

Conclusion:

Vapor hydrogen peroxide shows promise to reduce microbes on prunes. Exposure to 5-10 minutes of vapor peroxide reduced microbe populations to near zero for dehydrated prunes destined for pitting. The appearance of the prunes was unchanged by this treatment. Unlike potassium sorbate, hydrogen peroxide is a microbiocide rather than a microbiostat; it kills microbes rather than inhibiting their growth. Vapor hydrogen peroxide could be a component of a hazard analysis and critical control point (HACCP) program. Future plans are to determine if this technology can be applied immediately preceding packaging.

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