Carbohydrate Polymers 7 (1987) 321–324

News and Views

This new feature is intended to help readers keep up to date with developments on the carbohydrate polymers scene and will include information on both industrial and academic developments.

We welcome contributions which can include conference reports, major personnel changes and *new* research, production, application or marketing developments. The editors will reserve the right to modify all material to fit the style of the journal but any significant changes will be cleared with the contributors wherever possible.

DOW PUSH FOOD GRADE METHYL CELLULOSE IN EUROPE

Methyl Cellulose has a long established presence as an industrial thickener. The Dow Chemical Company, however, have recently launched a special high grade version for use in the food and pharmaceutical industries. This is produced in a dedicated plant in Midland, Michigan and is supported in Europe by a recently opened small development laboratory near Zurich, Switzerland. Under the direction of Dr Alan Henderson, this laboratory was set up to improve Dow's service to food technologists. In the UK, Semmons–Taylor/Lysander Food Products have been appointed as distributors of these new premium grades.

In the presentation which launched the new link held in London on 15 May, 1987, Dr Henderson explained that methyl cellulose is too expensive to compete with other gums where viscosity is the only functional property required, but its property of gelling on heating and melting on subsequent cooling, plus its surface activity, gave it a series of unique food applications. The role of these materials in food binding and providing a barrier to fat and water migration in fried products, is well-known. Dr Henderson also discussed its possible use as a gluten replacer in baked products and interestingly presented some evidence to show that methyl celluloses might act to enhance and subsequently stabilize starch viscosity. Since low molecular weight grades seem to be most effective, this does not seem to be due simply to an increase in the amount of polysaccharide in solution. To bring home the reversible thermal gelation

behaviour of these materials, 500 selected food technologists in the UK have been sent a kit designed to allow them to demonstrate thermal gelation prior to making their coffee.

SUMMARIES OF UK PATENT APPLICATIONS

Bacterial Process for the Production of Dispersants. GB 2183 665A. Filed 7 November 1986, published 10 June 1987. Applicants — Ramot University Authority for Applied Research and Industrial Development Limited, Tel Aviv, Israel.

It is claimed that bacterially produced polysaccharide from certain strains of *Acinetobacter calcoacetious* have useful properties as dispersing agents, i.e. the ability to assist in the formation and in the stabilization of finely divided solids in a liquid. It is believed that these polysaccharides have molecular weights in the range 45000 to 70000. They are heteropolysaccharides containing carboxy groups as well as amino and or acylamino-monosaccharide moieties.

Hair Rinse Conditioners with Superior Dry Hair Feel and High Hair Lustre. GB 2184 449A. Filed 22 December 1986, published 24 June 1987. Applicants — Colgate–Palmolive Company, New York.

A water-soluble non-ionic cellulose derivative such as hydroxyethyl cellulose or hydroxymethylpropyl cellulose is used in conjunction with a polyvinyl pyrrolidone/vinyl acetate copolymer and at least one hydrophilic cationic quaternary ammonium compound in a water based hair rinse conditioner.

ANNOUNCEMENT

Food Colloids — International Symposium, 13–15 April, 1988

A three day symposium on *Food Colloids* is being organised by the Royal Society of Chemistry, Food Chemistry Group. The symposium will be held, courtesy of Unilever plc, at Unilever Research Laboratory, Collworth House, Sharnbook, Bedford.

The programme will feature both presentations by industrialists on the developments now occurring in product systems and papers from leading scientists covering relevant issues in colloid science. Topics to be covered will include dairy, bakery and meat products, spreads, beverages and confectionery. These topics will be linked to scientific contributions on rheology, emulsion formation and structure, crystallisation and interfacial phenomena.

Industrial contributions from General Foods (Europe), Kraft (USA), Pilsbury (USA), Grindsted (Denmark) and Unilever (UK) have already been agreed. Amongst the eminent academic speakers who have also agreed to participate are Prof. Sir S. Edwards (Cambridge), Prof. R. Otterwill, FRS (Bristol) and Dr E. Dickinson (Leeds).

Scientific contributions are now invited for either papers or posters on any aspect of colloid science relevant to foods. It is intended that the proceedings will be published in book form and manuscripts will be required by 31 March, 1988. Abstracts should be sent to arrive no later than 30 October, 1987.

Intending participants and authors should contact:

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NOTICES

● = new entry; for full information on other meetings refer to the issue of this journal given in brackets.

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Ninth International Enzyme Engineering Conference
Santa Barbara, California, USA, 4–9 Oct. [*see* **7** (1) 86]

Biotechnology/Food Industry Exhibition and Conference
London, UK, 10–11 Dec. [*see* **7** (1) 86]

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- **Food Colloids — International Symposium**
  Sharnbrook, Bedford, UK, 13–15 April.
  Further details from:
  AFRC Institute of Food Research,
  Norwich Laboratory,
  Colney Lane, Norwich,
  Norfolk, NR4 7UA, UK

Tenth Cellulose Conference
Syracuse, NY USA, 29 May–1 June. [*see* **7** (3) 245]

4th International Conference on Chitin and Chitosan
Trondheim, Norway, 22–24 August. [*see* **7** (2) 167]

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Cellucon 89. Cellulose: Sources and Exploitation
UK, 11–15 September. (*see* **7** (3) 245]