



UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

**DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT OF A MICROSTRIP SENSOR FOR MEASUREMENT OF
MOISTURE CONTENT IN RICE GRAINS**

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By

FARIBA JAFARI

**Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia,
in Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Science**

July 2007



*To
My lovely Mother,
The most wonderful gift from God.*



Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfillment of the requirement for the Degree of Master of Science

DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT OF A MICROSTRIP SENSOR FOR MEASUREMENT OF MOISTURE CONTENT IN RICE GRAINS

By

FARIBA JAFARI

July 2007

Chairman: Professor Kaida Khalid, PhD

Faculty: Science

A Microstrip moisture sensor is developed based on microwave attenuation and is used for measuring moisture content of rice grains. This sensor is suitable for a broad range of moisture content ranging from 0% to 40 % (wet basis). It was fabricated using RT-Duriod with dielectric properties of $2.2-j0.002$ as the substrate, with operating frequency at 9.0 GHz. In this technique only the small part of sample is needed to contact with the microstrip line, therefore the measurement can be done with more accuracy and in a shorter time.

Theoretical analysis based on quasi-transverse electromagnetic mode (TEM mode) in four layered microstrip is carried out to evaluate design parameters such as microstrip characteristic impedance, effective dielectric constant, length and



thickness due to the sensitivity of the sensor. The analysis of the complex electromagnetic waves in this system is presented using signal flow graphs and solved by Mason's non-touching loops rules. To this end Visual Fortran programs is written and documented to evaluate all the design parameters needed and to estimate the microstrip patterns.

In the other part of this study, investigation was made to find the relation between the dielectric properties and moisture content of rice grains. The dielectric mixture theory has been derived to solve the problem of non homogenous medium. In the purpose of verifying the mixture theory the theoretical results has been compared with the empirical results. It was found that the dielectric properties of dried rice samples were in the range of 1.20 to 1.88 for ϵ' and 0.065 to 0.23 for ϵ'' and even can increased up to 30-j18 in maximum moisture content, respectively. A close and good agreement to theoretical expectation values is found. A computer program EMIX is written to predict the dielectric properties of wet basis rice grain by knowing the values of physical properties for dry basis.

In this study, analyzes of the sensor and various type of the rice grain samples with the effect of density and temperature of rice grains to the total attenuation of the sensor has been studied and the predicted results are compared with experimental results. The effect of air inside the medium and the compactness of the material under the test has been studied and the errors of ± 0.16 dB has been calculated for the measured reflected attenuation of the sensor.

The microsotrip sensor was tested on five types of rice grains in the range of 1% to

40% moisture content. The sensor has predicted moisture contents with standard error of ± 0.22 dB and accuracy of 1.5% MC wet basis compared to standard oven drying method. Moisture contents of rice grain samples were found in the range of 11 to 12.5% at room temperature (25°C).

A new proposed moisture sensor which can measure the moisture content of grains contained in a sack manner has been given. The slim and sharp geometry of the sensor enable it to measure the mean volumetric values of moisture content of rice since it penetrates deep into the sack. Therefore, this method can be so useful in industry for moisture content measurement of rice grains and even some other grains like wheat, corn barley and so on, to determine the proper time of harvest, safe storage and quality control of grains.

**Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia
sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk Ijazah Master Sains.**

**PEMBANGUNAN DAN REKABENTUK SENSOR/MICROSTRIP
KELEMBAPAN BAGI BIJIRIN BERAS**

Oleh

FARIBA JAFARI

Julai 2007

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Sensor kelembapan microstrip telah direcabentuk berdasarkan pengecilan gelombang mikro dan digunakan untuk mengukur kandungan kelembapan bijirin beras. Pengesan ini sesuai bagi pelbagai julat kandungan kelembapan bermula dari 0% hingga 40% (asas basah). Pengesan ini direka menggunakan RT-Duriod dengan sifat dielektirk, $2.2-j0.002$ sebagai 'substrak' dan frekuensi operasi pada 9.0 GHz. Melalui teknik ini yang hanya memerlukan bahagian kecil sampel untuk menyentuk dengan



garisan microstrip maka pengukuran dapat dilakukan dengan lebih jitu dan dalam jangka masa yang lebih singkat.

