



PHYSICOCHEMICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF LEMI FLAVOR POWDER OF BLUE SWIMMER CRAB (*Portunus pelagicus*) WITH MALTODEXTRIN ADDITION

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Abstract

The blue swimmer crab is one of the most important commodities and has high economic value. High export demand is followed by an increase in the volume of by-products, namely semi-solid substances (lemi). Lemi can be used as a flavor, but the product in the market is not optimal. Fillers such as maltodextrin need to be added to improve the flavor characteristics of the powder. This study aimed to determine the best concentration of maltodextrin on the physicochemical characteristics of crab lemi powder flavor. We used a completely randomized design (CRD) to compare the effects of various maltodextrin concentrations (5%, 10%, and 15%) on the yield, cooking loss, bulk density, and proximate composition of the flavor powder. The best concentration was 10% maltodextrin with a 26.68% yield, 73.54% cooking loss, 0.58 g/mL bulk density, 3.14% moisture content, 11.60% ash, 42.40% protein, 11.69% fat, and 31.18% carbohydrate. The addition of maltodextrin to the flavored blue swimmer crab lemi powder has the potential to transform it into a powdered flavoring suitable for a variety of food types.

Keywords: bulk density, cooking loss, proximate, seasoning, yield

Karakteristik Fisikokimia Flavor Bubuk Lemi Rajungan (*Portunus pelagicus*) dengan Penambahan Maltodekstrin

Abstrak

Rajungan merupakan salah satu komoditas penting dan memiliki nilai ekonomi tinggi. Permintaan ekspor yang tinggi diikuti dengan penambahan volume hasil samping, yaitu zat semi padat (lemi). Lemi dapat dimanfaatkan sebagai *flavor*, namun produk tersebut di pasaran belum optimal. Bahan pengisi misalnya maltodekstrin perlu ditambahkan untuk meningkatkan karakteristik *flavor* bubuk. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menentukan konsentrasi maltodekstrin terbaik terhadap karakteristik fisikokimia flavor bubuk lemi rajungan. Rancangan acak lengkap (RAL) digunakan untuk membandingkan pengaruh berbagai konsentrasi maltodekstrin (5%, 10%, dan 15%) terhadap rendemen, susut masak, *bulk density*, dan komposisi proksimat bubuk *flavor*. Konsentrasi terbaik, yaitu 10% maltodekstrin, rendemen 26,68%, susut masak 73,54%, *bulk density* 0,58 g/mL, kadar air 3,14%, abu 11,60%, protein 42,40%, lemak 11,69%, dan karbohidrat 31,18%. *Flavor* bubuk lemi rajungan dengan penambahan maltodekstrin berpotensi dikembangkan menjadi penyedap rasa bubuk dan diaplikasikan pada berbagai jenis pangan.

Kata kunci: *bulk density*, penyedap rasa, proksimat, rendemen, susut masak

INTRODUCTION

The blue swimmer crab (*Portunus pelagicus*) is a species of the phylum Crustacea, family Portunidae, and genus Portunus (Lai *et al.*, 2010). The crab this type is known by the common name blue swimmer crab. It is a crustacean that lives in beach and coastal habitats with bottom substrates of sand, mud sand, and seagrass habitats, to a depth of at least 50 m (Hamid *et al.*, 2016). The blue swimmer crab holds a significant economic value as one of the coastal resources (Iksanti *et al.*, 2022). This is due to the high demand for crab exports every year. The export value of crab reached USD 448 million in 2023. The crab commodity socially provides livelihoods for around 90,000 crab fishermen and 180,000 peelers who process crab (Kementerian Kelautan dan Perikanan [KKP], 2024). The export value of Indonesian fishery products until September 2024 reached USD 4.23 billion with a total export volume of 1.02 million tons (KKP, 2024). A 40.4% increase in king crab exports contributed positively to the growth of Indonesia's overall export value of fishery products.

Each year, a large volume of waste or by-products follows the increasing production and demand for crab (Mursida *et al.*, 2018). This is because crab processing generally only utilizes the meat for various products, namely fresh crab, frozen meat, and processed crab meat in cans (Natalia *et al.*, 2021). Shell waste reaches 40–60% of the total weight of crabs (Rochima, 2014). (Rochima, 2014). The proportion of crab body parts after stripping is 52.59% shell, 35.68% meat, and 11.73% offal (Suwandi *et al.*, 2019). Currently, the utilization of waste and by-products is not optimal, leading to their discarding. This leads to new environmental issues such as pollution, discomfort due to unpleasant odors, and potential disease (Supratman & Umroh, 2016) (Supratman & Umroh, 2016). Amalia *et al.* (2021) have conducted research to map crab waste in Indonesia and process it into chitosan products due to their high added value.

