

SUMMARY

Meat supplies micro (vitamins and minerals) and macro (proteins and lipids) nutrients to the human body. Meat foods play an important role in the growth and health of humans. Cattle, buffaloes, sheep, goats, pigs and chicken are the main meat producing animals in India. Color, flavor and texture (comprising tenderness and juiciness) are the prime meat quality parameters. The texture quality is rated highest by the consumers. Handling of animals during slaughter and storage of carcass affect meat quality. Improper handling and processing lead to undesirable PSE (Pale, Soft and Exudative) and DFD (Dark, Firm and Dry) conditions in meat. Suspension of carcass soon after slaughter and dressing by pelvis (Pelvic suspension), holding at temperature 20 – 25 °C till the muscle pH is 6.0 or below followed by chilling at 2 - 4 °C for overnight improves tenderness quality of meat by preventing cold contraction of muscles. Pre – rigor meat is better than post - rigor meat for the preparation of meat products. Meat proteins are excellent emulsifiers as they contain both hydrophilic and lipophilic amino acids.