

## **PHYSICO - CHEMICAL & MICROBIOLOGICAL CHANGES IN DESICCATED COCONUT DURING STORAGE**

**R. A. Kulatunga & Kamini Meedeniya**  
( *Coconut Processing Board* )

Desiccated coconut is manufactured by drying the comminuted white coconut kernel to moisture content below 3%. This is graded and packed and exported. Under normal conditions the well dried and well packed desiccated coconut remains in good condition for 6 months or more but with the passage of time, deterioration sets in leading to increased moisture and rancidity. In some manufactures this deterioration takes place sooner than 6 months. A study was carried out on the physico-chemical and microbiological changes occurring in desiccated coconut during storage. The following were estimated in samples from 8 mills over a period of 12 months.

Moisture content, pH of the product, F.F.A. of extracted oil, oil content, presence of aerobes, anaerobes, coliforms and E. coli type 1, yeasts and moulds.

Results indicated that physico-chemical and bacteriological changes occur during storage.

Moisture content increases, pH showed slight increase, oil content slight decrease, F. F. A. content increases, bacterial and yeast counts decrease with storage but moulds show increase.

The condition leading to accelerated deterioration and development of rancidity in desiccated coconut are discussed.