Analisis teori berdasarkan mod elektromagnetik mod quasi-TEM melintang (mod TEM) dalam microstrip 4 lapisan dijalankan untuk menilai parameter rekabentuk seperti impedan cirri microstrip, pemalar dielektrik berkesan, panjang, ketebalan dan parameter-parameter lain yang berkaitan dengan sensitiviti pengesanan tersebut. Analisis gelombang elektromagnetik kompleks dalam system ini dipersembahkan menggunakan graf-graf aliran isyarat dan diselesaikan oleh hukum gegelung tanpa sentuh Mason. Setakat ini, Program Visual Fortran ditulis dan didokumentasikan untuk dinilai kesemua parameter-parameter rekabentuk yang diperlukan serta untuk menganggarkan bentuk microstrip.

Dalam bahagian lain kajian ini, penyelidikan telah dijalankan untuk mencari hubungan di antara sifat-sifat dielektrik dan kandungan kelembapan bijirin beras. Teori campuran dielektrik telah diterbitkan untuk menyelesaikan masalah medium tidak homogen. Bagi tujuan mengesahkan teori campuran ini, keputusan teori telah dibandingkan dengan keputusan empirik. Didapati, sifat-sifat dielektrik sampel beras kering adalah di dalam julat 1.20 hingga 1.88 bagi ϵ' dan 0.065 hingga 0.23 bagi ϵ'' dan akan ditingkatkan dengan kandungan kelembapan $\epsilon=30-j18$ pada kelembapan maksimum. Suatu persetujuan yang baik dan hampir kepada nilai jangkakan teori telah dikesan. Program komputer ditulis untuk meramal sifat-sifat dielektrik bijirin beras basah dengan mengetahui nilai sifat-sifat fizikal bagi bijirin beras kering.

Dalam kajian ini, analisis sensor pelbagai jenis sampel bijirin beras dengan kesan

kepadatan dan suhu bijirin beras kepada jumlah pengecilan pengesanan telah dikaji dan keputusan yang dijangka telah dibandingkan dengan keputusan eksperimen. Kesan udara di dalam pengantaraan dan kepadatan sampel di bawah ujikaji telah dikaji dan ralat bagi ± 0.16 dB telah dihitung bagi pengecilan sensor yang telah diukur.

Sebagai contoh aplikasi, sensor microstripm telah diuji ke atas 5 jenis bijirin beras dalam julat kandungan kelembapan minimum dan maksimum. Sensor telah meramal kandungan kelembapan dengan ralat piawai kepadatan sebanyak ± 0.22 dB dan kejituan sebanyak 1.5% kandungan kelembapan berasaskan basah berbanding dengan kaedah pengeringan ketuhar biasa. Kandungan kelembapan sampel bijirin beras dikesan dalam julat 11 hingga 12.5% dalam suhu bilik (25°C).

Dengan persetujuan yang rapat antara nilai yang diramal dan nilai eksperimen, cadangan baru sensor kelembapan yang dapat mengukur kandungan kelembapan bijirin yang terkandung di dalam suatu karung dalam keadaan pantas dan praktikal telah diusulkan. Geometri sensor yang halus dan tajam itu membolehkan ia mengukur nilai min volumetrik bagi kandungan kelembapan beras oleh kerana ia menembusi ke dalam karung. Oleh itu, kaedah ini sangat berguna dalam industri pengukuran kandungan kelembapan bijirin beras dan juga bijirin-bijirin lain seperti gandum, jagung, barli dan lain-lain untuk menentukan masa yang sesuai bagi penanaman, keselamatan simpanan dan kawalan kualiti bijirin.

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I certify that an Examination Committee has met on 25th July 2007 to conduct the final examination of Fariba Jafari on her Master of Science thesis entitled “Design and Development of a Microstrip Sensor for Measurement of Moisture content in Rice Grains” in accordance with Universiti Pertanian Malaysia (Higher Degree) Act 1980 and Universiti Pertanian Malaysia (Higher Degree) Regulations 1981. The Committee recommends that the candidate be awarded the relevant degree. Members of the Examination Committee are as follows:

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the thesis is based on my original work except for quotations and citations, which have been duly acknowledged. I also declare that it has not been previously or concurrently submitted for any other degree at UPM or other institutions.

