

**A CASE STUDY ON CHARACTERISTICS AND  
QUALITY OF MUSHROOMS FROM NATURAL  
CONVECTION SOLAR DRYER AND OVEN DRYING**

**METHODS**



**BY**

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## ABSTRACT

The study was conducted at Agricultural Engineering Laboratory and Agro Technology park, Eastern University, Sri Lanka, during September 2017 to October 2017. Oyster mushrooms were used for drying in this study. Different sizes of mushrooms were used to evaluate the effects of size of the mushrooms on drying processes in natural convection solar dryer. Effective temperature for drying mushroom was examined by drying mushrooms in hot air oven at temperatures, 30 °C, 40 °C, 50 °C, 60 °C.

Full and half mushrooms were dried in a natural convection solar dryer until the samples reached desired moisture content of 8.2%. Air temperature inside the dryer and outside the dryer, wind velocity, relative humidity and moisture loss were measured at every 2 hours interval. Mushrooms were kept in the oven at different temperatures such as 30, 40, 50 and 60 °C until the samples reached desired moisture content. The moisture loss was measured at every 1 hour interval. The colour of raw and oven dried and solar dried samples were compared. The effect of drying air temperature on drying characteristics of oyster mushrooms were investigated. The experimental results show that the drying temperature and size of the mushroom have considerable effects on the moisture removal.

In the study, average moisture content, average drying rate, drying duration, rehydration ratio and moisture diffusivity values of full mushrooms were 3.79 %, 0.2 g min<sup>-1</sup>, 22 hours, 2.4 and  $-10.084 \times 10^{-9} \text{ m}^2 \text{ s}^{-1}$  respectively. In hot air oven, average moisture content, average drying rate, drying duration, rehydration ratio and moisture diffusivity values at 50 °C were 13.44 %, 0.5 g min<sup>-1</sup>, 6 hours, 2.33 and  $-10.08 \times 10^{-9} \text{ m}^2 \text{ s}^{-1}$  respectively.

## TABLE OF CONTENT

ABSTRACT .....	i
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT .....	iii
TABLE OF CONTENT .....	iv
LIST OF TABLES.....	vii
LIST OF PLATES.....	viii
LIST OF FIGUERS.....	ix
CHAPTER 1.....	1
INTRODUCTION .....	1
1.1 Research Problem .....	5
1.2 Justification.....	5
1.3 Objectives .....	5
CHAPTER 2.....	6
REVIEW OF LITERATURE .....	6
2.1 General introduction to mushroom.....	6
2.3 Importance of mushroom.....	9
2.4 Importance of the preservation of mushroom.....	10
2.5 Preservation methods of mushroom .....	11
2.5.1 Freezing.....	11
2.5.2 Other methods .....	12
2.5.3 Drying processes of mushroom.....	13
2.6 Drying methods of mushroom .....	13
2.6.1 Solar drying.....	13
2.7 Solar dryers .....	15
2.8 Classification of drying systems .....	17
2.8.1 Natural convection and other solar dryers .....	17
2.9 Rehydration.....	24
2.10 Rehydration capacity .....	24
2.11 Moisture diffusivity .....	25
CHAPTER 3.....	29

<b>MATERIALS AND METHODS</b> .....	<b>29</b>
3.1 Experimental site .....	29
3.2 Climate.....	29
3.3.2 Experimental conditions.....	30
3.4 Drying experiments.....	32
3.5 Rehydration ratio .....	32
3.6 Measurement of climatic parameters.....	33
3.6.1 Temperature .....	33
3.6.2 Relative humidity .....	33
3.6.3 Wind velocity .....	33
3.7 Determination of moisture content .....	33
3.8 Moisture ratio.....	34
3.9 Moisture diffusivity .....	34
<b>CHAPTER 4</b> .....	<b>35</b>
<b>RESULTS AND DISCUSSION</b> .....	<b>35</b>
4.1 Weather condition during the drying experiments .....	35
4.1.1 Temperature, relative humidity and wind velocity .....	35
4.2 Variation in mushroom temperature .....	36
4.3 Drying characteristics of mushrooms in the natural convection solar dryer .....	38
4.3.1 Drying rate from half mushrooms.....	38
4.3.2 Moisture loss from half mushrooms .....	39
4.3.3 Drying rate from full mushrooms .....	40
4.3.4 Moisture loss from full mushrooms .....	41
4.3.5 Effect of size on drying rate of mushrooms .....	42
4.3.6 Effect of size on moisture loss of mushrooms .....	43
4.3.7 Variation in RH during the drying process of full and half mushrooms.....	44
4.3.8 Temperature variation of half and full mushrooms in the solar dryer .....	45
4.4 Drying of full mushrooms in oven.....	46
4.4.1 Drying rate of full mushroom at 30 °C .....	46
4.4.2 Oven Drying of full mushrooms at 30 °C .....	47
4.4.3 Drying rate of full mushroom at 40 °C .....	48
4.4.4 Oven drying of full mushrooms at 40 °C .....	49
4.4.5 Drying rate of full mushroom at 50 °C .....	50