

## A STUDY ON DIFFERENT PRODUCTION AND PROCESSING METHODS OF “JAADI” IN SOUTHERN SRI LANKA

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Jaadi is a traditional fermented fish product popular among coastal community. During the high catching seasons fishing communities are used to produce jaadi as a low cost preservation method. Preliminary studies showed that there are variations in these processing methods and they are not documented well. This study was focused on investigating different processing and curing methods of jaadi adopted in southern Sri Lanka. A total of 35 producers were interviewed on variety and quality of fish, pre-processing methods, problems encountered during processing, consumer preference and constraints. 85% producers preferred skipjack tuna (*Balaya*) for jaadi production on its meatiness and taste. Almost all producers were serious on selecting undamaged fish for jaadi and initially they practice cleaning, removal of heads and bowel parts. In the case of skip jack tuna only 40% of producers practiced de-scaling, and 14.29% practiced de-skinning. As the curing agents a majority of producers use Sea salt and Garcinia paste. Many people preferred slicing the fish (85.71%). for better absorption of ingredients, while 71.43% mentioned cubing as their second preference in comparison to layering. While (65.71%) producers do not use other additives except salt and garcinia, 20% and 14.29% of the respondents use cinnamon and curry leaves respectively. The standard method of Jaadi preparation is followed by 57.14% while a 22.86% have been deviated from the standard method by using boiled salt water to a previously washed and salted fish (for 2 days). The ratio of salt and Garcinia added to one kilogram of fresh fish range between the 100 to 250 g and 50 to 250 g respectively, with rough measurements. For fermentation 45.71% respondents strictly prefer clay pots whereas plastic, glass and wooden containers are used by 25.71%, 14.29% and 14.29% respectively. Cloth is the mostly used container sealing material (45.71%), while banana leaf, polythene, plastic lids and wooden lids are been used by 17.14%, 22.16%, 8.57%, 5.71% respectively. The idea of almost all producers of using bony fish was undesirable for jaadi. The liquid remained in jaadi called *lunijja* is a useful by product which can be used to prepare sambol, and as an additive for different curries. There is a huge potential of this liquid to introduce as fish sauce which is currently import from overseas. Upscaling of the production for commercial level is setback due to the attitude of present generation due to formation of maggots, fungal and microbial contamination and lack of consumer awareness. It can be concluded that initiatives to increase consumer awareness on Jaadi products, provision of resources for production and distribution, setting a marginal price for raw fish can act as a base for increasing and stabilizing Jaadi production in the future in Sri Lanka.

**Keywords:** Jaadi, Processing methods, Fermentation, Fish products, Lunijja