
EXPERIMENT 9 COLLECTION AND DRYING OF SHARK FIN

Structure

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9.1 INTRODUCTION

Shark fins are used for preparing shark fin soup. Care must be taken in processing shark fin as the quality of fin rays can be influenced by the various processing steps.

Objectives

After performing this experiment, you will be able to:

- cut fins from shark; and
- preserve fins by salting and drying.

9.2 EXPERIMENT

9.2.1 Principle

Fins are to be cut from fresh shark with minimum damage to the fin rays. The process is called finning. By salting and drying, the moisture content of the fins is substantially reduced so that they can be preserved for several months at room temperature.

9.2.2 Requirements

- Fresh shark
- Common salt (sodium chloride), lime (calcium carbonate)
- Knife, other utensils, plastic bags
- Balance
- Drier

9.2.3 Procedure

- 1) Select larger sized fish. Observe various fins and the location of each.
- 2) Using a sharp knife cut off fins. Give a rounded cut at the base as can be seen in the figure (Fig.9.1). In case of Pectoral fin and straight cut for dorsal fin.



Fig.9.1: Cut shark fin (pectoral Fin, half moon cut)

- 3) Wash fins thoroughly in water. Remove any adhering flesh.
- 4) Weigh fins. Weigh out sufficient quantity of powder salt (salt : fin = 1 : 6- 8)
- 5) Mix salt with a small quantity of lime.
- 6) Apply salt over fins, especially the cut side.
- 7) Pack in a vessel with holes at the bottom. Keep for a day. Allow the liquid formed (brine liquor) to drain out.
- 8) Rinse in water by a quick dip and drain in order to remove excess salt sticking on to the fins.
- 9) Dry under sun or in a drier at a temperature not exceeding 50°C.
- 10) Stop drying once the material becomes hard dried with a moisture content of not more than 10%.
- 11) Weigh the fins. Pack in polypropylene bags and seal.
- 12) Store in a dry place at room temperature.

9.2.4 Observations

Species of shark used :
 Weight of freshly cut fins (x) =
 Weight of dried fins (y) =
 Yield = $(y/ x \times 100)$ =%

Various fins obtained:

Name of Fin	Number in Fish	Location in Fish

9.2.5 Results

Yield of dried fin from fresh fin is _____%

Total number of fins obtained is _____.

9.3 PRECAUTIONS

- Only fresh shark must be used for collecting fins.
- Take care not to exceed the temperature indicated. Excessive heating can affect the quality of fin rays.

Note:

- Only the lower lobe of the caudal fin contains fin rays. Therefore, this part may be sawed off from rest of the fin.
- In the case of white fins both lobes of caudal fins contain rays.