be fish oil or omega-3 fatty acid-containing fats, the high oleic oils and perhaps the genetically manipulated oils. Noncaloric fat substitutes may find ready applications; however, regulatory review and approval could be complicated and time-consuming. Other ingredients that can provide calorie reduction, improved flavor or texture, or functional characteristic may find a market in reduced-fat margarines or sauces and dressings. Certainly, consumer interest in such products already exists.

Methodology

Methods development update

Physical methods committee
Arthur Waltking at Best Foods, Union, New Jersey, has offered to organize an AOCS technical committee on physical methods. The purpose of the proposed committee would be to develop and adopt methodology for measuring the physical properties of fats, oils and fat-based food products.

Waltking has defined the scope of the committee as follows: "To propose, evaluate and formalize methods for measuring the thermal, rheological and textural properties of fats, oils and fat-based products." The AOCS methods book, *Official Methods and Recommended Practices of the American Oil Chemists' Society*, currently doesn't contain any methods for evaluating the physical properties of fats, oils and related food products.

Waltking currently is attempting to assess the interest in having such a committee and is seeking committee members. Anyone interested in actively participating on this committee is asked to contact him at Best Foods, 1120 Commerce Ave., Union, NJ 07083, telephone 201-688-9000.

TSOMSA meeting
At the Tri-State Oil Mill Superintendents Association (TSOMSA) regional meeting Dec. 5, 1987, in Memphis, Tennessee, W. Kirk Miller, administrator for U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Federal Grain Inspection Service (FGIS) in Washington, delivered the keynote address on "Current Issues That Will Impact Oilseeds Industry." The talk is published in detail in the February 1988 issue of the *Oil Mill Gazetteer*.

In his talk, Miller discussed such items as the oilseed supply and demand outlook, the proposed European Economic Community tax on fats and oils, labeling of tropical fats and recent FGIS initiatives. Of particular interest to those involved in methods development activities is Miller's reference to contract studies with the Agricultural Research Service and other institutions. These activities include evaluating new devices for separating foreign material from grain; measuring protein, oil and moisture online using nuclear magnetic resonance (NMR); measuring single kernel moisture; and detecting odors in grain using objective methodologies. In-house FGIS projects center around the use of near-infrared reflectance (NIR) technology.

Polyethylene in fats and oils
Concerns have been expressed about the current AOCS method (Recommended Practice Ca 16-75 [87]) for the determination of polyethylene and other plastic polymers in fats and oils. As noted by recent inquiries, this method is of considerable importance to the fats and oils trade.

The method, as written before 1987, did not call for the precipitation of polyethylene and other chloroform insoluble matter from an acid solution; therefore, it was possible that the precipitate obtained was contaminated with fatty acid soaps. As one laboratory reported, this kind of contamination could impart a pink color to the precipitate. Washing the precipitate with dilute hydrochloric acid was suggested to remove the soaps. Lacking a collaborative study and more definitive data, AOCS incorporated this suggestion into "Notes" of the method for the *1987 Additions and Revisions*.

The possibility of adopting the BSI/ISO standard method, which requires the precipitation from an acid solution, will be explored by the Uniform Methods Committee during 1988. Any suggestions regarding the change in the method or adopting the BSI/ISO standard method would be appreciated.

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