

Codex Committee

Meets in London

The 8th Session of the Codex Committee on Fats and Oils, held in London, England, on November 24-28, 1975, was attended by 89 participants including representatives and observers from 34 countries and observers from 8 international organizations. Robert W. Weik, FDA, headed the U.S. delegation with W.H. Tallent, NRRC, serving as alternate delegate. Industry advisors included Richard O'Neill, Glidden-Durkee, and Fred D. Blisplinghoff, National Rinderers Association. The meeting was organized and sponsored by the U.K. government with A.W. Hubbard, Ministry of Agriculture, serving as chairman.

General Standard for Edible Fats and Oils

According to Rex J. Sims, AOCS representative to the committee, the U.S. was successful in presenting the view that the standard should cover both fats and oils for direct consumption as well as those being utilized as ingredients in the preparation of food products. It was agreed that the Secretariat will revise the standard to include separate lists of approved additives for use in products to be consumed directly and for those to be processed further. The draft will be circulated for comments at Step 3 of the procedure. Member countries will also be invited to suggest other additives together with a technological justification in each case.

Standard for Low Fat Spreads

The U.S. is opposed to the drafting of a standard at this time because the products to be covered by such a standard are in an early stage of development; but the committee agreed to go ahead with this drafting along lines similar to the margarine standard. The percentages of fats and oils are to be restricted to 39-41%, and marine oils are to be included. The U.S. is opposed to such a narrow restriction on fat content and also expressed reservations about inclusion of marine oils. The name "low fat spreads" did not receive complete approval. As a consequence, governments will be asked to suggest other names.

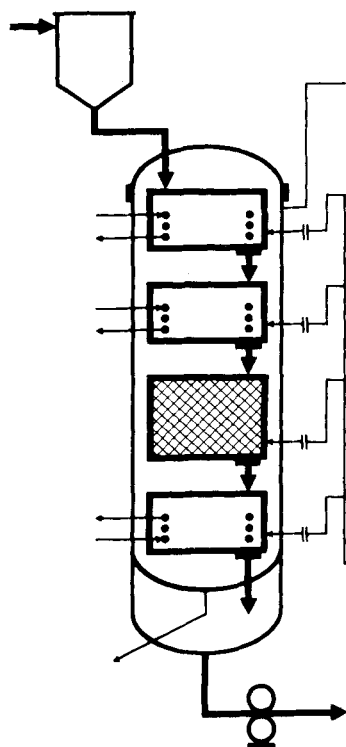
Revised Identity Characteristic Based on GLC Ranges

The U.S. proposed a method for the use of GLC fatty acid ranges as identity criteria for fats and oils. This method determines whether a sample falls within certain prescribed compositional ranges, with a maximum allowable total deviation. Although some delegates expressed reservations about the method, the committee agreed that delegations will test it on commercial samples. The U.S. delegate agreed to convene a working group early in 1976 to prepare a final text on the GLC analytical method. Representatives from IUPAC, ISO, IOOC, IASC, AOAC, and AOCS will participate.

Low-Erucic Acid Rapeseed Oil

It was decided to develop a new standard for this variety of rapeseed oil with the level of erucic acid tentatively set at 15%. Also, the brassicasterol content should not be < 5%. In spite of a lack of positive proof that ingestion of high-erucic acid content rapeseed oil constitutes a human health hazard, many countries are encouraging production of a low-erucic acid variety. For this reason, a new standard is needed.

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Solvent Residues

The committee agreed to delete trichloroethylene, tetrachloroethylene, and carbon disulphide from the approved lists of extraction and processing solvents. The U.S. presented a justification for the use of 2-nitropropane with data to show a residue of < 0.5 ppm in finished product. At the moment, a maximum of 10 ppm solvent residue is permitted.

The approved lists include:

Extraction

Propane
Butane
Hexane
Heptane
Petroleum ether
Naphtha

Processing

Methanol
Ethanol
Propan-2-ol
Acetone
2-Nitropropane

Coconut, Palm, and Palm Kernel Oils

Standards are needed for both crude and refined oils since the crude oils are consumed directly in some of the developing countries. The standards will be circulated at Step 3 of the Codex procedure.

Marine Oils

Due to the complex nature of these oils, elaboration of standards is a difficult matter. Canada has agreed to take the lead in drafting a standard for consideration at the next meeting.

No date has been established for the next meeting of the committee, but it was indicated that it will probably be held in the spring of 1977. ■