1. INTRODUCTION

- Gardenia erubescens (GE) fruit is nutrient dense, but is seasonal and highly perishable.
- Application of preservative methods such as drying is therefore imperative for shelf life extension.
- This study was therefore undertaken to investigate the effect of slice thickness, pretreatment option and air temperature on the drying kinetics, colour, and bioactive compound composition of GE fruits.

2. METHODOLOGY

Sorting, seed removal & washing in tap water → Slicing (3mm & 5mm thick) → 3 min dipping in 2% w/v ascorbic acid solution → 3 min steam blanching @ 100°C → Drying dried at 40, 50, 60, and 70°C to about 10% moisture → Colour & bioactive compounds analyses

Fig. 1. Preparation, drying and quality analysis of GE fruits

3. RESULTS

- The drying time increased with pretreatments in the order control < ascorbic acid < steam blanching and increase in slice thickness, but decreased considerably with increase in air temperature (fig. 2).

4. CONCLUSION

- Slice thickness, pretreatment and air temperature had significant effect on the parameters measured.
- From the results, there may not be any need to pretreat GE fruit or increase its slice thickness before drying since doing these did not translate to better results.

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