

OFF-FLAVORS IN FOODS : 1. ENVIRONMENTAL CONTAMINATION

Kanok-Orn Intarapichet¹

Abstract

Off-flavor in food may be defined as any flavor which is not normally associated with that food in question. This flavor may be unacceptable in any food, since it is completely alien to the palate, or it may be simply a flavor which is not present in that particular food. Basically an off-flavor in a food can either be derived from reactions within foodstuff or it may be due to incidental contamination of the food from environmental sources. The air is an excellent carrier for a wide range of compounds which can be deposited on a sensitive food product. Water which is used in the factory may carry undesirable compounds which can be absorbed onto food during preparation and processing. Water pollution is frequently linked with various off-flavors in fish and fishery products. Packaging materials, disinfectants, pesticides, detergents, preservatives, and other additives are also frequent sources of taints in foods.

¹ *Ph.D., Asst. Professor, School of Food Technology, Suranaree University of Technology, Nakhon Ratchasima 30000.*