

Book review

Cereals and Cereal Products

David A.V. Dendy and Bogdan J. Drobraszczyc;
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It is inevitable that any multi-author work will reflect the detailed interests of the individual contributors. This situation commonly leads to an unevenness of style and content between the individual chapters. This book suffers not only from this common problem but also from unevenness within some chapters. For example, Chapter 1 reads more like a collection of random ideas rather than the introduction to the subject that is purports to be.

The authors suggest that "This book offers a new perspective" but the key question is who did the authors intend would be the audience for this book? Scientists, technologists, students? Some chapters are particularly detailed and will certainly suit scientists. For example, the chapter devoted to bread delves deeply into gas bubbles and dough rheology. These are serious matters in breadmaking but then the contributors let themselves down by failing to provide data on non-UK breadmaking processes. Where are the data for the US sponge and dough process? This is surely a strange omission for a

book from a publisher in the USA. Authors should always be careful of using the word 'traditional' when applied to breadmaking since most bakers joining the industry after about 1980 think that the Chorleywood Bread Process is 'traditional' and commonly know little about bulk fermentation processes.

In contrast to the detail on bread, the chapter on Cookies, Cakes and Other Flour Confectionery is too superficial for scientists. The authors even fail to acknowledge the importance of changes in starch properties with either the chlorination or heat treatment of the flour for cakemaking. Even technologists could be disappointed although, as an introduction to the topic for students, it could be adequate.

As an overview of cereals and cereal products, the book has much to offer the potential reader. The chapters on the cereals other than wheat are useful for all potential readers. Despite its shortcomings, this is a book that you can expect to see on many bookshelves.

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