



Book Reviews

Determination of Vitamin E: Tocopherols and Tocotrienols. Claude Bourgeois. Elsevier Applied Science, London, 1992. vi + 162 pp. ISBN 1851667547. Price: £75.00.

The analysis of vitamin E in blood serum, animal and plant tissues, and processed foods and feeds presents a variety of challenges in extraction, sample preparation and analysis of the vitamin. This book provides a comprehensive account of the methods reported in the literature for the analysis of vitamin E. The introductory chapter briefly describes the structures and properties of the vitamin. Chapter II describes sample processing prior to the determination of tocopherols and tocotrienols, and this is followed by a chapter detailing the methods used for determination of these components. The book is completed by examples of the applications of the analysis of vitamin E in human blood plasma, animal feed and human foodstuffs by HPLC and a continuous flow method for the determination of α -tocopherol in food and feed.

The author is an employee of Hoffman-La Roche and clearly has considerable experience of the analysis of vitamin E. Inclusion of some of the author's recent findings ensures that the reader is presented with very useful information that is previously unpublished. However, the book includes several analytical methods that are of historical interest only. Serious analysts would not use paper chromatography or packed-column gas chromatography, and indeed well-equipped laboratories would normally use HPLC for the analysis of tocopherols and tocotrienols.

The use of language is slightly inferior to that which would be expected of a British author, and more careful editing could have improved the book in this respect.

However, the book is a useful reference text for scientists involved in the analysis of vitamin E. Whether they will wish to buy a personal copy is doubtful since a review paper covering analysis of vitamin E by HPLC would be adequate for most analysts. The price is extremely high for such a slim text.

M. H. Gordon

Industrial Gums. Polysaccharides and Their Derivatives. Third edition. Edited by R. L. Whistler and J. N. BeMiller. Academic Press, New York, 1993. xi + 642 pp. ISBN 0-12-746253-8.

This is the third edition of *Industrial Gums*, the previous editions having been published in 1973 and 1959. It continues to be a very interesting handbook of gums and polysaccharides. The book consists of 23 chapters concerning different types of gums, their chemistry and analysis. The first 4 chapters are of a general nature and are useful for anyone working with gums or needing some basic information about the subject.

As this is a multi-author work the standard of the chapters is not uniform although the editors have been careful to get each author to follow the same format. Some contributions stand out as being particularly good (e.g. the chapters on pectin, starch and xanthan, gellan, welan and rhamosan). It appears that some chapters have been updated very little from the previous edition and the only major criticism of the book is that, with very few exceptions, the references (of which there are hundreds) are from before 1982/3. This is amazing for a book published in 1993.

Barbara Andrews