

Natural Preservation Opportunities and Challenges in Improving Food Safety

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Abstract	<p>The food industry in Indonesia has developed very rapidly, in type, product variation, volume and quality of production. The rapid development of the food industry has occurred both in the scale of small industries, home industries, medium industries and even in large industries that have used high technology. However, this encouraging development was followed by the occurrence of preservatives that could endanger public health. The use of several synthetic chemical preservatives is still inviting controversy regarding the type and dose used, especially those carried out by small industry players, home industries and food processing medium industries. The excessive use of some synthetic chemical preservatives can potentially poison the body if used continuously for a long time. Some examples of cases of use of chemicals that endanger health include the use of formalin, borax and salicylic acid for food product preservatives. The use of preservatives to extend food shelf life has been known since time ago, by adding salt, sugar, and spices or by smoking using wood smoke. These preservatives can inhibit microbial growth so that they can preserve food. At present, various preservatives that are more complex and varied in type have been widely used in various types of food and with various purposes of use. Preservatives added to food have a function, including to prevent physical damage to food such as stabilizers and emulsifiers, to prevent chemical damage such as antioxidants added to food to prevent rancidity or to prevent microbiological damage by using compounds that have antimicrobial properties. The use of natural ingredients that have traditionally been applied by the community and not harmful or safe to use is an alternative to overcome these problems. Alternative natural preservatives for food products that can help overcome this problem, including the kecombrang plant (<i>Nicolaia speciosa</i>). The selection of kecombrang as a natural preservative source because it has long been used by people in certain regions, including Banyumas, Banjarnegara, Purbalingga, Cilacap, Kebumen, and other districts in Sumatra. This plant has been used as a spice and flavored food. In Banyumas Regency, the kecombrang stem is commonly used to improve the taste of chicken and fish dishes, while the kecombrang flower is widely used for pecel, urab, and vegetables.</p>
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