

Solar drying of chillies

When chillies remain moist, moulds develop and produce aflatoxin poison toxic to people. Solar dryer hygienically speeds up drying and uses heat from sun.

Solar drying has several benefits to mention: Requires less time, maintains chilli colour, prevents moulds, eliminates foreign materials and dries various foods.

Making solar drier

Materials: Wood, nails, hinges, lock and plastic sheet screen.

Start by making a wooden frame depending on galvanised sheet, paint iron sheet black to absorb heat from the sun. Then make drier 3 metres long, table height 95cm and 110cm at the back.

For 3 metres longer use 3 pairs of legs for extra support and slant the upper box surface. Make support 10cm above the bottom to help slide the trays. But make 2 doors on back for putting trays in and out and cover frames with screen so that air can reach from both sides. Slide foot trays 10cm in drier for air to evenly dry the chillies. Lastly cover the long sides of the doors with mosquito net to prevent dust and insects entry and add a small lock so that the door stays closed.

Solar drying process

Wash hands to keep the product clean, put solar drier in sunny place, spread chillies on foot trays and put in solar drier. But always keep solar drier doors closed so that flies do not enter. During cool nights keep solar drier indoors to prevent development of moulds

After 2 days check if chillies are dry then pack and store.