



Evaluating The impact of Certain Herbal Essential Oils on The Shelf Life and Chemical Composition of Beef Steak



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Abstract

NOWADAYS, spices and herbal characteristics, including essential oils have been recommended as an essential meat additive for its strong antimicrobial and antioxidant which elongate the meat and meat products shelf-life. It, also, improve meat safety and enhance its acceptability. The current study was aimed to investigate the impact of 1.0 and 1.5% of each of ginger (GEO), lemon (LEO) and pomegranate (PEO) peels essential oils on beef steak freshness criteria i.e. pH, total volatile nitrogen (TVN) and thiobarbituric acid (TBA) along of 15 days in the refrigeration. Generally, oils addition revealed significant extension of the treated samples acceptability up to 12 days of storage. Whereas, the control samples spoiled within 6 days of storage. Moreover, the control group exceeded the acceptable limits after the 3rd day of storage, while the treated samples proved their potent antioxidant and antimicrobial traits with higher acceptability score. In addition, GEO, LEO and PEO appeared to add-value of the chemical freshness criteria and shelf-life as a consequence. So, it is recommended to use GEO, LEO and PEO as useful treatments to meat steak for more compatible beef steak with longer shelf-life.

Keywords: Food preservation, Food safety, Shelf life.

Introduction

Freshness issues about meat and meat products in the human diet are significant [1]. In addition, to provide the body with readily digested proteins, meat also contains all the nutrients that are essential for maintaining a healthy diet [2, 3]. The meat is prepared into wholesale or retail cuts once the animal has been killed. Meat trimmings and other cuts are subsequently ground and processed further. This increases the meat's surface area, which promotes the bacteria's adherence and proliferation [4].

Meat is perishable, and during storage, endogenous enzymes and microorganisms cause changes in its chemical composition [5]. Total volatile nitrogen (TVN) is a biomarker for the breakdown of amines and proteins [6, 7, 8]. Furthermore, thiobarbituric acid (TBA) is a good measure of rancidity, especially in meat [8].

The most popular way to preserve fresh meat and meat products is to store them in a refrigerator [9]. The antimicrobial and antioxidant chemicals, particularly synthetic ones, are added to beef

products to increase their shelf-life in the refrigerator [10]. However, as the safety of synthetic additives has been questioned in recent years, consumers recommend to use the natural ingredients as alternative preservatives in the meat and meat products [11].

Extracts of essential oils (EOs) from common culinary herbs, spices, and aromatic plants that have antibacterial and antioxidant properties were used for meat preservation lately [12]. These chemicals used to slow down or stop the growth of foodborne bacteria, which affect the meat's chemical acceptability standards and its shelf life [13].

Medicinal plants have been used for a wide range of purposes throughout history, including food preservation and flavoring spices, which has sparked interest in replacing chemical additions [14]. The efficacy of aromatic herbs and their extracts for applications involving food safety and preservation has been assessed [15]. The active ingredients in their essential oils (EOs) and other secondary plant metabolite components were responsible for the majority of their preservation qualities [16]. Essential

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oils are known to possess antibacterial and antioxidant qualities [17].

Lemon essential oil (LEO), derived from the peel of lemon fruit (*Citrus limon*), contains several active compounds that contribute to its antimicrobial and antioxidant properties [18]. These compounds include limonene, citral, linalool, α -terpineol, β -pinene and terpinene-4-ol which gave the LEO its specific aroma and functionality as antimicrobial agent through microbial cell wall disruption and death [19]. In addition, LEO contains significant amounts of flavonoids such as hesperidin and naringin, which possess antioxidant properties [20]. These compounds can scavenge free radicals and reduce oxidative stress, thereby preserving the quality of meat products by preventing lipid oxidation and delaying spoilage [21, 22].

