disadvantages met within them. This is a retortable flexible pouch based on Polyester/Aluminium foil/Cast polypropylene. Now, flexible pouches are manufactured in India employing the configuration developed by CIFT and this opened the way for commercialisation of heat processed fish curry in flexible pouches. CIFT has standardised the process for the production of fish curry in these pouches using over pressure autoclave and the curry processed in them has remained without any change for over a year at room temperature.



Ready-to-serve fish curry

CIFT has a research/pilot model of autoclave with full provisions for monitoring all functions associated with thermal processing of flexible pouches and allied infrastructural facilities.

CIFT can offer state-of-the-art technical consultancy services on heat processing of food products in flexible pouches in ready-to-serve condition.