In addition to serving as chitosan, the by-products of crab processing also contain semi-solid substances that remain after processing. The crab shell contains a yellowish

material known as lemi. Lemli is a yellowish material found under the surface of the crab shell. When collecting crab meat, it's important to remove Lemli as it can alter the color of the meat if mixed (Azmy *et al.*, 2021). Foods such as rengginang (Badriyah & Jumiati, 2022), shrimp crackers (Jumiati & Suprapti, 2022), and flavors (Sasongko *et al.*, 2018; Nur Fajri *et al.*, 2021; Novitasari *et al.*, 2021) have incorporated lemi. Lemli has challenges when added to food, namely high moisture content, susceptibility to spoilage, and limited shelf life.

The unique flavor of lemi presents a promising opportunity for use as a powdered seasoning. Pandega Food has produced and marketed lemi powder to the community. Most buyers apply lemi powder to food, specifically as an ingredient for shrimp paste. Powdered products have several advantages, including increasing stability, simplifying handling, and expanding usability for various food applications (Wijayanti & Dewi, 2020). Partners still produce lemi powder using simple processing techniques such as drying, roasting, and grinding. Making lemi powder on a business scale is still a challenge because the characteristics produced are not optimal. We need to add filling materials to lemi powder to improve its characteristics effectively and efficiently, considering its economic value. Maltodextrin is a common addition to powdered products.

Commonly used as a carrier agent in powdered products, maltodextrin plays a crucial role in maintaining and protecting flavor compounds during processing (Atungulu & Pan, 2014). In powder drying, maltodextrin serves as a filler and dressing material, protecting important compounds from damage and enhancing yield (Novitasari *et al.*, 2021). Amini *et al.* (2023) research demonstrates that adding maltodextrin to flavor powder can act as a dressing material, shielding the material's compounds from damage. The use of appropriate methods and formulations can improve the flavor characteristics of powders. This study employs a processing method approach that involves steaming, blending, and drying lemi paste with varying levels of maltodextrin, with the aim of enhancing the powder's flavor characteristics and boosting its



competitiveness in the market. Before drying, the steaming process inactivates enzymes and eliminates microbial contaminants, and the addition of maltodextrin enhances the stability, dispersibility, and overall quality of the powdered flavor (Agustina *et al.*, 2019; Jaya *et al.*, 2006). Previous studies have shown that maltodextrin concentration affects product characteristics, such as moisture retention, aroma retention, and slurry density. However, there is limited information on how different maltodextrin concentrations affect the flavor of lemi-based powder. Research on the effect of modified processing techniques for crab lemi and maltodextrin incorporation on powder flavor characteristics is limited. This study aimed to determine the best concentration of maltodextrin on the physicochemical characteristics of lemi blue swimmer crab powder flavor.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Preparation of Flavor Powder from Crab By-products

The main ingredient of the flavor for each treatments is 500 g lemi obtained from crab processing in Rembang, Central Java. Other ingredients used in this study included 5 g salt, as well as variations in maltodextrin concentration percentage according to the lemi (5% = 25 g, 10% = 50 g, and 15% = 75 g). These different concentrations of maltodextrin were used in the formulation of crab lemi to determine their effect on the physicochemical properties of the resulting lemi powder flavor.

The procedure for producing lemi rajungan powder flavor is referenced from Wijayanti & Dewi (2020).

The powdered flavor production begins with fresh lemi that is cleaned of impurities. Next, the steaming process lasts for 10 minutes starting from the moment the water boils. The steaming process serves to reduce the risk of spoilage from microorganisms and increase the flavor present in the crab lemi. The experimental design added maltodextrin and salt to the steamed lemi at a predetermined weight percentage. The prepared ingredients were then mixed until homogeneous using a food processor, resulting in a smooth lemi paste. The paste was then poured evenly onto a tray and dried in an oven at 65-70°C until dry. The dried lemi was then ground to a fine powder using a grinder. The ground lemi powder was then sieved using a 60-mesh sieve. Flavored crab lemi powder is then packaged in bottles and capped to maintain its quality, and stored in cool and dry conditions until the product will be analyzed further. Figure 1 presents the flavor of lemi powder.

