Like whole produce, minimally processed products deteriorate after harvesting due to physiological aging and microbial spoilage. Minimally processed products need to be preserved from alteration and microbial growth prior to further processing. Senescence may accelerate and off-flavors may develop as respiration and ethylene production increased near the cut surface. Also, the exudate from the cut surface is a favorable medium for microbial growth.

With minimally processed products, the increase in cut damaged surfaces and availability of cell nutrients provides conditions that increase the numbers and types of microbes that develop. Furthermore the increased handling of the products provides greater opportunity for contamination by pathogenic organisms. Recommended tests for assessment of sanitation and manufacturing practices are enumeration of yeast, mold, lactic acid bacteria and enterobacteriaceae (Garg et al, 1990).

Controlled atmosphere is used worldwide on a variety of fresh fruit and vegetables. It maintains quality and extends storage life by inhibiting metabolic activity and decay (Kader, 1986).