For more information, write or call:

TECHNOLOGICAL SERVICES DIVISION
Industrial Technology Development Institute (ITDI-DOST)
Telefax: 837-2071 loc. 2265 / 837-6156
e-mail: tsd@itdi.dost.gov.ph

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Livelihood Technology Series 1

KALABASA FOOD PRODUCTS

Department of Science and Technology
INDUSTRIAL TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE
DOST Compound, General Santos Avenue
Bicutan, Taguig City, Metro Manila, PHILIPPINES
http://www.itdi.dost.gov.ph

'Our Business is Industry…"

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Prepared by: **ELNILA C. ZALAMEDA**
TSD-ITDI

Ma. ELSA M. FALCO
FPD-ITDI

Edited by: **VIOLETA B. CONOZA**
TSD-ITDI

Cover layout by: **LUZMIN R. ESTEBAN**
TSD-ITDI

Adviser: **NELIA ELISA C. FLORENDO**
TSD-ITDI

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WONDER GOURD

INTRODUCTION

'***KALABASA'*** is never too dull! While too often, '*kalabasa'* (poor) rating in school breeds discontent. In the Filipino kitchen, this wonder gourd called *kalabasa* offers many food graces to man.

Various food products can be developed from *kalabasa*, a popular yellow vegetable rich in vitamin A. It can be used to come up with consumable food items such as vinegar, *nata de kalabasa*, flour and catsup.

FLOUR

Materials Needed

- Fresh kalabasa
- 1% sodium metabisulfite

Utensils

- Knives
- Cabinet dryer or solar dryer

Packaging Materials

- Plastic

Procedures

1. Peel and wash the *kalabasa* thoroughly. Cut into segments, remove seed cavities. Slice into 1 cm x 1 cm size, then soak for about 3 hours in 0.1 percent sodium metabisulfite (1 g sodium metabisulfite/1 L water) to preserve the material and prevent discoloration.
2. Wash the *kalabasa* in running water and drain. Blanch for 15 minutes in warm water, drain.
3. Dry in oven at temperatures between 50° – 55°C or sundrying for 8 to 10 hours or until brittle.
4. Grind the dried samples in coffee/mill grinder and sieve through 40-mesh repeatedly. Pack in plastic bags or in a tightly-sealed jar for safe storage.

CATSUP

1. Select mature squash, peel, remove the core and slice into 1” x 1” size and weigh.
2. Boil 4 cups of *kalabasa* slices in 4 cups water for 10 minutes.

3. Drain the cooked squash, mash and place in Waring blender to come up with *kalabasa* puree.

4. Boil the puree for two (2) minutes.

5. Add slowly all the catsup ingredients (¾ cup vinegar, ¾ cup sugar, ¾ tsp salt, ¼ tsp citric acid and $^{1}/_{8}$ tsp paprika).

6. Separate $^{1}/_{8}$ tsp cloves and ¼ tsp onion, and put in spice bag. Immerse the bag in the puree so that solid bits of spices will not mix with the catsup product.

7. Add 0.5 gm or a pinch of sodium benzoate and 0.1 gm or one-half pinch of gum xanthan.

8. Cook mixture for 30 minutes or until the catsup consistency is smooth under medium heating (50° – 60°C). ***Optional:*** (Add ¼ tsp ketchup red for a desirable color of the product. Stir until a homogenous red color is attained.)

NATA DE KALABASA

1. Wash the peels and core of *kalabasa*. Add three (3) parts water for every part of peel/core. Boil for 15 minutes.

2. Strain using ordinary strainer. Then for every 4 cups of strained liquid from boiled peels/core, add $^{2}/_{3}$ cup sugar and 1¼ tsp ammonium sulfate.

3. Heat for 15 minutes, then cool. Add 1¼ tsp food grade acetic acid to adjust the acidity favorable to the growth of the *nata* organism. Add $^{2}/_{3}$ cup of *nata* starter (available at Bureau of Plant Industry) for every 4 cups of *kalabasa* mixture.

4. Set aside for 10-15 days, then harvest the *nata* product. Cook in 50% syrup to come up with *nata* dessert.

VINEGAR

1. Wash the peels and core of *kalabasa*. Add three (3) parts water for every part of peel. Boil for 15 minutes.
2. Strain. For every 4 cups of strained liquid from boiled peels/core, add 1¼ cups sugar.
3. Boil again for 20 minutes, cool. Transfer to a container then add one (1) tsp yeast.
4. Ferment for seven (7) days until alcohol content is about eight (8) percent by volume using alcohol meter or ebulliometer.
5. Pour gently the alcoholic solution into another container so as not to disturb the sediment. Add one (1) cup of vinegar starter (available at Bureau of Plant Industry) for every four (4) cups of the solution for vinegar fermentation.
6. Set aside from 15-20 days, after which, determine the acidity using titrimetric method or pH paper/litmus paper. (This vinegar usually has an acidity between 6-7 percent as compared to commercial brands of 4 percent acidity).