Physical Test

The physical properties of powdered flavor from crab by-products (lemi) included yield, cooking loss, and bulk density. The yield was calculated as a percentage of the total mass of the resulting lemi flavor powder compared to the total mass of the raw materials before drying. Cooking loss was determined by measuring the weight loss of crab lemi

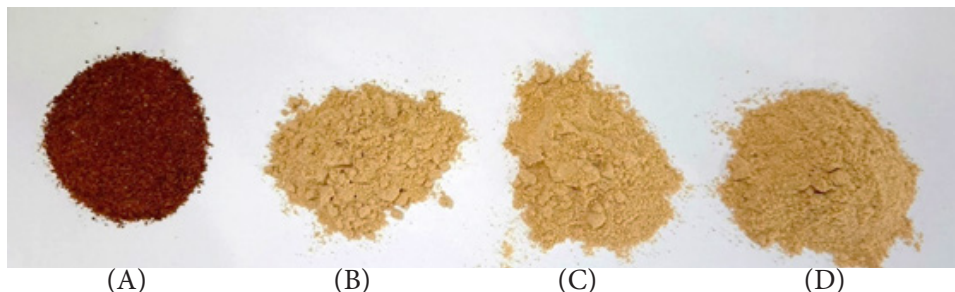


Figure 1 Lemi powder flavor; (A) commercial products, (B) with 5% maltodextrin, (C) with 10% maltodextrin, (D) with 15% maltodextrin

Gambar 1 *Flavor lemi bubuk*; (A) produk mitra, (B) 5% maltodekstrin, (C) 10% maltodekstrin, (D) 15% maltodekstrin

powder during processing (Prabawa *et al.*, 2021; Wijayanti & Dewi, 2020). Bulk density is the ratio of the weight of the material to the volume it occupies, including the empty space between the grains. Bulk density was calculated as the weight of the sample per unit volume of the sample (Kaur & Singh, 2007).

Proximate Analysis

Proximate analysis included moisture, protein, ash, fat, and carbohydrate content. Moisture content was determined using the thermogravimetric method, while protein content was analyzed using the Kjeldahl method. Ash content was measured by combustion in a muffle furnace, and fat content was determined using the Soxhlet extraction method. Carbohydrate content was calculated by the by-difference method. Proximate analysis refers to the AOAC (2005) method.

Data Analysis

The research design used a completely randomized design (CRD) consisting of three treatments of maltodextrin concentration (5, 10, and 15%). The data obtained were statistically analyzed using analysis of variance (ANOVA) to assess statistical significance ($p < 0.05$) among treatments. ANOVA results that showed a significant difference were followed by Duncan's Multiple Range Test (DMRT) to determine which treatments were significantly different.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Physical Characteristics

Yield, cooking loss, and bulk density are important physical parameters in a processing process. The addition of maltodextrin at a

concentration of 10 and 15% resulted in an increase in yield and a decrease in cooking loss (Table 1). This indicates high process efficiency and product stability (Marques *et al.*, 2014). The addition of maltodextrin with a concentration of 15% increased the bulk density of lemi powder flavor. The percentage yield indicates the efficiency of the process. Higher yields indicate better retention, which is desirable regarding economic and nutritional factors (Patriani *et al.*, 2020).

The functional properties of maltodextrin are responsible for the increase in yield value in this study and the decrease in cooking loss at higher maltodextrin concentrations. The lemi powder flavor yield ranged from 24.68% to 27.44%, while the cooking loss value varied from 72.56% to 75.32%. ANOVA results showed $p < 0.05$, indicating significant differences in yield and cooking loss. Significant differences were found in the 15% and 5% treatments ($p < 0.05$). ANOVA results with a value of $p < 0.05$, showed significant differences in cooking loss parameters. Maltodextrin concentration of 5% had the highest cooking loss (75.32%), while the 15% concentration treatment had the lowest (72.56%). Maltodextrin concentration directly influences the crab lemi powder flavor yield and cooking loss. The results observed in this study are in line with the results reported by Crehan *et al.* (2000), who examined the effect of various concentrations of maltodextrin on the yield obtained. The results showed that increasing the addition of maltodextrin resulted in higher yields and lower cooking loss.

