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Development of soup mix using germinated cowpea

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Legumes are important sources of protein. Cowpeas (*Vigna unguiculata*) are one of the most important food legume. To improve the benefit through the cultivation of cowpea it is important to transform this low value protein source into value added product. Germination is a primary processing method to improve the nutritional quality while increasing the amino acid content, digestibility of cowpea, and reducing anti-nutritional factors in cowpea. Soup mixes are simple convenient foods that are known to stimulate appetite and provide quick nourishment. Studies were conducted to develop soup mix incorporated with germinated cowpea (*Vigna unguiculata*) and evaluate the shelf life with the package of triple laminated aluminium pouches. The best formulation was selected according to sensory evaluation with simple ranking test. A formula containing 35% of ground germinated cowpea, 2.5% of corn starch and 2% of salt level was determined as the best formulae. Selected best formulation was compared with commercially available soup mix using five point hedonic scale test. There was no significant difference in preference of developed and the commercially available soup mix. Proximate composition and amino acid profile of soup mix was analysed using standard methods to evaluate the product quality and aerobic plate count was used to evaluate the microbial quality. Proximate analysis revealed that the final product possessed 6.9% moisture, 18.41% ash, 14% protein, 57.74% carbohydrate, 1.17% fat, and 1.88% fiber. Amino acid profile indicated that there are essential amino acids such as histidine, cystine, phenylalanine and leucine content of soup mix were 5.15, 1.58, 0.98, 0.43%, respectively. Microbial analysis revealed that initial aerobic plate count (2.6×10^3 cfu/g) of the developed soup mix was not significantly changed during twelve weeks of storage period in triple laminated aluminium pouches. Results revealed that germinated cowpea can be successfully incorporated in soup mixes to produce appetizer.