

Anchovy Processing in Ghana:



Describing Quality and Food Safety Parameters in the Processing Chain

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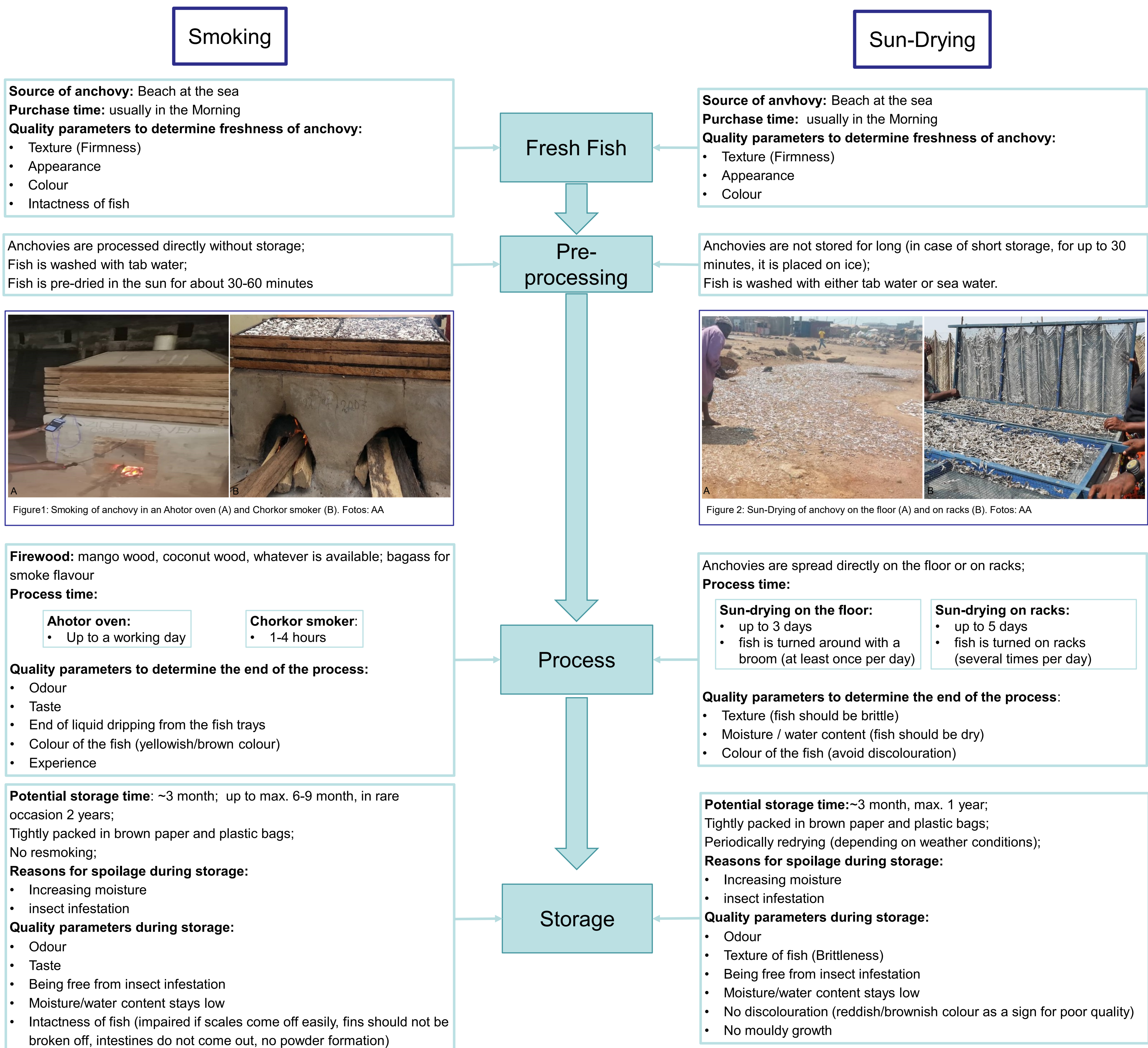
Introduction

Small fish species like anchovy (*Engraulis encrasicolus*), which are eaten whole, contain a wide range of essential nutrients and consumption can contribute towards nutrition security. At the same time, fish is highly perishable. Storage and transportation of fresh fish requires a lot of resources for preservation of the fish. When freezing or refrigeration infrastructure is limited, also the availability of fish as food is limited, especially in seasons of shortage. Therefore low cost traditional methods such as smoking and sun-drying are applied for fish preservation. Smoking and drying not only allow longer storage time of the fish in lean seasons, but also address consumers' food preferences and traditional heritage. In addition to infrastructural challenges and advantages, food safety-specific aspects,

such as chemical and microbiological contamination, have to be considered and controlled. In this study, the objective was to describe the processes of sun-drying and smoking of anchovy in Ghana. The quality criteria applied by the producers in the field were asked for in a questionnaire.

Material & Methods

For sun drying (on the floor and on racks) and smoking (Ahotor and Chorkor smoker) of anchovy in Ghana, each three independent and experienced processors were interviewed. Questions were asked to describe the process and the applied quality parameters. Answers were collected and compared and displayed as a flow chart.



- ▶ Availability of fish and other resources (e.g. space, fuel wood), convenience (e.g. practicability) and time are the most important factors for choice of method
- ▶ Process parameters and the applied quality parameters are not consistent between the different processors
- ▶ Determination of the quality of processed fish is mostly based on individual experience
- ▶ Further transport, storage, selling and consumer practices were not included in this study, but should also be considered for a thorough description of value chain