Cooking loss values indicate the amount of weight lost during processing, mainly due to loss of moisture and fat content.

Table 1 Physical characteristic of blue swimmer crab lemi powder flavor

Tabel 1 Karakteristik fisik flavor bubuk lemi rajungan

Maltodextrin (%)	Yield (%)	Cooking loss (%)	Bulk density (g/mL)
5	24.68±1.19 ^a	75.32±1.19 ^a	0.53±0.03 ^a
10	26.46±0.63 ^b	73.54±0.63 ^b	0.58±0.02 ^b
15	27.44±0.66 ^b	72.56±0.66 ^b	0.62±0.02 ^b
Commercial products	30.83±3.82	69.17±3.82	3.44±0.29

Different letters on the same column indicate significant differences ($p < 0.05$)



Lower cooking loss values indicate better nutrient and flavor retention (Alpaugh *et al.*, 2020). The decrease in cooking loss values with the addition of higher levels of maltodextrin indicates improved thermal stability and reduced water and fat content during the drying process. These factors may affect the quality, shelf life, and solubility of crab lemi powder flavor. The combination of steaming and oven drying, along with the use of maltodextrin, enhanced the physicochemical properties and quality of the powdered flavor (Luo *et al.*, 2020; McDermott *et al.*, 2018).

The ability of maltodextrin to retain water and minimize weight loss during processing is critical to maintaining the physicochemical characteristics of powdered products. By increasing water binding capacity and reducing weight loss, maltodextrin can contribute to improved product stability, longer shelf life, and better retention of flavor and nutritional components (Ningsih *et al.*, 2019).

The increase in yield and reduction in cooking loss with higher maltodextrin addition showed that the addition of maltodextrin improved the processing characteristics of lemi powder flavor. The water-binding and stabilizing properties of maltodextrin, which can aid in water-binding ability and minimize nutrient loss during processing, are responsible for the high yield and reduction in cooking loss (Ningsih *et al.*, 2019; Ozcelik & Kulozik, 2023). Other research has found that adding maltodextrin (5–20%) to different types of food products, like meat and seafood-based ones, can improve their processing and functional properties (Bebartta *et al.*, 2023; Murphy *et al.*, 2003). These results support what this study found.

Bulk density represents an object's mass in unit volume, accounting for the voids present within the solid. Based on the test results, 15% maltodextrin has a greater bulk density than 5%. This is because a higher concentration of maltodextrin in the powdered crabmeat flavor leads to a higher concentration of soluble solids. As the water content decreases, the particle size of the powdered crab lemi flavor becomes smaller. So that the water

content is lower, it makes the particle size of the powdered crab lemi flavor smaller. This is in accordance with the research of Srihari *et al.* (2015), which showed that the higher the concentration of maltodextrin added to garlic powder, the greater the bulk density.

The physical characteristics of lemi flavor products from partners differ from the lemi flavor powder found in research results when maltodextrin was added. The physical characteristics of the partner product were yield 30.83 ± 3.82 , cooking loss 69.17 ± 3.82 , and bulk density 3.44 ± 0.29 . The yield of the partner product was much higher, and the cooking loss was lower due to the different processing process and ingredient composition. The difference led to a significant increase in the product's water content, which in turn increased its weight yield. The difference in the processing process, namely temperature and heating time, is one of the factors that affects the water content, which affects the yield and cooking loss (Buckle *et al.*, 2010). Bulk density can be calculated from the ratio of the weight of the material to the volume it occupies, including the empty space between the grains of material. The bulk density of the partner's product was higher than that of the researched lemi powder flavor. This is influenced by the manufacturing process, such as the sieving process, the size and type of raw materials, and the moisture content of the material or product. Material size and moisture content are factors that affect the physical properties of materials, namely bulk density (Andriani *et al.*, 2013).

Proximate Composition

Proximate analysis was conducted on the raw materials of crab lemi, partner products, and lemi powder flavor products with different maltodextrin variations. The proximate analysis showed significant differences in the content of the lemi powder flavor formulated with various concentrations of maltodextrin. The difference in proximate composition shows the effect of maltodextrin addition on lemi powder flavor characteristics. Table 2 presents the proximate composition data.