Several bioactive components found in ginger essential oil, which is extracted from the rhizome of the ginger plant (*Zingiber officinale*), give it antibacterial and antioxidant qualities. β -Sesquiphellandrene, zingerone, gingerols, shogaols, and gingerdione are some of these active components. These components help scavenge free radicals and lessen oxidative stress because of their potent antioxidant qualities [23]. The growth of foodborne pathogens and spoilage microorganisms in meat products is also effectively inhibited by gingerols, which have been demonstrated to possess antibacterial action against a broad variety of bacteria and fungi.

Pomegranate essential oil (PEO), derived from the seeds and peel of the pomegranate fruit (*Punica granatum*). It contains several bioactive compounds that contribute to its antimicrobial and antioxidant properties [24]. These active compounds include punicalic acid, ellagic acid, punicalagins and anthocyanins; which, exhibit significant antioxidant activities and can help scavenge free radicals, preventing oxidative damage to lipids and proteins in meat products [25]. They also contribute to the preservation of meat freshness and quality [26]. Moreover, PEO contains flavonoids (such as quercetin and kaempferol) and vitamin C; which have a potent antioxidant effects and help maintaining their effectiveness in protecting meat products from oxidative damage [27]. In addition, phyosterols have antioxidant properties and can help stabilize cell membranes in meat products, reducing lipid oxidation and preserving product quality [24].

The antibacterial positive impacts effects of the previously stated essential oils on meat preservation might be due to the prevention the formation of foodborne pathogens and spoilage bacteria, increasing of their shelf life and guaranteeing food safety. Moreover, its antioxidant properties can also stop lipid oxidation, maintaining the quality and flavor of meat products. Therefore, the current study

was carried out to determine the impact of ginger, lemon, and pomegranate peel essential oils (EOs) on beef steak preservation during refrigerator storage in terms of the meat quality chemical parameters (pH, TVN, and TBA).

Material and methods

Essential oils

From CAP PHARM Co., which extracts natural oils, plants, and cosmetics in Al-Obour City, Qalubiya Governorate, Egypt, the ready-to-use oils from ginger, lemon, and pomegranate peels were acquired. Every chemical that was utilized was of food quality. Until they were needed, these oils were kept at 4°C in amber-colored bottles.

Fresh beef meat steak

A 3.5 kg of the fresh beef steak used in this study. The samples were separated into 7 equal groups, each one weighed 500 g. Then treated by adding essential oils in varying amounts (1.0 and 1.5% conc.). They were then further divided into equal subgroups, each weighing roughly 85 g, and stored in the refrigerator until analyses.

Experimental design

The main 7 groups named as G1 to G7, representing control untreated sample, and treated samples with ginger EO (1% and 1.5%), lemon EO (1% and 1.5%) and pomegranate EO (1% and 1.5%), respectively. After addition of EOs, mixed thoroughly by gently squeezing the bags by hand and were left for 30 seconds for complete adaptation between oils and beef steak samples.

Initial pH, TVN and TBA values were determined after 30 seconds of refrigeration and every 3 days of storage until exceeding the permissible limits (6.8 for pH, 20 mg% for TVN and 0.9 mg malonaldehyde% for TBA). All samples were kept in refrigerator during all the experimental period. Tests were performed in triplicate.

Estimation of the chemical criteria

The pH, total volatile nitrogen (TVN), and thiobarbituric acid (TBA) values were conducted according to EOS 63-11 [28] using a calibrated pH meter (Adwa, AD1200) dipped in 50g of minced meat sample, EOS: 63-9 [29] in which ten grams of minced meat sample was mixed with magnesium oxide and Dist. water and place to boiler for distilling vapor in mixture of boric acid and methyl red reagent; which will furtherly neutralized by sulphoric acid 0.1N. % for TVN = Sulphoric acid (ml) needed to neutralize the end product - Sulphoric acid (ml) needed to neutralize the control test x 14 (mg/100 g of meat); and EOS 63-10 [30] through mixing of ten grams of well-minced meat distilled water + hydroaluric acid 4N, followed by heating of the flask containing the mixture to distill about 50

ml of the distillate; from which, 5 ml were mixed with thiobarbituric acid reagent and was kept in a boiling water bath for 35 minutes. Optical density of the end product was measured at wavelength 538; where, TBA = Light absorption x 7.8 (mg malonaldehyde/kg), respectively.

