



News and Views

WREXHAM FORMAT CONTINUES TO WORK

The Sixth Gums and Stabilisers Conference for the Food Industry was held in Wrexham from 15-19 July 1991. The format, which aims at bringing together academics and industrialists, continues to work. This was a well supported meeting with thirty-nine poster presentations and an industrial exhibition supporting the main conference programme.

The latter included sessions on structure and rheology, synergism, processing, emulsion stabilisation, low-calorie products, novel functionalities and techniques, as well as an introductory session which covered legislation, marketing aspects and end-users' viewpoints and problems. The majority of the scientific contributions came from the academic community and it would have been nice to see more end-users of polysaccharides attending. It was difficult to pinpoint themes, though, from a fundamental point of view, interest is still high in mixtures which show either synergism or phase separation, and in the role of biopolymers in controlling emulsion stability. It is

becoming increasingly apparent that low levels of non-adsorbing polysaccharides actually destabilise emulsions, presumably by a depletion flocculation mechanism. Industrial interest remains high in the use of polysaccharides in low-calorie foods. It was nice to see a study reported on the elongational viscosity of polysaccharide solutions, a potentially important area which it is difficult to attack experimentally.

A new feature was the presentation of awards sponsored by Dairy Crest Ingredients for the best poster and verbal presentation given by 'relatively' young participants. Although I certainly would have no quarrel with the judges' decision, I am not a believer in making scientific sessions (particularly oral presentations) competitive affairs and feel that the money might be better spent in reducing the cost to research students of what is a relatively expensive meeting.

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Editor