Characterization of cassava parallelepiped-shaped samples convection drying: Consideration of temperature and initial sample dimensions impact.

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ABSTRACT

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| The objective of this study is to examine the behavior of cassava during convective drying, taking into account the external temperature and changing the dimensions of the parallelepiped-shaped samples. The following temperatures were used: 40°C, 50°C, 60°C and 70°C. The conclusions indicate that the drying process is faster at higher temperatures. To illustrate, the drying time of a parallelepiped with dimensions 2cmx1.5cmx1cm is 620 minutes at 40°C, 540 minutes at 50°C, 520 minutes at 60°C and 460 minutes at 70°C. For parallelepipeds measuring 2cmx1.5cmx1.5cm, the drying times are increased: 640min, 600min, 540min and 480min. This mainly concerns the larger ones, especially at higher temperatures. At a temperature of 40°C, the impact of size is less obvious, however at higher temperatures (50°C, 60°C, 70°C), the importance of sample size is more felt. For example, at a temperature of 70°C, parallelepipeds with dimensions 2cmx1.5cmx1cm, 2cmx1.5cmx1.5cm and 2cmx1.5cmx2cm dry out in 440 minutes, 460 minutes and 500 minutes respectively.  In conclusion, higher temperatures promote drying, while lower temperatures can maintain the nutritional value of cassava. Small pieces of cassava tend to dry faster than large ones, especially at higher temperatures. |

*Keywords: convective drying, cassava, temperature, size, parallelepiped*

1. INTRODUCTION

Drying represents an option to consider for agricultural processing, as desired by developing countries to achieve food self-sufficiency [1]. To be successful, it is essential to perfectly master the transfer processes that control drying [2-4]. In the drying of agri-food products, several parameters must be taken into account. We can cite external parameters such as the temperature of the drying air as shown [6] for thin layers of figs, [7] for bunches or [8] for eggplants. There are also parameters related to the sample to be dried. [9] for the variety of onion, [10] for the maturity of okra, [11] and [12] for the initial size. Pretreatments are also taken into account [13,14] These last parameters are multiple, due to the complexity of the material that constitutes the agri-food product [15] and [16]. It goes without saying that its state of maturity [11], its size [17], its shape [18], etc. constitute important parameters in the evaluation of convective drying of agri-food products.

Many studies have shown that drying curves evolve according to the above-mentioned parameters. We can list, on potatoes [1], on bananas [19], on figs [6] on different products (celery, onion, garlic, tomato, corn, etc.) [3].

On tomatoes [5] and on garlic (2 to 4 mm thick) [4], the drying time decreases when the thickness decreases while the drying rate increases, allowing thus to preserve the quality of food product.

In this work, we aim to understand the behavior of cassava samples when subjected to convective drying. The external influence of temperature is taken into account. Regarding the intrinsic parameters, we maintain a fixed parallel shape, while modifying the dimensions.

2. material and methods

**2.1 Sample processing**

Cassava is purchased from a local market in Bobo-Dioulasso, Burkina Faso. It is transferred to the LaMHE laboratory. It is peeled and then cut into a parallelepiped shape with a stainless steel knife. We measure the edges with a digital micrometer (MITUTOYO, Japan, accuracy 2.10 -5 m), as shown in Figure 1.

Convective drying of cassava was carried out in an oven. The temperature was set to the drying temperature. Once thermal equilibrium was reached, the samples were introduced into the oven chamber. We minimized the measurement time so as not to disturb the thermal equilibrium already established in the product. For some samples, we measured the length of the marked sections during drying.

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| a) | b) |

Fig.1 : Cassava:

a) freshly harvested tubers,

b) cut-out parallelepiped shapes

**2.2 Data processing**

**2.2.1 water content**

Since drying of food products involves the loss of its water, it is essential to be able to monitor the evolution of its water content during the drying process. A given product contains water whose initial content or the initial water content of the product is the quotient of the total mass of water contained in the freshly cut product , divided by the mass of solid matter according to Eq.1.

where m 0 is the initial mass of the sample and ms is the dry mass of the sample.

However, monitoring the temporal evolution of the water loss of the product during its drying acquires knowledge, at each instant of its water content. The curves of the water contents as a function of the drying time were plotted from the experimental data. From the mass of the sample at instant t, we deduce the water content according to Eq.2:

where m(t) is the mass of the sample at time t of drying.

**2.2.2 water content**

Drying, estimated in terms of drying rate, gives a good perception of drying.

The drying rate is expressed as the mass of water extracted from the solid per unit of time and per unit of surface exposed to the drying air according to the following relationship (Perré et al., 2007, Dissa et al., 2008)(Eq3):

where is the drying rate, the mass of the solid skeleton, the initial exchange surface, and the water content on a dry basis.

: the mass of water evaporated per unit of time given by Eq4 :

Or :

the dry mass of the product.

 : the drying rate (Kg e. Kg ms -1 .s -1 ) given by Eq5:

And :

: water content of the product (Kg e. Kg ms -1 .s -1 ) ;

: drying time step (s).

3. results and discussion

3.1 Influence of temperature on cassava parallelepiped samples convective drying

In a study on cassava parallelepiped shape convective drying, we modified the drying air temperatures in order to observe the influence of temperature on cassava behavior during its convective drying process.

