

SUMMARY

Vegetables are highly perishable agricultural commodities due to high moisture content and higher metabolic activities. World production of vegetables in 2001, was 691-894 103 MT. India contributes to 15% of the world vegetable production and stands second next to China in the total vegetable production. The post-harvest losses recorded during previous decades are scaring. Spoilage of fruits & vegetables mainly occur due to microbial attack, auto-oxidation and insect pest attack. As a result, about 25 to 30 per cent of the production is lost after harvest due to improper handling, storage and microbial contamination. As processing technology is a young science in India, to extend the shelf life of these perishable products by minimally processing along with edible coatings like carnauba wax and nisin can improve the shelf life of salad vegetables during storage at room temp as well as at low temperature. These newer approaches aimed at preserving both the freshness and nutritive value of vegetables have revolutionized the vegetable processing technologies, but have not yet been widely adoptable owing to lack of infrastructure and unfavorable economics for small scale operations.