•Short report

Estimation of annual effective dose from ²²⁶Ra and ²²⁸Ra due to consumption of foodstuffs by inhabitants of Ramsar city, Iran

M. Asefi*, A.A. Fathivand, J. Amidi

Iranian Nuclear Regulatory Authority (INRA), National Radiation Protection Department (NRPD), Tehran, Iran

Background: 226Ra and 228Ra contents in foodstuffs of Ramsar which is a coastal city in the northern part of Iran were determined by gamma spectrometry. Measurement results together with food consumption rates were used to estimate annual effective dose from 226Ra and 228Ra, due to consumption of food stuffs by inhabitants of Ramsar city. Materials and Methods: A total of 33 samples from 11 different foodstuffs including root vegetables (beetroot), leafy vegetables (lettuce, parsley and spinach) and tea, meat, chicken, pea, broad bean, rice, and cheese were purchased from markets of Ramsar city and were analyzed for their 226Ra and 228Ra concentration. 1-8 kg of fresh weight sample was placed in Marinnelli beaker and sealed. The measurement of natural radioactivity levels as performed by gamma-spectrometry system, using a high purity germanium (HPGe) detector with 40% efficiency. Results: relative The highest concentrations of ²²⁶Ra and ²²⁸Ra were determined in tea samples with 1570 and 1140 mBg/kg, respectively, and the lowest concentration of ²²⁶Ra was in pea, cheese, chicken, broad bean, and beetroot. Conclusion: The maximum estimated annual effective dose from 226Ra and 228Ra due to consumption of foodstuffs were determined to be 19.22 and 0.71 mSv from rice and meat samples respectively, where as, the minimum estimated annual effective dose for 226Ra was 0.017, 0.018 and 0.019 mSv from beetroot, cheese and pea samples respectively. Iran. J. Radiat. Res., 2005; 3 (1): 47-48

Keywords: Gamma spectrometry, ²²⁶Ra and ²²⁸Ra, annual effective dose, Ramsar.

INTRODUCTION

Knowledge of natural radioactivity in man and his environment is important since naturally occurring radionuclides are the major sources of radiation exposure to man⁽¹⁾. Radioactive nuclides present in the natural environment enter the human body mainly through food Besides. and water. of measurement naturally radionuclides in the environment can be used not only as a reference when routine releases from nuclear installation or accidental radiation exposures are assessed, but also as a baseline to evaluate the impact caused by non-nuclear activities.

In Iran, measurement of natural and artificial radionuclides in environmental samples in normal and high-background radiation areas have been performed by some investigators^(2, 3), but no information has been available on ²²⁶Ra and ²²⁸Ra in foodstuffs. Therefore, we have started measurements of ²²⁶Ra and ²²⁸Ra in foodstuffs of Ramsar city using low level gamma spectrometry measurement system⁽⁴⁾, and estimating annual effective dose due to consumption of foodstuffs by Ramsar city residents.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Diet samples were purchased from food distribution centers in Ramsar city. The samples were washed and peeled, when necessary, dried in air and accurately weighed for determination of fresh mass, and then they were oven dried and burned for approximately 16h between 80-200 °C. In some cases like meat, samples were freeze dried. Then, 1-8 kg of fresh weight sample was placed in Marinnelli beaker and sealed.

Measurements have been carried out on sealed samples, after 'aging time' of at least 21 days, in order to allow the establishment of radioactive equilibrium between radium and its short-lived daughter products⁽⁵⁾. The measurement of natural radioactivity levels performed by gamma-spectrometry system, using a high purity germanium (HPGe) detector with 40% relative efficiency. The

*Corresponding author:

Maryam Asefi, Iranian Nuclear Regulatory Authority (INRA), National Radiation Protection Department (NRPD), Tehran, Iran.