Table 2 Proximate composition of lemi and lemi flavor powder
Tabel 2 Komposisi proksimat bahan baku lemi dan bubuk flavor lemi rajungan

Parameters (%)	Lemi	Commercial products	Maltodextrin (%)		
			5	10	15
Moisture	78.26	14.85±1.09	5.02±0.83 ^a	3.14±0.80 ^b	3.76±1.03 ^{ab}
Ash	2.40	22.80±1.15	13.47±0.14 ^a	11.60±0.18 ^b	10.52±0.18 ^c
Protein	14.40	43.41±0.61	46.67±0.57 ^a	42.40±1.37 ^b	36.54±0.60 ^c
Fat	0.02	5.16±0.64	13.13±0.51 ^a	11.69±0.71 ^b	9.48±0.22 ^c
Carbohydrate	4.95	13.78±2.38	21.70±1.44 ^a	31.18±1.83 ^b	39.70±0.85 ^c

Different letters on the same row indicate significant differences ($p < 0.05$)

Moisture

Moisture content ranged from 3.76% to 5.02%, indicating a difference in moisture content with increasing concentration of maltodextrin used. The water content of fresh lemi and partner products without maltodextrin was higher. Maltodextrin, with its hydrophilic properties and free hydroxyl groups, influences this by binding water more easily to the product (Ratna *et al.*, 2021). ANOVA results showed significant differences ($p < 0.05$) in moisture content between treatments. The study's moisture content is lower than that of Wijayanti & Dewi's (2020) research, which found that the powdered flavor's moisture content ranged from 10.83-12.43% when using a combination of fillers, specifically 15% nanocalcium and maltodextrin. This indicates that the formulation in this study is more effective at controlling moisture content, which can lead to an increase in shelf life and product stability.

This study's moisture content matches powder flavors made from crab by-products, which Yusuf *et al.* (2022) process by adding fillers (maltodextrin and gum arabic). The results showed that the moisture content ranged from 2.24% to 3.28%. This highlights the significance of filler selection in enhancing binding ability, a crucial factor in preserving product quality and shelf life.

Maltodextrin affects the moisture content value based on the concentration and type of filler used. Ingredient formulation greatly influences the characteristics and stability of the final product. This can aid in the formulation of powdered flavors and offer insights into how different ingredients

can enhance physicochemical characteristics, guarantee product safety, and extend shelf life (Mauer *et al.*, 2019). Li *et al.* (2020) and the dynamic release of flavor substances during dissolution. MDs with three different DE values and whey protein isolate were mixed in a ratio of 4:1 as wall materials to encapsulate ethyl acetate, and powdered microcapsules were prepared by spray drying. It was proved that MD could reduce the diffusion of flavor substances under different relative humidity conditions through the interaction between core material and wall material. During dissolution, MD released flavor substances quickly owing to its superior solubility. The reconstituted emulsion formed after the powder dissolved in water recaptured flavor substances and made the system reach equilibrium. This study explored the mechanism of flavor release during the storage and dissolution of powder micro capsules and should help us understand the application of powder micro-capsules in food systems. (Li *et al.*, 2020 suggest that the selection of ingredient type and concentration, like maltodextrin, can enhance the moisture content, nutrient retention, and overall product quality and stability of powdered flavor products.

Ash

The resulting ash content was 10.52-13.47%, showing a decrease as the maltodextrin content increased. The lack of minerals in lemi raw material results in a low ash content, while the proportion of other ingredients influences the high ash content of the partner product. ANOVA results of ash content showed significant differences ($p < 0.05$) between



treatments. Duncan's further test results showed a significant difference between all treatments: 5% (13.47%) > 10% (11.60%) > 15% (10.52%). The 5% maltodextrin treatment had the highest ash content at 13.47%, and the 15% maltodextrin treatment had the lowest at 10.52%. Ash content decreased with increasing maltodextrin. The properties of maltodextrin are responsible for the decrease in ash content with higher maltodextrin addition. Maltodextrin is a filler made of carbohydrates and almost no minerals. When added in large amounts, it lowered the concentration of minerals that came from crab waste.

Increasing maltodextrin reduces the amount of other components, including the mineral content of an ingredient, leading to a decrease in ash content (Atma & Pakpahan, 2020; Manikandan *et al.*, 2020). The lower ash content in crab lemi powder flavor with more maltodextrin is likely due to the carbohydrate-rich maltodextrin dissolving the mineral components of the product. Ash content is the mineral content of a product, indicating the presence of important minerals such as calcium, phosphorus, and iron from the crab lemi powder flavor. Minerals present in powdered flavors are also essential nutrients that can contribute to various physiological processes and functions important for human health (Aubourg *et al.*, 2021; Lee *et al.*, 2022).

