

G. Britton has written the definitive review of the stereochemistry of carotenoid biosynthesis, whilst Bock and Sigurskjold have described various carbohydrate derivatives that are experimental enzyme inhibitors. The book concludes with a review of the chemistry and biogenesis of the iridoids (by A. Bianco). The topics include a discussion of acid-catalysed rearrangements of the compounds, a list of partial syntheses that have used iridoids as chiral starting materials, and a useful guide to the literature. As usual the overall quality of the camera-ready text is good, the subject index adequate, and the price beyond the means of individuals.

G. G. Birch

Food Antioxidants. Edited by B. J. F. Hudson. Elsevier Applied Science, London, 1990. xii + 317 pp. ISBN 1 85166 440 8. Price: £52.00.

Although much has been written about antioxidants, there still remains a need for a short monograph aimed specifically at their use in food products. This volume goes a long way in filling such a need and provides an up-dated broad overview of those antioxidants which contribute to the acceptability and keeping qualities of food products. Different authors have contributed the seven chapters, the subject matter of which are: mechanisms of action; analytical techniques and methods for evaluating antioxidants; the chemical fate of phenolic antioxidant molecules; natural antioxidants exploited commercially; natural antioxidants not exploited commercially; biological effects; toxicological aspects. There is very little duplication of subject matter throughout the book with each chapter providing an authoritative and useful review of a specific topic and supported by an extensive list of references. These are up-to-date and, for certain chapters, cover work published as late as 1989.

The book is well produced with good quality text, tables and figures, and clearly presented structural formulae. It is essentially free from typographical errors but in chapter 4 the number of stereoisomers of each tocopherol and tocotrienol is wrongly stated.

This is a useful and versatile book which will serve as a reference text for experts and for those in the food industry concerned with the role of additives.

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