Fax: +98 21 88009502 E-mail: mrymsf@yahoo.com detector was shielded by 10 cm lead on all sides with cadmium-copper in inner sides. The system was equipped with software for data acquisition and analyzing. The counting time was 250,000 seconds and background spectra was also collected for the same period of time and subtracted from sample spectras. Marinnelli standard mixed source (CERCA HM 395) from France was used for efficiency calibration due to its close geometry to the sample geometry⁽⁶⁾. The ²²⁶Ra and ²²⁸Ra activities were determined indirectly via gamma line of their daughter products, 214Bi (609 keV) and ²²⁸Ac (911 keV) respectively⁽⁷⁾. Under normal operating conditions and present counting set up, the minimum detectable activity (MDA) was approximately 12.2 and 23.4 mBg/kg (fw) for ²²⁶Ra and ²²⁸Ra respectively(8).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The annual food consumption (kg), annual intake (Bg) and estimated annual effective

dose from ²²⁶Ra and ²²⁸Ra (mSv) due to consumption of foodstuffs by Ramsar city residents are presented in table 1.

As seen in table 1, the maximum estimated annual effective dose from ²²⁶Ra due to consumption of foodstuffs was 19.220 mSv from rice sample and the maximum estimated annual effective dose from ²²⁸Ra was determined to be 0.713 mSv from meat sample. The minimum estimated annual effective doses for ²²⁶Ra were estimated to be 0.017 mSv from beetroot sample.

Among leafy vegetables, spinach has the maximum ²²⁶Ra and ²²⁸Ra annual effective doses equal to 0.645 and 0.552 mSv, respectively Analysis showed that concentrations of ²²⁶Ra and ²²⁸Ra in tea samples was the highest, and the lowest concentration of ²²⁶Ra were in pea, cheese, chicken, broad bean and beetroot.

Table 1. Annual effective dose (mSv) from ²²⁶Ra and ²²⁸Ra due to consumption of food stuffs by Ramsar city residents.

Foodstuffs	No. Of Samples	Annual Consumption (Kg)	Annual ²²⁶ Ra Intake (Bq)	Annual ²²⁸ Ra Intake (Bq)	²²⁶ Ra Annual Effective dose (μSv)	²²⁸ Ra Annual Effective dose (μSv)
Beetroot	3	7.1	0.086	0.410	0.017	0.124
Lettuce	3	8.6	0.353	0.430	0.071	0.129
Parsley	3	2.7	2.040	0.371	0.408	0.112
Spinach	3	10.0	3.220	1.840	0.645	0.552
Chicken	3	12.7	0.154	1.524	0.030	0.457
Meat	3	29.0	0.519	2.378	0.104	0.713
Rice	3	72.3	96.120	1.690	19.220	0.507
Cheese	3	7.6	0.092	0.831	0.018	0.249
Tea	3	1.4	2.180	1.582	0.436	0.475
Pea	3	7.4	0.093	0.844	0.019	0.253
Broad bean	3	13.7	0.167	0.321	0.033	0.096

REFERENCES

- UNSCEAR (2000) Sources and effects of ionizing radiation. In Report to the General Assembly with Scientific Annexes. New York, United Nations.
- Sohrabi M, Blourchi M, Beitollahi MM, Amidi J (1996) Natural radioactivity of international conference on highlevel natural radiation. Beijing, China.
- Ghiassi-Nejad M, Beitollahi MM, Amidi J, Hafezi S (2003) Natural gamma radiation and public external exposure in Iran. 3rd international WONUC conference on the effects of low and very low doses of ionizing radiation on human health, Tehran, Iran.
- 4. Malanco A, Gazzola A, Santos ZH (1998) Intake of

- radium and effective dose for population of Brazilian state. The Nucleus, **35**: 127-131.
- Banzi FP, Kifanga LD, Bundala M (2000) Natural radioactivity and radiation Exposure at Minjingu phosphate mine in Tanzania. J Radiat Prot, 20: 41-51.
- Amidi J and Beitollahi MM (1998) Calibration of gamma spectrometry with high pure germanium (HPGe) detector. INRA-NRPD technical report.
- Savidou A, Raptis C, Kritidis R (1995) Natural radioactivity and radon exhibition from materials used in Athen region, Greece. Radiat Prot Dosim, 59: 309-12.
- IAEA (1998) International atomic energy agency. Measurement of radionuclides in food and the environment. Technical report series. No 295, Vienna, Austria.