

Research note :

PROSPECTS OF THE PROCESSED POTATO PRODUCTS IN PATNA, INDIA

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In India, there has been about 5% reduction in rural population together with about 10% decline in agricultural labour force over the last 25 years. This in combination with growing urbanization and rising income is substantially contributing to changed life style accompanied by a corresponding change in food habit. Over a period of 10 years, there has been a tremendous popularity of processed products in Patna, the capital of Bihar. Bihar is among the top five potato producing states in India with a very minimal productivity of only 9.7 q/ha in spite of the fact that potato production in India has increased from 1.5 million tons in 1949-50 to 25 million tons in 2004 with a productivity of 17.86 tonnes/ha (Pandey et al., 2006). Potato and potato-based processed items hold a major market share in ready-to-eat market in India in general and Patna in particular and recently many organized and unorganized sectors has come up in and around Patna for processed products including potato products and there is considerable scope for increasing potato

processing (Das and Ezekiel, 2001; Ezekiel and Shekhawat, 1999). Therefore, as a part of a larger study, a market survey was carried out in and around Patna (Bihar) to actually assess the status of processed potato products.

The market survey was carried out in and around Patna (Bihar) during December-March, 2001-02. A total of six main localities in main Patna viz. Nala road, Gandhi Maidan, Dakbungla road, New Patna market and Boring road and in suburban area, a locality called as Patna city were visited and a total of 14 very popular retailers and 76 small scale units (unorganized) were contacted. Information was collected on the product quantity and quality, package size and sale price of potato products. The colour and taste of the products were also determined. For colour, chips were subjected on a scale of 1 to 10, where, 1 denotes white and highly acceptable and 10 as brown colour, bitter and unacceptable chips (Pandey et al., 2006).

The processed potato products available in and around Patna were potato

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Table 1: Processed potato products in different packing sizes and cost available in Patna.

Processed potato products	Reputed firms/brand	No. of areas visited	Small scale units in unorganized sector	Packaging sizes available (g)	Packaging size in demand (g)	Cost (Rs./kg)
Potato chips	Uncle chips, Haldiram chips, Hello chips, Lay's chips	12	19	37-1000	200	70-100
Potato namkeens	Haldiram, Lehar, Crax	12	12	40-200	100	50-85
Potato pops	Pik Nik pops	10	6	40	40	250
Potato lachha	Haldiram	10	6	100-200	100	150-180
Aloo bhujia	Lehar, Haldiram	12	5	50-100	100	100
Potato waffers	Nil (Local)	8	6	100-200	100	380
Dehydrated potato chips	Local reputed firms	12	22	100-500	200	200