EFFECT OF PACKAGING AND PRESERVATION METHODS ON THE QUALITATIVE AND SENSORY CHARACTERISTICS OF DEHYDRATED JUJUBA FRUIT

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ABSTRACT Jujuba (Zizyphus jujube) fruits resemble the crab-apple in flavor and appearance and the pulp is mealy and sweet; they are more palatable and less acid than the wild varieties. When ripe and dried, it is a mild laxative and expectorant. Khorasan province in Iran is one of the main producers of Jujuba and in southern parts of this province this fruit is one of the main source of income for local farmers. In this research, Jujuba fruits were harvested at 120 days after full bloom, dried industrially (cabinet dryer), packed and stored for one year. The experimental design was completely randomized design with 3 replicates. Factor A was packaging methods (crate, low density polyethylene and cellophane), factor B was storage temperatures (25, 10, 4 degrees centigrade) and factor C was storage times (0, 6 and 12 months). The attributes consisting of weight changes, contamination by insects, moisture content, panel tests (texture, color, odor, taste, overall acceptance) were measured every 6 months. The results showed that the best packaging method was low density polyethylene and preservation in 4 degrees centigrade for 1 year.

Keywords: Zizyphus jujube, low density polyethylene