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Drying is one of the most frequently used methods for food preservation as it can reduce the moisture to a low level, which can prevent the growth and reproduction of microorganisms, and reduce many moisture-mediated deteriorative reactions. In addition, food drying provides numerous benefits, such as extending food shelf-life, giving products special texture and physical properties, and minimizing packing, storage, and transportation costs.

With the advantages of simplicity and the small capital investments, natural open-sun drying and hot air convective drying are still the most popular practical methods for agricultural products drying, particularly in developing countries. However, the natural open-sun drying possesses several disadvantages, such as long drying time, rewetting or rotting caused by bad weather, contamination by dust and insects, nonuniform drying, and significant color loss and nutrients deterioration due to long exposure to solar radiation. Drawbacks of hot air drying include nutrition and flavour's degradation due to prolonged exposure to high air temperatures, serious shrinkage, case hardening and darkening, and decrease of antioxidant and rehydration capacity.

In order to satisfy the growing demand for high quality products as well as minimizing the environment footprint of drying, one of the food drying research trends is to minimize chemical degradation reactions, maximize nutrient retention, minimize energy consumption, and reduce carbon footprint to produce better quality products. Therefore, innovative and emerging drying technologies for enhancing food quality are very desirable and needed by food industry.

The main aim of this special issue is to provide a platform to show the latest progress of innovative and emerging drying technologies for enhancing food quality. High-quality research as well as comprehensive review papers on this topic are highly welcomed and recommended. We hope that this special issue not only contributes to a better understanding of the research status of innovative and emerging drying techniques, but also triggers new research opportunities in this field in order to provide more healthy and nutritious food for the growing global population in a more sustainable way.

Potential topics include but are not limited to the following:

- ▶ Food quality evolution during drying
- ▶ Drying kinetics and quality of vegetables, fruits, and mushrooms
- ▶ Drying kinetics and quality of herbs, spices, and forest products
- ▶ Drying kinetics and quality of meat
- ▶ Safety of dried products

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