

The Annual Review of the Literature on Fats, Oils, and Soaps

TECHNICAL and scientific literature on fatty materials appears in about 100 different journals, special publications by individuals, patents, and other miscellaneous sources as government, research institute, and experiment station bulletins at a rate of about 1,000 items annually. Chemical Abstracts reviews these, but only about half are grouped in one individual section on fats and detergents and the remainder are disseminated throughout 10,000 other columns of this publication because it is the fat and oil information concerned with nutrition, physiology, physical chemistry, organic chemistry, analyses, food, pharmacology, paint, lubrication, resins, etc. In addition, this review source, as well as the abstract section of fat and oil journals, does not coordinate the literature over a long period of time. These conditions preclude the possibility of chemists engaged in manufacturing application, laboratory supervision, teachers, and others with limited available time from becoming easily posted comprehensively on the progress in the broad field of technology, science, and application of fatty materials.



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In 1934 R. C. Newton of Swift and Company, Chicago, responded to this need among the Society's members of initiating organization of a committee for publication of the annual review. As the first chairman of the committee, he directed the work with editorial assistance from some leaders in various phases of the field. Then due to pressure of other responsibilities Dr. Newton resigned after serving three years, and chairmanship of the committee was passed to the undersigned. The material for the review is compiled from periodicals, patents, bulletins, and abstract journals by the Research Laboratory library staff at Swift and Company and, after classification and integration into a review form, is sent to the committee for editing, suggestions, and general improvement. The work at the library for the most part "dovetails" with the service to the firm's

research staff. After revision it is published in the Society's Journal in two installments in the spring.

IN the organization of the objectives of the committee the amount of material to be reviewed, the space that could be allotted to the publication, and the means at hand to do the work were considered. Thus it was decided that all publications pertaining to fats and oils coming to the attention of the reviewers should be included even though some were conveniently presented only by indication of the scope or text with the reference. Publications containing original work or thoughts should be reviewed without criticism, describing briefly the author's contribution. Where criticism appears in the review, it should be considered as that of the author of the paper being reviewed, criticizing ideas of others. The present form of inserting the references, although unconventional, has been determined as the simplest, briefest, and most convenient since it permits additions and alterations with the least difficulty.

Practically the same outline has been maintained for years because coworkers of the compilers have found that this standardization permits a collection of reviews to serve as a quick source for information. That is, the same class of material is reviewed in practically the same part of each section of each annual review, thus simplifying specific literature searches, such as for information on rendering, refining, emulsifiers, antioxidants, and others. Several others have reported that they take advantage of this convenience.

BECAUSE of the nature of the product of this committee's work it is difficult to appraise its utility in terms of measure. Among contacts in technical meetings it seems that persons without convenient technical library facilities seem to appreciate it most. Individuals from many countries in all the world's continents and some islands have written to the writer for information or reprints, and some have sent reprints of their own papers lest they be missed. The review does not attract interest from "iron curtain" countries although China before Communism was the origin of six letters annually pertaining to the review. Fat and oil technical organizations of France and Germany have obtained permission for reprinting in their domestic journals the issues of the review that appeared during the war years. Complaints because of items omitted also reflect interest in the reviews. Response to these is that the material will be included in the next review, and if there is no access to the original or an abstract, the information needed will be requested.

In closing this brief description of the Annual Review of the Literature on Fats, Oils, and Soaps, the contribution and courtesies that make the work possible should be acknowledged. Dr. Newton made it possible to do the work from material in the Swift and Company Technical Library, and this courtesy has been continued by the present director of research, H. S. Mitchell. W. H. Goss, G. R. Greenbank, G. S. Jamieson, H. A. Mattill, and Dr. Newton (a past chairman) as past members of the committee have contributed much service towards developing the work. At present the committee responsible for the production of the review comprises E. W. Blank, Colgate-Palmolive-Peet Company; J. B. Brown, Ohio State University; E. A. Gastrock, Southern Regional Research Laboratory; and M. M. Piskur.

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