

Methods of Dried Fish processing for small scale fish processors

Fish drying is one of the traditional methods of preserving fish in Myanmar. However, adherence to food safety and quality control measures remains poor that can result in economic loss for processors and have harmful effects to health (diarrhea, food poisoning, parasite infestation, cancer, etc.) among consumers. Reports found that fish are usually laid on the ground with direct sunlight for about 3-5 days which poses risks of contamination by pests, insects, and animals (FAO, MOALI & LIFT 2016).

This document provides a brief guide on methods of drying fish observing food safety and hygiene practices to ensure good quality and safe product for consumption. Additional information on different methods of fish preservation is found on the Fish for Livelihoods funded by USAID “Training of Trainers for Small-scale Aquaculture Technology and Basic Nutrition” manual.

Choose the area that has enough wind and sunlight

Cut the bamboo at appropriate height to build the structure

Install the bamboo securely on the ground and cover the whole structure with fine mesh nets (photo 1)

Once the whole structure is covered, carefully sew the edges of the net leaving no holes

Inside the covered area, build a bamboo racks where fish can lay (photos 2 & 3)

When sun drying is not possible due to poor weather conditions, an alternative method can be applied by setting up an electric heater with a coil of 3,000 watts and a fan in front of the heater. The fan spreads the hot air from the heater inside the structure which can dry the fish within 3-4 days based on fish species and size (photo 4). Moreover, to hasten the drying process, the heater can be used at night time and fish can be laid out in the sun during day time.

Photo 1. Bamboo structure covered with net



Photo 2. Inclined bamboo trays at 45° angle inside the structure



Photo 3. Fish dried inside the covered area



Photo 4. Alternative method of drying fish



Based on the documents; Dried Fish processing - WorldFish Bangladesh, Improved Post harvest Training, DOF Myanmar, FAO Guidelines for Risk based fish inspection (<http://www.fao.org/3/a-i0468e.pdf>)

Fresh fish processing

Below show the steps on how to process fresh fish for drying observing food safety and hygiene practices.



Photo 5. Proper icing of fish
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Photo 6. Recommended practice of washing fish
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Photo 7. Recommended practice during processing
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Photo 9, 10. Dried fish sold at the local markets
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Photo 8. Traditional method of processing fish
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