


Modified Sun-drying Techniques for Dates



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In Pakistan, monsoon rains coincide with the ripening period of dates which causes the rotting of ripened fruits. Hillawi is a prominent cultivar and commercially grown in Punjab. Its ripening period starts in mid-July to August which is a peak monsoon period. The fruit of Hillawi is completely harvested and consumed at Khalal stage with less economic value. There is no trend to process or cure the fruit due to occurrence of monsoon rains. However, if the fruit is harvested at Rutab stage and properly processed/cured by using proper sun drying techniques; It can be saved for future consumption with good economic value. The income of farmers can be increased 3 to 4 fold as compared to those that are sold on Doka stages. The fruits are collected at rutab/dug stage from the tree and these fruits can be dried/ processed with in 6 to 8 days depending upon daily weather conditions. After the harvest, fruits are spread on mat to remain under sun and covered at night. These fruits can be packed in plastic boxes of different weights according to the requirement of consumers.



Harvesting of Hillawi dates at Rutab stage



Dates covered with newspaper



Removal during evening in basket



Soft semi-dried dates packed in small trays and boxes