

BIOPOLYMERS FOR EDIBLE FOOD COATINGS

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Flexible and non-toxic films processed from natural polymers have been set as a novel category of materials with high potential for applications as protective edible coatings on fruits and vegetables. Such coatings have as main aim act as barrier medium reducing the respiratory activity while preserving for longer the physiological characteristics. Such films also have activities against browning and bacteriostatic properties, reducing the spread of pathogenic microorganism either *in natura* or on cut surfaces. Polysaccharides from animal and vegetal origin, hydrophobic maze proteins, cashew gum and galactomanans are the materials under investigation. In a broad sense the coating sequence has similar procedure independent of fruit, what can be summarized as depicted in Figure 1.

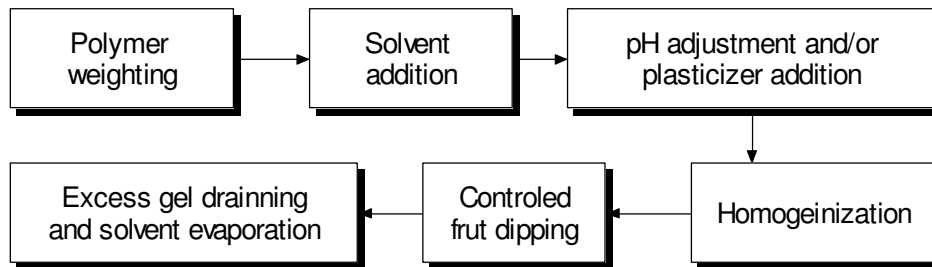


Figure 1. General sequence of gel preparation na fruit coating.

In this work an overview of the subject is presented with results from materials characterization as on going researches at Embrapa Instrumentation Research Center in S.Carlos, SP.

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