

Thidarat Lomsukwattana 2010: Production Potential of Ready-Made Chilli Paste Products in Upper Central Region. Master of Home Economics, Major Field: Home Economics, Department of Home Economics. Thesis Advisor: Associate Professor Tasanee Limsuwan, Ph.D. 256 pages.

The main objectives of this research were the analysis of the production processes, product quality and production potential of ready-made chilli paste of the One Tambon One Product (OTOP) scheme in the upper central region of Thailand. The data was collected by means of interviews with individuals involved with the production process of ready-made chilli paste who were selected from the top OTOP level of the 3 – 5 star group. Purposive random sampling was employed to select 60 people from 10 manufacturers in Chainat, Lopburi and Pathum Thani. The data analysis was using the average, percentage and SWOT analysis to determine the production potential in 4 areas inclusive the management structure of the group, the production processes, focus on the product and marketing. The chilli paste products were collected and analyzed for water activity, moisture, benzoic acid, salt, sorbic acid and the total bacterial count as in comparison with the Thai Community product standard.

The sample group decided to produce chilli paste products because of the local availability of raw materials, and the product in accordance with local practices was produced by local wisdom. The production processes of dried chilli paste (nam prik pon haeng) and roasted chilli paste (nam prik pao) of each group had similar main production processes, but there was a slight difference in their characteristics. Dried chilli paste (nam prik pon haeng) product samples of all groups did not meet the Thai product standard of water activity, moisture and the total number of microorganisms present. On the other hand, all of the roasted chilli paste from the 4 - 5 Star - group passed the minimal standards but 66.67% of the 3 Star - group products did not pass the minimal standards for the total bacterial count.

The SWOT analysis revealed that the production potentials of the 4 – 5 star - group and the 3 star – group are similarly high. However, data from the interviews showed the 4 - 5 star - group had more access the education, raw materials, and distribution channels as well as higher volumes of the production and better packaging than the 3 Stars - group products.

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Thesis Advisor's signature