FARIBA JAFARI

Date: 30 April 2007

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
DEDICATION	ii
ABSTRACT	iii
ABSTRAK	vi
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	vii
APPROVAL	ix
DECLARATION	x
LIST OF TABLES	xvi
LIST OF FIGURES	xvii
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	xx
CHAPTER	
1	GENERAL INTRODUCTION
1.1	Introduction 2
1.2	Microwave Energy 3
1.3	Advantages and Limitations of Microwave Sensing 4
1.4	Microwave Aquametry of Grain 6
1.5	Classifications of Microwave Moisture Sensors 8
1.5.1	Reflection Sensors 8
1.5.2	Resonant Sensors 10
1.5.3	Transmission/Reflection sensors 12
1.5.3.1	Free-Space Transmission Method 13
1.5.3.2	Waveguide Transmission Method 13
1.6	Objectives 14
1.7	Thesis Outline 15
2	THEORETICAL ANALYSIS BASED ON MICROSTRIP STRUCTURE
2.1	Semi-Infinite Double Covered Microstrip as Sensing Area 18
2.2	The Total Attenuation of the Microstrip Sensor 19
2.2.1	Reflection and Transmission at Multiple Interfaces 20
2.2.2	System Signal Flow Graph 21
2.3	Microstrip Structure 25
2.4	TEM Analysis of Double Covered Microstrip with Semi-infinite Layer 26
2.5	Stripline 31
2.6	Computed Results for Microstrip Structure 34
2.7	Dielectric Loss in Microstrip 36
2.8	Dielectric Mixture Theory 40
2.9	Results and Discussion 43
2.10	Summary 45



3	SENSOR DEVELOPEMENT	
3.1	Microstrip Sensor	48
3.2	Properties of Materials	51
	3.2.1 Frequency Dependence	52
	3.2.2 Complex Dielectric Spectrum of Water	54
	3.2.3 Complex Dielectric Spectrum of Rice Grains	56
	3.2.4 Bulk Density of Grain Dependence	57
	3.2.5 Temperature Dependence	58
3.3	Summary	60
4	METHODOLOGY	
4.1	Determination of Dielectric Properties	61
	4.1.1 Calibration Procedures	62
	4.1.2 Methodology	62
4.2	Standard Methods of Measuring Moisture Content	64
	4.2.1 Direct Methods	64
	4.2.2 Indirect Methods	66
4.3	Measurement of Moisture Content	67
	4.3.1 Sample Preparation	67
	4.3.2 Calibration Procedure for Attenuation Measurement	70
4.4	Experimental Set-up	71
4.5	Summary	72
5	RESULTS AND DISCUSSION	
5.1	How Does Rice Dry?	74
5.2	Dielectric Properties of Rice Grain	76
	5.2.1 Variation with Frequency	77
	5.2.2 Variation with Moisture Content	79
5.3	Attenuation of Microwave Power in Rice Medium	81
	5.3.1 Variation with Thickness of Protective Layer	81
	5.3.2 Variation of Attenuation with Moisture Content	83
	5.3.3 Effect of Operating Frequency	85
	5.3.4 Effect of Temperature	88
	5.3.5 Effect of Density	89
5.4	Comparison between Compactness and Noncompactness Sample	90
5.5	Standard Errors of Experiments	92
5.6	Summary	93
6	CONCLUSION AND FUTURE WORK	
6.1	Conclusion	95
6.2	Future work	97
6.3	Micsotrip Moisture Sensor	98

REFERENCES	101
APPENDICES	106
BIODATA OF THE AUTHOR	138



LIST OF TABLES

Table		Page
3.1	Geometrical and Electrical Parameters of Microstrip sensor	50
4.1	Measured Values of Some Physical Properties for Eech Five Types of Rice Grain	69
5.1	Dielectric properties with Density and Bulk Density for Dried Rice Samples at Operating Frequency 9 GHz	77
5.3	Measured Attenuation with Residuals at Operating Frequency 9 GHz, for 22% MC rice sample	91
5.4	Standard Error of MC Measurement with Residuals at Operating Frequency 9 GHz, for Rice Sample C	93