Statistical analysis

A one-way ANOVA was used to data analysis; and Duncan's post hoc multiple range test was used to compare between treatments using the SPSS software for Windows (Version 16) (SPSS Inc., Chicago, IL, USA). The P value of less than 0.05 was considered statistically significant.

Results

Referring to the shown obtained results in Fig. (1), gradual increases in pH values were recorded; where, the control group exceeded the acceptable limit (6.8) after the 3rd day of storage, while the treated samples showed longer acceptability; where the treated samples with PEO (1%) and LEO 1% recorded >6.8 pH in the 9th and 12th day of storage, respectively. After 15 days of storage, all the examined groups exceeded the acceptable limit.

Referring to the recorded results in Fig. (2), gradual increases in TVN values were recorded; where, the control group exceeded the acceptable limit (20 mg%) after the 9th day of storage, while the treated samples showed longer acceptability. After 15th days of storage, all the examined groups exceeded the acceptable limit, except GEO (1.0% and 1.5%) treated samples.

Referring to the recorded results in Fig. (3), gradual increases in TBA values were recorded; where, the control group exceeded the acceptable limit (0.9 MDA mg%) after the 6th day of storage, while the treated samples showed longer acceptability. After 10th days of storage, all the examined groups exceeded the acceptable limit, except GEO (1.0% and 1.5%) treated samples.

Referring to the overall obtained results, ginger oil revealed superior better preservation effect than the other examined essential oils.

Discussion

Recent interest in the antioxidant qualities of polyphenols derived from ginger, lemon, and pomegranate peels has arisen because the use of natural antioxidants is thought to be a helpful tactic in postponing or slowing lipid oxidation as well as preventing the production of harmful oxidation products in meat products, improving the shelf-stability of food products [31].

Essential oils can meet some of the growing demand for "green food" items made from natural sources as people shift toward consuming food free of chemicals [32].

Meat's high moisture content and readily used nutrients make it prone to spoiling quickly, even during chilling conditioning, and have a short shelf life [33]. This is linked to an initial loss of freshness that affects the food's bacteriological and sensory quality. So, sensory evaluation is important when it comes to food acceptability, as human response determines the eating quality of any food [34].

According to many studies, the usage of chemicals and other produced food additives might cause malignant neoplasms as well as degenerative illnesses[35, 36]. In order to cover various antibacterial qualities and extend the duration of realistic usage, it became necessary to look for elective procedures. Natural plant byproducts have recently attracted a lot of attention in food conservation measures due to their ability to inhibit the growth of harmful microorganisms through their antioxidant activity [11].

Medicinal plants have been used for a wide range of purposes throughout history, including food preservation and flavoring spices, which has sparked interest in replacing chemical additions [14]. A variety of methods, including dipping, spraying, and adding, can be used to include essential oils into food products [37].

Regarding with the present results, significant ($P \leq 0.05$) retardation in the pH values raising up, as a results of fatty acids and amino acids degradation, in the treated groups. Inter-groups comparison revealed that the control group exceeded the acceptable limit (6.8) after the 3rd day of storage, while the treated samples showed longer acceptability; where the treated samples with PEO (1%) and LEO 1% recorded >6.8 pH in the 9th and 12th day of storage, respectively revealing superiority of LEO as an enhancer for pH values of the treated meat samples; which may be attributed to the bioactive contents of lemon oil such as vitamin C, citric acid, phenolics and flavonoids which are believed to be responsible for a range of protective benefits including anti-oxidative and antimicrobial activities[38].

Because pH is correlated with the metabolic changes that take place in meat during storage, it is a crucial indicator of meat quality and freshness. The pH of fresh meat is normally mildly acidic, though this might vary based on the animal's species, muscle type, and diet. Meat's pH variations might reveal important details about its quality and freshness. Meat spoilage can also be detected by changes in pH that occur during storage. Because microbial growth and metabolic processes produce ammonia and other alkaline substances, spoiled meat may experience an alkaline shift, or an increase in pH. Thus, it is possible to detect microbial spoiling and guarantee the safety and quality of meat products by keeping an eye on pH variations during storage [39].