Protein

The protein content of lemi powder flavor was 36.54-46.67%, with statistically significant differences ($p < 0.05$) between treatments. The 5% maltodextrin concentration had the highest protein content (46.67%), while the 15% maltodextrin concentration had the lowest protein content (36.54%). The protein content of fresh lemi raw materials is lower than that of partner products and lemi powder flavor when maltodextrin is added. The addition of maltodextrin tends to change the protein content of the final product due to the proportion of proximate results. The dilution effect, which increases maltodextrin concentration, leads to changes in protein content (Gibis *et al.*, 2021). The addition of high-carbohydrate maltodextrin lowers the product's protein concentration.

The higher proportion of maltodextrin in the 15% treatment effectively reduced the concentration of the product's protein component, resulting in lower protein levels.

The study conducted by Sasongko *et al.* (2018) yielded a protein content of 34-43% from the lemi powder flavor. The concentration and type of crab by-product, along with the processing method, contribute to the variation in protein content. Influencing factors such as cooking time, temperature, and drying method can also play a role in producing high-protein products (Hao *et al.*, 2021).

Fat

The fat content of the crab lemi powder flavor varied across the three treatments, ranging from 9.48% to 13.13%. ANOVA results showed statistically significant differences ($p < 0.05$) in fat content among the different maltodextrin concentration treatments. The 5% maltodextrin formulation had the highest fat content, while the 15% maltodextrin formulation had the lowest fat content among the three treatments.

Both the raw material, fresh lemi, and the partner product are low in fat content. The addition of maltodextrin increased the fat proportion of the product, but the higher the maltodextrin concentration, the more the fat changed. Several factors contribute to the change in fat content as the maltodextrin concentration increases. Maltodextrin acts as a barrier around the fat globules and prevents coalescence. This encapsulation not only reduces the overall fat content but also improves the flavor stability of the powder by minimizing lipid oxidation, which can lead to off-flavors and reduced shelf life (Byun *et al.*, 2010; English *et al.*, 2023). The dilution and encapsulation effects of maltodextrin lead to a reduction in fat content as the concentration of maltodextrin in the formulation increases (Oliver & Alquicira, 2022). Higher amounts of maltodextrin can reduce the proportion of other components, namely fat, in a compound. The fat-binding ability of maltodextrin can help reduce the fat content of the final product (Crehan *et al.*, 2000).

Carbohydrate

The carbohydrate content of crab lemi powder flavor showed a positive correlation with increasing maltodextrin concentration. The carbohydrate properties of maltodextrin itself primarily account for this. Maltodextrin, as a polysaccharide composed of glucose units, contributes significantly to the overall carbohydrate profile of the final product (Lee *et al.*, 2022; Takeiti *et al.*, 2010).

Increasing carbohydrate content with higher concentrations of maltodextrin can be advantageous in several ways. Maltodextrin can increase the energy density of powder flavors, making the ingredients more calorie-dense. Increased carbohydrate content, especially from maltodextrin, can also contribute to improved mouthfeel and texture (Murphy *et al.*, 2003; Wang & Zhou, 2012). Maltodextrin is known to impart a smooth and creamy texture to food products, which can enhance sensory appeal. An enhanced texture can be desirable in powdered flavor applications, such as adding to sauces, soups, or other processed creations (Wang & Zhou, 2012; McDermott *et al.*, 2018; Sasongko *et al.*, 2018).

This study showed that maltodextrin concentration affected ash, protein, fat, and carbohydrate content. A maltodextrin level of 10% improved the moisture content and was associated with higher yields, indicating better process efficiency and potentially longer shelf life. Moisture content is inversely proportional to maltodextrin concentration, as maltodextrin helps reduce the moisture content in the final product.

CONCLUSION

The addition of maltodextrin affected the physicochemical characteristics of blue swimmer crab lemi powder's flavor. Maltodextrin 10% was the best concentration to produce blue swimmer crab lemi powder flavor. Maltodextrin 10% was effective and efficient in improving the physicochemical characteristics of crab lemi powder flavor. Lemi rajungan powder flavor has the potential to be developed and applied to various types of food.

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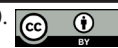
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