

FOOD ADDITIVES

Charles F Nicholson

Department of food science, Harvard university

Abstract

Food additive are the components added to the food to make it more attractive and increase its shelf life.

Sometimes they are also added to enhance the taste of the food. Some examples of additives are food colors, monosodium glutamate, artificial sweeteners etc.

Sometimes agents like fat emulsifiers, stabilizing agents etc. are also used. In rare cases, nutritional supplements are also added as additives to enhance the nutritive value of the product. Nutritional supplements are the only class of additives which have nutritive value. Rest all additives have no nutritional supplements and cause health hazards.

Food additives are the substances added to preserve the food for a longer time. They help in increasing the shelf life of the food by inhibiting the growth of microorganisms there by causing the retardation of fermentation and acidification. Some examples of food preservative are sodium benzoate, ascorbic acid, propionic acid etc. The following are some of the functions of food additives.

- They give the food a consistent and smooth texture
- They help in improving the nutritive and preservative value of food.
- They aid in maintaining the wholesomeness of the food.
- They help in maintaining the chemical balance of the food that is the acid base balance of the food.
- They enhance the flavor of the food and make it
- They give the food a consistent and smooth texture
- They help in improving the nutritive and preservative value of food.

An ideal food preservative is a one which doesn't cause any harmful effect after consumption and which is capable

of inhibiting the growth of microorganisms even if used in minute traces. The food preservatives are broadly classified into 2 different categories based on their source of origin.

They are class-I preservatives which are natural in origin.

They include salt, sugar, and oils. The class-II preservatives include chemical preservatives such as sodium benzoate and sodium Meta bi sulphide. The usage of artificial additives and preservatives causes many health hazards. The consumption of food additives is being increased unintentionally. The junk food that is available is loaded with these additives. The best example for this is MSG. MSG is being used very widely in the present day society. Parmesan cheese, tomato ketchup, instant noodles contain high amount of MSG.

However, food additives are not only a threat to health but also are a boon to us in some aspects. They reduce the risk of food borne infections such as typhoid, cholera etc.

An ideal food preservative is a one which doesn't cause any harmful effect after consumption and which is capable of inhibiting the growth of microorganisms even if used in minute traces. The food preservatives are broadly classified into 2 different categories based on their source of origin.

They are class-I preservatives which are natural in origin.

They include salt, sugar, and oils. The class-II preservatives include chemical preservatives such as sodium benzoate and sodium Meta bi sulphide. The usage of artificial additives and preservatives causes many health hazards. The consumption of food additives is being increased unintentionally. The junk food that is available is loaded with these additives. The best example for this is MSG. MSG is being used very widely in the present day society. Parmesan cheese, tomato ketchup, instant noodles contain high amount of MSG.

However, food additives are not only a threat to health but

also are a boon to us in some aspects. They reduce the risk of food borne infections such as typhoid, cholera etc.