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PRODUCTION OF 'MASS' FROM *EUTHYNNUS* SPP. AT BLANGAD, TRICHUR DISTRICT, KERALA *

Production of 'Mass' (smoked tuna flesh) from *Euthynnus* spp. was observed recently at Blangad, a fish landing centre in Trichur District, Kerala.

Fishes generally called 'Kudutha' or 'Sootha' (*Euthynnus* spp.) are used for the preparation of 'Mass'. First, the Viscera and head parts are removed and then washed in fresh water and boiled in salt water for nearly 18 hours. Afterwards, the fishes are removed from the container and each fish is split into 2 pieces lengthwise. From the soft flesh the spines are removed and the stuff is arranged on specially made metallic rods in single layers and, under these rods, fire is set using firewood so that the flesh is dried up and smoked. This process continues for 30 minutes and immediately it is subjected to sundrying using a spe-

cially erected wooden platform on which a single layer of coir mat is spread. Sundrying process is done continuously for 8 days, due to which the flesh becomes very hard, moisture free and brownish black in colour. Now the 'Mass' is prepared and is ready for sale.

While undergoing the process, the fresh fish loses its weight at an average rate of 70%. At present 400 kg of fish are processed at a time from Blangad. It mainly depends on the availability and price of the fishes. 'Mass' thus prepared are sent to Kozhikode district of Kerala (Beypore).

The person engaged in this new venture had his training in the Lakshadweep and he started this processing very recently on an experimental basis.

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