ORIENTAL NOODLES

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It is believed that noodle products were known in China as early as 5,000 B.C., and then spread to surrounding Asian countries. Although definitely a convenience food, noodles are much more than fast food, offering variety, versatility and high quality nutrition with various toppings, and become an essential part of oriental cuisine. The increasing consumption of oriental noodles has caught the attention of food scientists and technologists over the past three decades.

Wheat noodles are a type of pasta prepared from a dough containing flour, water and salt and/or alkaline solution. Many types of noodles depending on their ingredients, degree of pre-cooking, moisture content, and method of drying, etc. are available in the marketplace. Objective assessment of noodle texture by instrument is \of value because texture is one of the major components of food acceptability. Several instruments have been used to measure the texture of noodles. However, to my knowledge, no previous literature has been published describing the computerized instrument to measure the noodle texture. The objectives of this study were (a) to explain the general information on oriental noodles, and (b) to devise the TPA of noodles using computer-aided instrument.

The noodles examined were laboratory prepared, or commercially available instant fried ramen and commercial Chinese and Japanese noodles. For the development of instrumental, textural assessment of cooked noodles, Texture Analyser interfaced with a computer software program was operated. Texture profile analysis (TPA) technique simulating chewing of noodle using molar teeth, was adopted to this study.

Six to eight parameters from TPA curve using Texture Analyser with computerized program illustrated the texture of noodles, giving a better and more complete understanding of noodle texture. This method had advantages over the other instrument(s) used in the past including Instron Universal Testing Instrument, that is, simple, efficient, quantitative, reproducible, and time-saving method.