However, TBA and TVN are frequently utilized as markers of the quality and freshness of meat. The volatile nitrogenous chemicals that are created as meat's proteins break down are measured by TVN. Ammonia, amines, and other volatile nitrogenous chemicals are released as meat spoils due to the breakdown of proteins by proteolytic enzymes and microbial activity. Elevated TVN levels in meat are a sign of advanced protein breakdown and spoiling, which can produce unpleasant smells and aromas [7]. Malondialdehyde (MDA), a sign of lipid oxidation in meat, is also measured by the TBA assay. When meat's unsaturated fats react with oxygen, reactive oxygen species are created, which causes lipid oxidation and subsequent lipid breakdown [4].

However, gradual rise up in the both TVN and TBA parameters were observed in the current study as a result of enzymatic and microbial lipolytic and proteolytic activities. It was faster in the control group than in the EOs treated groups; which acceptability for consumption extended to the 12th day of storage.

Ginger EO showed higher enhancement effect on TVN and TBA values among the used EOs. The current obtained results can be attributed to the potent antimicrobial and antioxidative effects of the used EOs referring to its contents of bioactive polyphenols compounds that have significant antimicrobial and antioxidative activity in meat matrix[21, 23, 24].

Recorded results agreed with those of Elbalsy *et al.* [40], Eldahrawy *et al.* [41] and Zhang *et al.* [42] who recorded significant antibacterial and antioxidant effects of the used herbal extracts in the treated meat products; which was reflected on the pH, TVN and TBA values and meat freshness, quality and shelf-life as consequences.

Conclusion

Essential oils offer beneficial antioxidant effects on the treated steak samples. Among them, pomegranate essential oil (1.5%) demonstrated the most effectiveness, followed by ginger and lemon essential oils as antioxidant agents in the meat model. Consequently, it is advisable to incorporate ginger, lemon, and pomegranate essential oils, along with GMP, in meat production and preservation.

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Declaration of Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

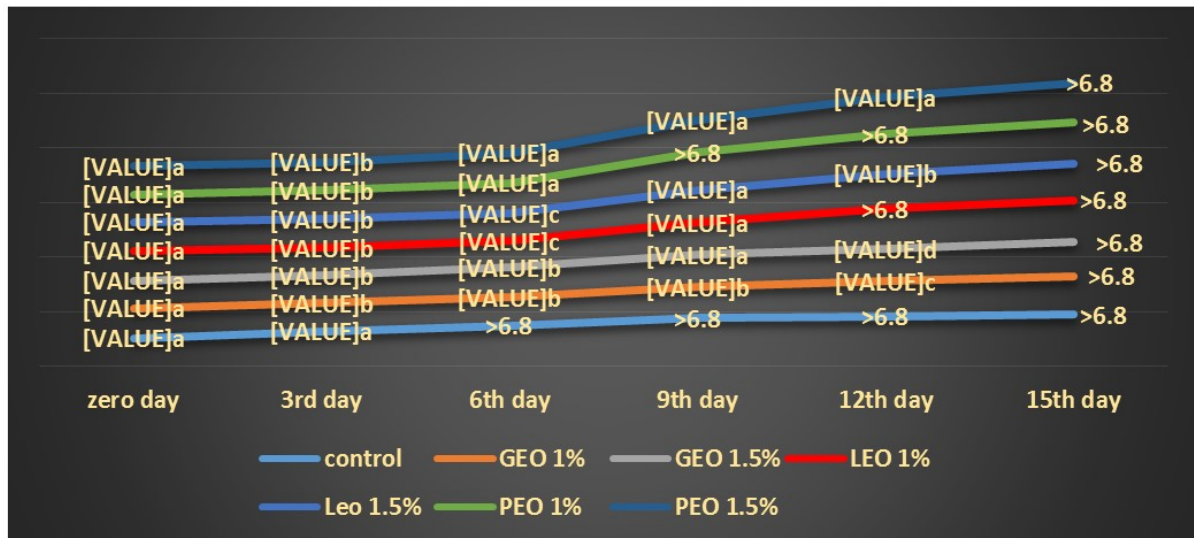


Fig. 1. Effect of different concentrations of EOs on meat pH values

*Means with different superscript are significantly different ($P < 0.05$). Values > 6.8 represent decomposed samples