LIST OF FIGURES

Figure		Page
1.1	The Electromagnetic Spectrum	3
1.2	Typical Reflection Sensor	9
1.3	Typical Resonators with Different Coupling Schemes	11
1.4	Typical Transmission sensor	13
2.1	Sensor configuration, (a) Moisture Sensor, (b) Cross Section of Semi-infinite Microstrip as a sensing area of the Sensor	19
2.2	Multiple Reflection and Transmission Propagation Paths for Plane Wave through Different Media	20
2.3	Microstrip Sensor with Sample Inserted	21
2.4	The Sensor as a Two-port Network	22
2.5	Flow Graph of the Sensor as a Cascaded Two-port Network	23
2.6	Figure 2.6: Simplified Signal Flow Graph Using Mason's Nontouching Loop rule, (a) Simplified Signal Flow Graph, (b) Final Form in Terms of Scattering Parameters of The Input and Output Ports	24
2.7	Microstrip Transmission Line	25
2.8	Semi-infinite Double Covered Microstrip Line	27
2.9	The Cross Section of Stripline	32
2.10	Characteristic Impedance versus W/h for Stripline at various s/h for (a) Dielectric constant $\epsilon_{r1} = 2.2$ and (b) $\epsilon_{r1} = 10.5$ as a substrate with $\epsilon_{r2} = 2.6$ and $\epsilon_{r3} = 30.0$	33
2.11	Characteristic Impedance versus W/h for Semi-infinite Microstrip at various s/h for (a) dielectric constant $\epsilon_{r1} = 2.2$ and (b) $\epsilon_{r1} = 10.5$, with $\epsilon_{r2} = 2.6$ and $\epsilon_{r3} = 30.0$	34
2.12	Effective dielectric constant versus W/h for semi-infinite microstrip at various s/h for (a) dielectric constant $\epsilon_{r1} = 2.2$ and (b) $\epsilon_{r1} = 10.5$, with $\epsilon_{r2} = 2.6$ and $\epsilon_{r3} = 30.0$	35

2.13	Microstrip; (a) Semi-infinite 4-layer Microstrip, (b) Semi-infinite Covered Microstrip with the Same Dielectric Constants	38
2.14	Dielectric Loss as a Function of Ratio W/h for Semi-infinite Double Covered Microstrip at Various Thicknesses of Covered Layer with $\epsilon_{r1} = 2.2$, $\epsilon_{r2} = 3.0$ and $\epsilon_{r3} = 30.0$	40
2.15	Model of Rice Compact Volume and Specimen with Moisture Content	41
2.16	Variation in Total Attenuation with moisture content of 3-layer Semi-infinite Microstrip sensor	43
2.17	Comparison of Total Attenuation Between 4-layer Microstrip and 3-layer Semi-infinite Microstrip Sensor	45
3.1	Photo of Microstrip Moisture Sensor	49
3.2	The Cross Section of Microstrip's Sensing Area	50
3.3	Variation of Dielectric Constant and Loss factor of Rough Rice, <i>Oryza Sativa</i> L., at 24 °C, with Moisture Content for Frequencies of 20 MHz, 300 MHz and 2.45 GHz	53
3.4	Real and imaginary part of the complex permittivity, ϵ of water plotted <i>Versus</i> frequency	55
3.5	The Variation of Effective Dielectric Constant and Loss Factor for Rice and Air Mixture as Functions of Volume fraction of Rice	57
3.6	Moisture content and bulk-density dependence of (a) the dielectric constant and (b) the dielectric loss factor of rough rice, brown rice, and barley samples at 10.5 GHz and 24±1° C	58
3.7	The temperature dependencies of relative permittivity for wheat Grains variety at 2 MHz for moisture contents wet basis	59
4.1	Field Lines for an Open-ended Coaxial probe	62
4.2	Rice Grain Samples Have Been Used for Measurement	68
4.3	Experimental Setup for Microwave Attenuation Measurement Using HP 8270B Vector Analyzer	72
5.1	Drying Process of Rice sample Type M	75
5.2	Variation in Mass of dried rice at Different Temperatures	76



