PROCESSING OF CORIANDER

Introduction
Coriander (Coriandrum sativum L.) is an annual herb with branching stems and small white, pinkish flowers that grows to a height of about 90 cm. It is a member of the same family as carrots and parsley (Umbelliferae) and is native to the Mediterranean and Middle East. Coriander, which is also known as Chinese parsley and cilantro, is grown for its seeds and leaves, both of which are used in a range of dishes. Coriander requires well drained soils and plenty of warmth and sunshine. It is grown as a crop in India, Russia, Brazil, South America, North America and Holland.

Uses
The seeds are tiny globes, about the same size as peppercorns, which are a pale creamy brown colour. The seeds from Indian coriander tend to be elongated while the seeds from European coriander are more round in shape (see figure 1). They are dried and ground and included in curry powder and garam masala powder in Indian cooking. Quite frequently ground coriander and cumin are used in the same dish.

The leaves are used as a fresh green vegetable or salad leaf. Coriander seed oil is used for a range of medicinal applications. It has antibacterial properties and is used in treatments for colic, neuralgia and rheumatism. It has industrial applications in pharmaceutical applications and tobacco where it is used to counteract unpleasant odours.

Harvesting
Harvesting at the correct stage of ripeness is essential for the coriander seed to have a full aroma. Under-ripe coriander seeds have an unpleasant flavour and lack the distinctive spicy aroma and over-ripe seeds (after about 90 days from planting) tend to shatter which reduces the yield. Since ripening is progressive on the plant, harvesting should take place when between half and two thirds of the seeds are ripe. To minimise breakage, the plants should be cut during the early morning while the dew is on the plant or in the late evening. After harvest the seed is dried and stored for later use.

Figure 1: Fresh coriander
Photo: Practical Action / Neil Noble

Figure 2: Coriander seed
(http://www.uni-graz.at/~katzer/engl/Cori_sat.html)
Drying
The typical aroma and flavour of coriander seed is not fully developed until it is completely dry. Usually the whole plants are spread out in the sun to dry. They are left to wither for two days until the moisture content is about 18%. They are then threshed to remove the seeds which are further dried to a final moisture content of 9%. The second drying stage should be in the shade to prevent over-heating of the seeds. The drying time depends on the climate.

In some countries artificial dryers are used to dry the seed. It is important to ensure that the temperature of drying ovens does not exceed 100°C as this reduces the levels of volatile oils. The clean seed should be stored in bags or closed containers.

Essential oil extraction
The ground seeds can be used for the extraction of essential oils. The seed is ground immediately prior to distillation to increase the yield of oil and reduce the distillation time. The essential oil content varies from 0.1-1.5% and contains a range of different essential oils. For more information on how to distil essential oils, see the Practical Action Technical Brief.

Equipment suppliers
This is a selective list of suppliers of equipment and does not imply endorsement by Practical Action.

This website includes lists of companies in India who supply food processing equipment. http://www.niir.org/directory/tag/z,1b_0_32/fruit+processing/index.html

Dryers

**Acufil Machines**
S. F. No. 120/2, Kalapatty Post Office
Coimbatore - 641 035
Tamil Nadu
India
Tel: +91 422 2666108/2669909
Fax: +91 422 2666255
E-mail: acufilmachines@yahoo.co.in
http://www.indiamart.com/acufilmachines/#product

**Bombay Engineering Works**
1 Navyug Industrial Estate
185 Tokersey Jivraj Road
Opposite Swan Mill, Sewree (W)
Mumbai 400015
India
Tel: +91 22 24137094/24135959
Fax: +91 22 24135828
bomeng@vsnl.com
http://www.bombayengg.com/contact.html

**Bry-Air (Asia) Pvt Ltd**
21C Sector 18
Gurgaon – 122015
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Tel: +91 124 4091111
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E-mail: enquire@pahwa.com
http://www.bryair.com/index.htm

**Bry-Air China**
No 951-F Jian Chuan Road
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www.teriin.org/tech_cardamom.php

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Coriander processing

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E-mail: Rank@poboxes.com

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Songpa-gu
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Fax: +82 2 417 2622
E-mail: drikorea@hanmail.net
Website: www.drikorea.co.kr

Bry-Air (Malaysia)
Sdn Bhd (197712-W)
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43650 Bandar Baru Bangi
Selangor, Malaysia
Tel: 603 89256622
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Website: www.bryair.com.my

Industrias Technologicas Dinamicas SA
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URB industrial Infantas
Los Olivos
Lima
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Bry-Air (Thailand)
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Samsennai Huayekhwang
Bangkok 10320
Thailand
Tel: +66 2 5415479, 9389304
Fax: +66 2 9389314
E-mail: info@bryair.co.th
Website: www.bryair.co.th

Bry-Air (Africa)
Lower Ground Floor
Lakeside Place
1 Ernest oppenheimer Drive
Bruma-2198, Bedfordview
Johannesburg
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Tel: +27 11 6150458
Fax: +27 11 6166485
E-mail: bryairafrica@telkomsa.net;
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Kundasala Engineers
Digana Road
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Fax: +44 1666 577339
E-mail: enquiries@alvanblanch.co.uk
Website: www.alvanblanch.co.uk

Mitchell Dryers Ltd
Denton Holme, Carlisle
Cumbria
CA2 5DU
UK
Tel: +44 1228 534433
Fax: +44 1228 633555
webinfo@mitchell-dryers.co.uk
http://www.mitchell-dryers.co.uk/
Contacts

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mailbox@teri.res.in
www.teriin.org/tech_cardamom.php

Indian Institute of Spices Research (IISR)
Marikunnun PO, Calicut
Kerala
India 673012
Tel: +91 495 2731346
+91 495 2730294
http://www.spices.res.in/spices/coriander.php

Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Bombay
Powai
Mumbai 400076
India
Tel: +91 22 2572 2545
Fax: +91 22 2572 3480
http://www.ircc.iitb.ac.in/webnew/

Reference and further reading

*Drying of Foods* Practical Action Technical Brief
*Spice Processing* Practical Action Technical Brief
*Food Labelling* Practical Action Technical Brief
*Drying* selection of Practical Action Technical Briefs
*Herbs and Spices* selection of Practical Action Technical Briefs
*Drying* UNIFEM Practical Action Publishing 1995

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