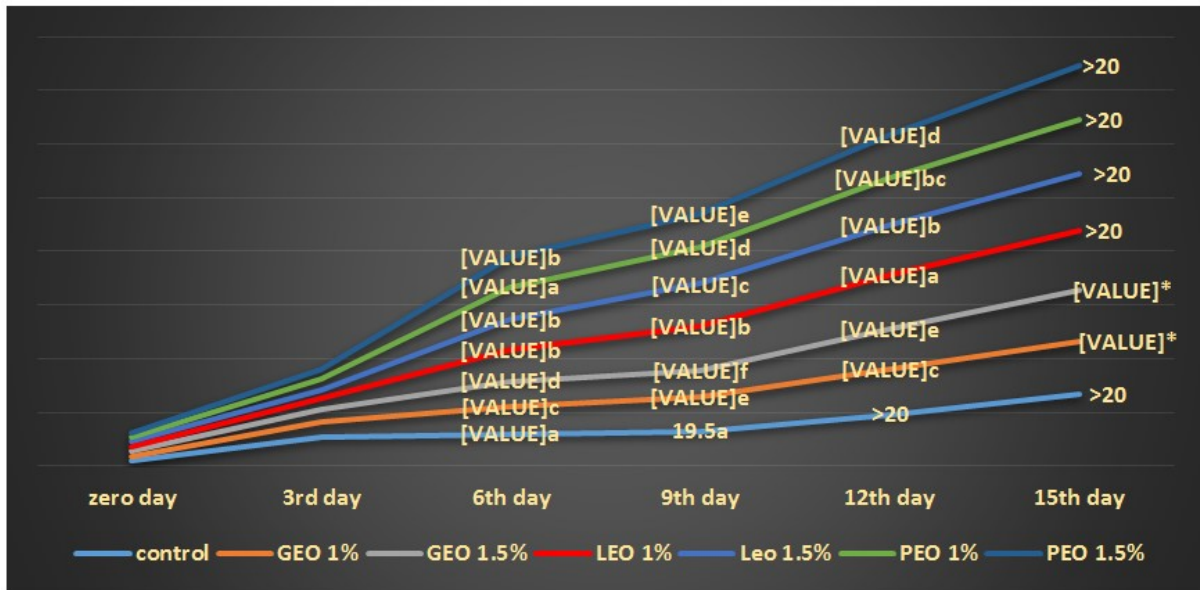


Fig. 2. Effect of different concentrations of EOs on meat TVN values

*Means with different superscript are significantly different ($P < 0.05$)

* Means, of 15th day, carrying superscript star are significantly different by independent T test ($P \leq 0.05$)