5.3	Frequency Independence of Dielectric Properties of Dried Rice Samples	78
5.4	Dielectric Properties of Dried Grain Versus Moisture Content	79
5.5	Comparison between Predicted and Measured Values of Dielectric Properties as a Function of Moisture Content in Medium Rice M	80
5.6	Comparison between Predicted and Measured Values of Attenuation as a Function of Moisture Content for Sample Rice A	82
5.7	Comparison between Predicted and Measured Values of Attenuation as a Function of Moisture Content for Rice Samples A and B	83
5.8	Comparison between Predicted and Measured Values of Attenuation as a Function of Moisture Content for Rice Samples C,D and B	84
5.9	Comparison between Predicted and Measured Values of Attenuation as a Function of Frequency for Rice Samples A and B	86
5.10	Comparison between Predicted and Measured Values of Attenuation as a Function of Frequency for Rice Samples C and D	87
5.11	Comparison between Predicted and Measured Values of Attenuation as a Function of Temperature for Rice Sample M	88
5.12	Variation of the Attenuation versus Moisture Content for Five Types of Rice Samples	90
5.13	The Effect of Compactness and Non-Compacted Material	91
5.14	Comparison between Standard and Measured Moisture Content of Rice Grain	92
6.1	Sensor Structure (a) Cross Section of sensor Layers, (b) Front and Side view of the Microstrip Moisture Sensor	98
6.2	Proposed application of the Sensor System to Measure Moisture Content of Grain Commodities	99
B1.1	Flow chart to Compute the Characteristic Impedance for Different Values in width of Conducting Line of a Two Port Network	109
B2.1	Flow chart to Compute the Dielectric of the Microstrip Line for Different Values in width of Conducting Line	115
B4.1	Flow chart to Compute the Scattering Parameters and Total Attenuation of the Sensor in 0% to 50% Moisture Content	126



LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

VNA	Vector Network Analyzer
MUT	Material Under Test
MC	Moisture Content
HPBW	Half-Power Beam Width
BW	Bandwidth
PLF	Polarization Loss Factor
SEC	Standard Error of Calibration
NDT	Non Destructive Testing
VSWR	Voltage Standing Wave Ratio
TEM	Transverse Electric Magnetic Fields
RF	Radio Frequency
HF	High Frequency
VHF	Very High Frequency
UHF	Ultra High Frequency
d.b.	Dry Basis Moisture Content Determination
w.b.	Wet Basis Moisture Content Determination



LIST OF SYMBOLS

Symbol	Quantity	Units
E	Electric Field Intensity	(V/m)
H	Magnetic Field Intensity	(A/m)
ϵ_0	Permittivity of Vacuum	(F/m)
μ_0	Permeability of Vacuum	(H/m)
ϵ_r^*	Relative Permittivity (Complex)	(dimensionless)
μ_r^*	Relative Permeability (Complex)	(dimensionless)
η^*	Medium Impedance (Complex)	(Ω)
L	Inductance	(H)
C	Capacitance	(F)
R	Resistance	(Ω)
Z_0	Characteristic Impedance	(Ω)
Y	Admittance	(S)
γ^*	Propagation Constant (complex)	(1/m)
α	Dielectric constant	(1/m)
β	Phase Constant	(rad/m)
σ	Conductivity	(S/m)
ω	Angular Frequency	(rad.Hz)
ϵ'	Dielectric Constant	(F/m)
ϵ''	Loss Factor	(F/m)
$\tan\delta$	Loss Tangent	(dimensionless)
Γ^*	Reflection Coefficient (complex)	(dimensionless)

τ^*	Transmission Coefficient (Complex)	(dimensionless)
D	Directivity	(dimensionless)
G	Gain	(dimensionless)
e	Efficiency	(dimensionless)
Q_T	Quality factor	(dimensionless)
RL	Return Loss	(dB)
h	Substrate Thickness	(mm)
s	Thickness of Protective Layer	(mm)
d	Height of Sample or Wet Media	(mm)
W	Width of Line	(mm)
β	Phase Constant	(dimensionless)
ρ	Density	(gr/cm ³)
V	Volume	(cm ³)
v_a	Volume Fraction of air	(dimensionless)
v_g	Volume Fraction of grain	(dimensionless)
v_w	Volume Fraction of water	(dimensionless)
m_a	Mass of air	(gr)
m_g	Mass of Grain	(gr)
m_w	Mass of water content	(gr)
S_{11}	Scattering Parameter (Port 1 to Port 1)	(dB)
S_{12}	Scattering Parameter (Port 2 to Port 1)	(dB)
S_{21}	Scattering Parameter (Port 1 to Port 2)	(dB)
S_{22}	Scattering Parameter (Port 2 to Port 2)	(dB)
C	Capacitance of the structure	(F)

C_a	Line Capacitance	(F)
V_p	Phase Velocity	(m/s)
A	Attenuation	(dB/cm)
ϕ	Electrostatic Potential	
$\rho(x,y)$	surface Charge Density	(C/m ²)
$\rho(\beta)$	Fourier Transform of $\rho(x,y)$	
Q	Total Charge	(C)