The temperatures of 40°C, 50°C, 60°C and 70°C were used. It is obvious that with the parallelepiped-shaped samples of 2cmx1.5cmx1cm (figure 1.a), an increase in temperature leads to an acceleration of drying. A similar trend is also noted for the samples of dimensions 2cmx1.5cmx1.5cm (fig 1 b)). Note, however, that the drying temperature of 50°C seems to be more effective than that at 60°C. This can be explained by the complexity of organic products. Indeed, ouoba et al [20] showed that the organic product, in the context of okra, behaves differently, depending on the cutting area. Also, the origin of the sample, which is not necessarily cut from the same cassava root, can influence the result. These remarks should be taken into account when evaluating the drying of agri-food products.

For the 2cmx1.5cmx1cm parallelepiped samples, these samples take 620min, 540min, 520min and 460min, respectively at temperatures of 40°C, 50°C, 60°C and 70°C to reach their end of drying, at the zero level in the humic base, as indicated in Figure 1, a).

In Figure 1 b), for the 2cmx1.5cmx1.5cm parallelepiped samples, these samples take 640min, 600min, 540min and 480min, respectively at temperatures of 40°C, 50°C, 60°C and 70°C to reach their end of drying, at the zero level in the humic base, as indicated in Figure 1.

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| a) | b) |

Fig. 2 : Influence of temperature on the drying of parallelepiped cassava samples:

a) parallelepiped 2cmx1.5cmx1cm ,

b) parallelepiped 2cmx1.5cmx1.5cm

3.2 Influence of temperature on drying rates

Figure 2 shows the graphs of drying speed variation over time, for parallelepiped-shaped samples of cassava, exposed to temperatures of 40°C, 50°C, 60°C and 70°C. All these curves have a shape, which begins without initial speed, undergoing a jump in value to reach a maximum before starting to decrease. Note that contrary to the general shape presented by some authors [20], we did not observe a plateau near the maximum. This observation could be linked to the small size of the samples. Indeed, from the first moments, all the water contained in the material is active and ready to be evaporated for small samples, unlike samples of large dimensions.

After this peak, the curves decrease globally towards a zero asymptote which marks the end of drying. An important observation is the irregularity of the curves. Drying can accelerate at times, or slow down. We attribute this irregularity to the fact of the removal of the samples for mass gain, which slows down the transfers, and its reintroduction into the oven which accelerates the transfers. This phenomenon can also be due to the structure of the material as observed by ouoba [20] and [21] for cassava, which bursts, i.e. small cracks, ensuring the accelerated evacuation of the water trapped in the internal solid matrix.

For the 2cmx1.5cmx1.5cm parallelepiped samples, the standardized drying rate reaches a peak of 0.0024; 0.0057; 0.0064 and 0.0097 respectively for the temperatures of 40°C, 50°C, 60°C and 70°C. It can be deduced that the higher temperatures accelerate the drying more. This confirms the results on the drying kinetics of the previous paragraph.

Fig. 3 : Influence of temperature on drying rate

3.4 Influence of size

For the four different temperatures, namely 40°C, 50°C, 60°C and 70°C, we used a form parallelepiped of different sizes, namely 2cmx1.5cmx1cm, 2cmx1.5cmx1.5cm and 2cmx1.5cmx2cm. The results are recorded in Figure 3. All comparisons of the curves at the same temperature indicate that the small samples dry faster than the large samples. It should be noted that for the low temperature of 40°C, the influence of the size is not very perceptible. Indeed, Figure 3.a, indicates that the parallelepiped samples of dimensions 2cmx1.5cmx1cm, 2cmx1.5cmx1.5cm and 2cmx1.5cmx2cm, at the temperature of 40°C have drying curves almost merged. Their drying time is around 640min.

As the temperature increases, as shown in Figure 3.b (50°C), Figure 3.c (60°C) and Figure 3.d (70°C), size is taken into account in assessing the drying of parallelepiped cassava samples.

For example, in Figure 3.c, the parallelepiped samples take 520 min, 560 min and 600 min, respectively for the parallelepiped samples of dimensions 2cmx1.5cmx1cm, 2cmx1.5cmx1.5cm and 2cmx1.5cmx2cm, to dry.

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| a) | b) |
| c ) | d) |

**Fig. 4 : Influence of size on convective drying of parallelepiped cassava samples:**

**a) at 40°C,**

**b) at 50°C,**

**c) at 60°C,**

**d) at 70°C**

As for the temperature of 70°C, in Figure 3.d, these drying times are ranked as 440 min, 460 min and 500 min.

4. Conclusion

This research examined the impact of temperature and size of parallelepiped-shaped cassava samples on their convective drying process. Observations indicate that the drying process occurs more quickly at higher temperatures, with a significant increase in drying speed at 70°C. However, at 50°C, the heat appears to be more efficient than at 60°C, which could be due to the complexity of cassava's biological characteristics, such as disparities depending on the cutting location and the origin of the samples.

Analysis of drying rates reveals that they peak before decreasing to an asymptote, with irregularities due to sample handling. Sample size also has a significant impact on drying, with smaller samples drying faster than larger ones, especially at higher temperatures. However, at 40°C, the influence of size is less pronounced.

In essence, temperature plays a key role in accelerating drying, and smaller sample size contributes to faster drying. These findings can be used to improve dehydration conditions for cassava-derived products by adjusting temperature and sample size to ensure optimal performance while maintaining product quality.

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