

## History of the Fat Analysis Committee

**A**FORERUNNER of the Fat Analysis Committee appears to have been a subcommittee appointed in 1908 by Dr. W. F. Hildebrand, then chairman of the A.C.S. Committee on Uniformity of Technical Analysis. This subcommittee was charged with the responsibility for methods of analysis of fats and oils, soap, and glycerine. The scope of the work of this group was limited to the consideration of methods applicable to materials of commercial significance. The first meeting of the group was held at the Graduate Club, New Haven, Conn., June 30, 1908. The subcommittee membership consisted of: W. D. Richardson, J. W. Lovibond, R. E. Devine, David Wesson, A. C. Langmuir, B. T. B. Hyde, W. H. Lowe, and Ernst Twitchell.



V. C. Mehlenbacher

There is no clear-cut record that this group was transformed into the Fat Analysis Committee. However the following quotation from the Proceedings of the General Meeting of the American Chemical Society at the University of Illinois, April 18-21, 1916, indicates the actual beginning of the Fat Analysis Committee:

It was voted that a Committee on Analysis of Fats and Oils appointed by a number of manufacturers and buyers of fats and oils in the middle west and consisting of W. D. Richardson, Swift and Company, chairman; P. Rudnick, Armour and Company; A. Lowenstein, Morris and Company; I. Katz, Sulzberger Sons and Co.; J. R. Powell, Armour Soap Works; H. J. Morrison, Procter and Gamble; Ernst Twitchell, Emery Candle Company, be taken over by the Division and be known as the Committee on the Analysis of Fats and Oils.

This committee became a committee of the Society in September 1916 when it was so appointed following recommendation of the Division and action by the Council.

H. G. Morrison, president of the American Oil Chemists' Society, recommended in 1926 that the Fat Analysis Committee be made a joint committee responsible to the American Oil Chemists' Society as well as to the American Chemical Society. This situation existed until recently when the Fat Analysis Committee became responsible only to the American Oil Chemists' Society.

W. D. Richardson, Swift and Company, was the first chairman of the committee and served through the year of 1932. W. H. Irwin was appointed chairman in 1933 and served until the time of his death in 1937. R. C. Newton was chairman from July 1937 through December 1939, and the present chairman, V. C. Mehlenbacher, was appointed in 1940.

The Fat Analysis Committee issued its first report in 1917 when recommendations were made for the adoption as tentative, methods for sampling, estimation of moisture, determination of insoluble impurities, soluble mineral matter, free fatty acids, titer and unsaponifiable matter. The second report of the committee appeared in 1918, in which additional recommendations were made for the determination of iodine and saponification values. The following year methods for melting point and cloud were added. After this the committee proposed to the A.C.S. Supervisory Committee the adoption of the recommended methods. Favorable action was taken so that these methods obtained official sanction in April 1919.

Several busy years followed, during which such methods as softening point, Halphen test, acetyl value, and the FAC color standards were adopted. This sort of program has continued through the years so that an ever-increasing number of methods are being added to the list of standardized and approved methods for the analysis of fats and oils.

**T**HE function of the Fat Analysis Committee is to study, by collaborative investigation, methods of analysis that are necessary or helpful for the evaluation of the characteristics and composition of fats and oils. From a beginning of seven members the committee has increased in number to 37, with 12 subcommittees engaged in the investigation of as many different methods. Approximately a dozen additional problems are contemplated for future study.

While the prime purpose of this report is to present an abbreviated history of the Fat Analysis Committee, a second reason is to serve notice to the membership of the Society that the committee can use additional help to carry on the work of the many problems ahead. Anyone interested is invited to so indicate by communicating with the National Office, American Oil Chemists' Society, 35 E. Wacker Drive, Chicago, Illinois.

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chairman