Values > 20.0 represent decomposed samples

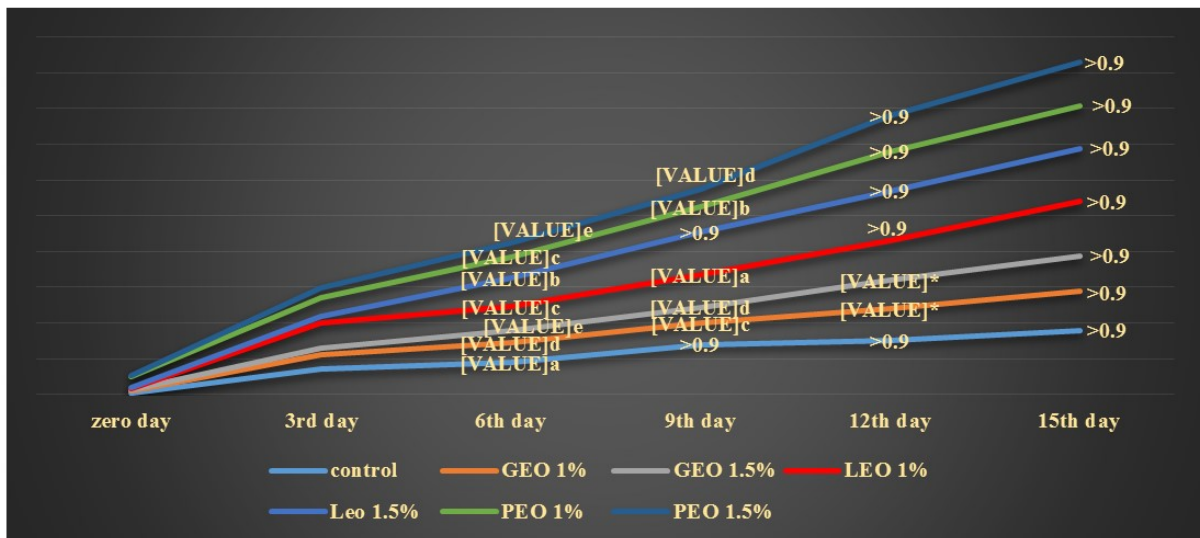


Fig. 3. Effect of different concentrations of EOs on meat TBA values

*Means with different superscript are significantly different ($P < 0.05$)

* Means, of 15th day, carrying superscript star are significantly different by independent T test ($P \leq 0.05$)

Values > 0.9 represent decomposed samples

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تقدير تأثير بعض الزيوت العطرية العشبية على مدة صلاحية شرائح اللحم البقري من حيث خصائصها الكيميائية

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³ قسم صحة الاغذية، معهد بحوث الصحة الحيوانية، مركز البحوث الزراعية، جمهورية مصر العربية.

الملخص

يوصى باستخدام التوابل والمنتجات العشبية الطبيعية بما في ذلك الزيوت العطرية كإضافات أساسية للحوم ومنتجاتها بسبب خصائصها القوية كمضادات للميكروبات والأكسدة بهدف إطالة عمر التخزين مع تحسين الجودة وتعزيز قبولها. تهدف الدراسة الحالية إلى التحقق من تأثير معالجة شرائح اللحم البقري بالزيوت العطرية المستخلصة من قشور الزنجبيل والليمون والرمان بتركيزات (1 و 1.5%) على معايير القبول الكيميائية الدالة على صلاحية اللحوم المتمثلة في الرقم الهيدروجيني ونسبة النيتروجين الكلي المتطاير وحمض الثيوباربيتوريك على مدار 15 يوماً من التخزين المبرد. بشكل عام؛ أظهرت النتائج إطالة العمر التخزيني ومعايير القبول في المجموعات المعالجة بإضافة الزيوت العطرية حتى اليوم الثاني عشر من التخزين المبرد، في حين ظهرت علامات الفساد على عينات مجموعة المقارنة بعد ستة أيام من التخزين. تم تسجيل زيادات تدريجية في قيم الرقم الهيدروجيني والنيتروجين المتطاير الكلي وحمض الثيوباربيتوريك حيث تجاوزت مجموعة المقارنة الحدود المقبولة بعد اليوم الثالث من التخزين، بينما أثبتت العينات المعالجة بزيوت قشور الزنجبيل والليمون والرمان تأثيرها المضاد للأكسدة من خلال إطالة فترة التخزين للعينات المعالجة بدرجة قبول أعلى مما سبق يمكن استنتاج أن إضافة زيوت قشور الزنجبيل والليمون والرمان إلى عينات شرائح اللحم البقري حسنت معايير القبول الكيميائية ومدة الصلاحية. لذلك، يوصى باستخدام تلك الزيوت محل الدراسة كإضافات ذات فائدة لشرائح اللحم مع اتباع الممارسات الصحية الموصى بها أثناء التصنيع والتخزين.

الكلمات الدالة: حفظ الاغذية، سلامة الغذاء، العمر التخزيني للحوم.