The decompression time is not particularly limited as long as the urease content of the soybeans can be uniformly reduced, and is generally 1 minute or more, preferably 1 to 10 minutes, and more preferably 3 to 7 minutes. The temperature for the ~~steaming~~ decompression is not particularly limited, and is, for example, -20 to 45°C and preferably room temperature.

[0021]

Soybeans that have undergone the decompression are subsequently supplied to the steaming described below after their atmosphere has been returned to ordinary pressure. In the process of steaming after decompression, it is preferable to prevent air from entering the atmosphere of soybeans that have undergone decompression as much as possible. Therefore, in the present invention, the atmosphere is preferably returned to ordinary pressure from a reduced pressure by introducing water vapor to the atmosphere of the soybeans that have undergone decompression.

[0022]

Prior to steaming, the soybeans that have undergone decompression may be supplied to a preliminary heating step. By conducting preliminary heating, more uniform steaming, i.e., steaming that is free from unevenness, can be conducted in the steaming described below. The preliminary heating may be started after returning the pressure of the atmosphere of the soybeans to ordinary pressure after decompression. Alternatively, it may be started by introducing heated water vapor while returning the pressure of the atmosphere of the soybeans to ordinary pressure after decompression.

[0023]

The temperature of the preliminary heating is not particularly limited insofar as it does not adversely affect the excellent sensory-related properties and

CLAIMS

[Claim 1]

A method for producing a processed soybean comprising steps (A) and (B):

(A) decompressing a soybean by exposing the soybean to a reduced pressure of 30 kPa or less, wherein the soybean is not ground soybeans; ~~and~~

(B) returning the soybean to an ordinary atmospheric pressure; and

(C~~B~~) steaming the soybean obtained in step (B~~A~~), wherein the steaming is performed at a temperature of 100 to 130°C.

~~[Claim 2]~~

~~The method according to claim 1, wherein the decompressing is conducted by exposing the soybean to a reduced pressure of 30 kPa or less.~~

[Claim ~~3~~2]

The method according to claim 1~~ or 2~~, wherein the steaming is performed at 80 to 150°C over a period of 1 to 60 minutes.

[Claim ~~4~~3]

The method according to ~~any one of~~ claim~~s~~ 1 or 2 ~~to 3~~, wherein a processed soybean that has undergone steaming is further subjected to drying, ~~and/or~~ pulverization, or both drying and pulverization.

[Claim ~~4~~5]

~~A~~ P~~p~~rocessed soybeans obtainable by any one of the methods according to claims 1 to ~~3~~4.

[Claim ~~5~~6]

The processed soybeans according to claim ~~4~~5, which has urease activity of pseudopositive (+1) or less measured based on Chinese national standard GB/T5413.31-1997.