

## **Novel Drying Method for Vegetables, Fruits, Herbs, and Aquatic Resources**

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This paper gives an overview of Refractance Window<sup>®</sup> (RW) drying method with particular reference to the drying of various vegetables (asparagus and squash), fruits (berries), herbs (aloe vera), and marine algae. This technology is specifically suited for drying pureed tropical fruits or other fresh produce that are characterized by unique aroma and bright colours. With this drying method, high moisture fresh fruits, vegetables or herbs typically dry in 3-5 minutes, with excellent retention of colour, vitamin, and antioxidant contents. The systems operate at atmospheric pressure and are used for commercial production of scrambled egg mix, avocado powder, high carotenoid-containing algae, herbal extracts, human nutrition supplements and food ingredients, as well as dried fruits and vegetables. Compared to freeze drying, a well established technology for high value products, RW drying is simple and relatively inexpensive. Drying results for some of the mentioned products will be discussed including a highlight of areas that need further research and improvement.