

Added value for the Sicilian mango through dehydration

Detail Introduction :

Today, one of the most valuable tropical fruits is the mango, which sees a growth in the consumption and a growing interest from the Italian and European agri-food chains. Retail preference for a product guaranteed at a phytosanitary level and with a low carbon footprint, such as Sicilian versus overseas, has intensified this crop in recent years.

"The dehydrated fruit market has an important economic weight in several parts of the world, with growing consumption trends in European countries, as a product as such, in mixtures with other dehydrated fruits, or in the composition of bars. Dehydration is a process that has an important weight in handling postharvest products, given that they have a high water content, in most cases greater than 80%. This method represents an alternative technique to significantly increase the shelf life of the product, making, in addition, that it is available in periods when it is not present on the shelves. The decrease in water content also slows down metabolic reactions and the proliferation of microorganisms", says Vittorio Farina.

"The modern and conscious consumer asks for healthy foods with high nutraceutical properties. Based on this consideration, we wanted to create a new product for the territory: the Sicilian dehydrated mango. It starts from fruits harvested at an early stage of maturity, but also from mature and ready-to-eat or those with aesthetic defects, let's say not suitable for the fresh market. This way, we have achieved the additional objective of not wasting food. Due to its color, aroma, and flavor characteristics, we have obtained a product reminiscent of fresh Sicilian mango, eliminating its typical perishability", explains the university professor.

"Commercially, the idea could be translated into snacks or as an ingredient in various recipes. Once dehydrated, the mango could also be used to compose the bars above or as an ingredient in a cereal mixture. Dehydrated fruits maintain a high value nutritious, appearance, smell, and pleasant taste.