Development of a Heat and Mass Transfer Model to Simulate the Conventional Chilling of a Beef Carcass

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Abstract
This project concerns the development of a coupled heat and mass transfer model to simulate the chilling of a beef carcass post-slaughter. The methodology outlined by Mallikarjunan, P., & Mittal, G. (1994) was adopted for this study and results were compared with experimental results obtained from previous research. Cost benefits can be gained from being able to predict heat and mass loss profiles more accurately. Finite differential analysis was researched and implemented on the beef carcass based on established methodologies. The project demonstrated that results from the finite difference method documented can relatively closely replicate the process of beef chilling in relation to both heat and mass transfer.

Methodology
In order to establish changing values for heat and mass transfer a finite difference method with forward time step was used. This method is especially useful for solving differential equations and it solves the problem iteratively, which is applicable for this problem because the value at each time step is given and then can be compared to those around it to see trends in the data. The finite difference equations were formulated for Cartesian co-ordinates and coded in Microsoft Excel VBA. The scheme used ambient temperature of 0.44°C, average relative humidity of 85% and air speed of 0.5 m/s over a period of 47 hours.

The model was based on the following assumptions:
- The carcass shape is consistent with the shape shown based on given literature and is divided into five two dimensional sections.
- Heat and mass transfer in the vertical direction is negligible. For this reason a two-dimensional was used.
- Density was deemed uniform for the transfer model.

Finite Difference Formulation from First Principles
The first set of equations produced were for the heat transfer across the carcass.

These were derived based on the orientation of nodes in the beef section. The equation below for heat transfer across the carcass sections now includes a ω (“dot”) term which has been added in to account for ATPase reaction.

The temperature profiles obtained were a close match with experimental results obtained from previous research.

Results
These graphs show a close correlation with the Mallikarjunan's experimental results and the simulated results for heat and mass transfer through the carcass as it is cooled.

Conclusions & Recommendations
- From the results, it is evident that the heat transfer model follows experimental data very closely, proving that the model is adequate. The mass transfer however, was not as close to the literature model. It followed a similar shape graph, however the error increased with increase in time.
- The literature from Mallikarjunan included a term that should be added to the temperature model to account for the change in heat transfer due to the loss of mass at boundaries. In doing so it would fully couple the heat and mass transfer equations. Due to time constraints this was not possible to complete but as a recommendation, this term should be added and could possibly reduce the error observed in this project.
- Also, h_{sat}, the surface mass transfer coefficient was a constant in this model but this would in reality change with changing temperature. If an equation could be derived to account for this, it may enhance the accuracy of the model and would be a good area for research.

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References