

Effect of Soaking Parchment on Coffee Factory Capacity

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ABSTRACT

Coffee factories in Kenya have in the past experienced serious processing constraints. This has particularly occurred at the drying stage where a bottleneck normally arises. Alternative methods of increasing the capacity of a coffee factory, by modifying some stages of processing, without extra facilities are hence being considered.

As a first step, a soaking stage which has been conveniently used, though to a limited extent, to hold parchment in order to overcome temporary congestion at the drying stage has been under investigation as one of the prime options. Parchment grade one (1) was subjected to prolonged soaking in different agroecological zones, for up to 28 days, in clean water changed every day. The results show that over and above the normal practice, parchment can be soaked for 7 days without adverse effect on coffee cup quality or loss in dry matter. The implications of prolonged soaking on the factory capacity are further illustrated. The coffee cup quality given in the outturn reports for the farms in which the trials were sited compares favourably.