

Application of Splitting of Coffee Cherries Prior to Sun Drying as an Alternative to Enhance Drying Performance

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SUMMARY

Drying is the most intensive and critical step in coffee processing. In order to enhance the process, splitting of coffee cherries has been applied by many farmers since decades ago. Previously the system has been applied in big plantations, in order to enhance their production capacity. The coffee product under the system has been known as “OIB” (*Oost Indische Bereiding*), which separated from the natural process (“GB” = *Gewone bereiding*). Currently, the system is applied by farmers in some coffee areas. The splitting is conducted by using a various coffee splitter from a wooden to metal type models. Drying performance of split coffees was evaluated and compared to natural and de-pulped coffees at 3 different locations. The moisture content and a_w , were followed daily and physical quality and organoleptic, as well as ochratoxin A (OTA) status of the coffee products were analyzed. Application of splitting prior to sun drying was apparently enhanced drying performance. To reach 12% of moisture, natural drying took between 13-15 days while split coffee took 10-13 days, which comparable to the drying of parchment coffees at the same load of 30 kg of cherries or parchments per m². Splitting also improved quality (cup taste) of coffee product, and did not promote OTA contamination. Advantages and disadvantages of the splitting system are also presented.