

Fibre Enriched Bites

Bite or namkeen para is an Indian traditional deep fat fried snack food popular throughout the country. Traditionally, it is prepared from refined wheat flour (maida) with additives such as common salt, spices and fat. Bite is a very simple and easy to make tea-time snack item. It is ribbon-like strip of pastry which is delicately seasoned with cumin or caraway seeds and deep fried in pure ghee. They are crispy yet puffy salted strips of dough that are deep fried.

In the process of preparing refined flour from wheat, it is not just bran that is separated but the wheat germ, containing oils and the nutrients especially B group vitamins and minerals like magnesium and zinc, are also removed. Refined wheat flour is also deficient in fibre. Moreover, it is relatively devoid of nutritional quality.

People who consume refined foods, like white flour can get diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure, and can gain weight. The more refined foods a person eats, the more insulin must be produced to manage it. Insulin promotes the storage of fat, making way for rapid weight gain and elevated triglyceride levels, which can lead to heart disease. Over time, the pancreas gets so overworked that insulin production grinds to a halt, and hypoglycemia (low blood sugar) or diabetes sets in. The only effective treatment for celiac disease is a strict adherence to a gluten-free diet throughout the patient's lifetime.

Dietary fibre is essential for a healthy diet as it offers many health benefits such as reduction in chances of constipation and colorectal cancer. Fibre also provides relief from irritable bowel syndrome. A high fibre diet improves diabetic control and appears to protect against colon cancer.

Products made from refined flour are now-a-days being not preferred much by the consumers as they are becoming more conscious about their health and nutrition. They are well acquainted with the demerits of products made from refined wheat flour like low fibre content, poor nutrition and allergic effects etc. They are also aware about the ill-effects of consuming foodstuffs prepared from only maida.

Hence, an attempt was therefore, made to develop fibre enriched bites by hybridization technology wherein, a considerable proportion of maida was replaced by okara flour, and flours of other food grains by employing Response Surface Methodology so as to produce fibre enriched bites with various nutritional and functional properties and simultaneously diminishing the adverse effect of only one ingredient i.e. refined flour.

Advantages:

1. Reducing content of refined wheat flour in making bites.
2. Providing fibre rich nutritious food product.
3. Proper utilization of okara produced in making soy milk or tofu.