

In some respects the book is misnamed because, fortunately for chemists, it is less about toxicology as applied to food than it is about substances in food which are toxic and why. The chemical and biochemical reactions of substances are therefore dealt with in detail and interesting examples of physical properties, such as partition coefficient, in relation to biological effect, are explained. It is unfortunate that data in this area are often inevitably derived from cruel and unnecessary experiments. It ought to be possible, with the information now established, to explore biological effects without causing animals to suffer. The book is both theoretically and practically valuable with large sections devoted to carcinogenesis, food poisoning, natural plant toxicants and other topically important matters. Dr Concon completed both parts of the book before he passed away but there were many pieces of work still needing to be done. Mrs Jayne Concon deserves special praise for completing these and bringing the book to print. Altogether it is a most impressive and indispensable work for those of us interested in the composition and biological effects of food.

G. G. Birch

Cheese Starters: Development and Application of the Lewis System. By J. E. Lewis, Elsevier Applied Science Publishers, London. Price: £32. 1987. ISBN 1-85166-024-0. x + 221 pp.

In the past forty years there has been considerable development in the techniques of both production and handling of starter cultures for cheese and fermented milk products. This book provides an insight into the development of the Lewis System to meet the needs of the dairy industry from the 1950s, and the modifications introduced to meet the demands of changing cheesemaking technology and larger scale production.

A largely practical approach has been adopted in the book, giving many examples that are equally applicable in modern dairies, both large and small. As such, the bibliography is not extensive giving a selection of references covering the period from 1919 to 1978, which would form the basis for further reading. Whilst giving an excellent first-hand account of the Lewis system, the text would have benefited from the inclusion of a detailed comparison with other developments in starter technology.

The book is well presented and should be of interest to students and dairy technologists involved with cheese and fermented milk products, as well as to those with an interest in the development of dairy technology.

R. A. Wilbey