

Book reviews

Biomass Thermal Processing. E. Hogan, J. Robert, G. Grassi and A. Bridgwater, CPL Press, Newbury, 1992. iv + 253 pp. Price £45.00. ISBN 1-872691-50-1.

The thermochemical conversion of biomass feedstocks are designed to produce either liquids or chars for use as either fuels or as chemical feedstocks; the eventual aim being to displace our current overdependence on fossil fuels. Environmental focussing means that opportunities exist for thermochemical methods to be used in the processing of waste feedstocks that pose disposal problems.

Biomass Thermal Processing is based on the proceedings of the first joint Canada/European Community Research & Development Contractors Meeting. It brings together a variety of papers which have been broadly subdivided into four sections, namely Process Updates, Analytical, Isolation and Separation Processes and Products, and Economic Market Prospects. Additional to this are the minutes of a workshop which aimed to decide the direction of future work and collaboration.

In common with many symposium books, *Biomass Thermal Processing* has no index. This is infuriating for the reader because his/her access to the books information is immediately restricted. This is unfortunate because all of the data and discussions are well presented and clearly stated. There are several papers which will be of interest to readers of this journal and we can therefore recommend the book as a library loan. The lack of index will, possibly, restrict the purchasing of this volume to those people directly related to the field. These people should find *Biomass Thermal Processing* an interesting read despite its obvious limitations.

David W. Taylor
John F. Kennedy

Credible Communication: Low Calorie Sweeteners After 1992. S.G. Lisansky and L. Yeomans, CPL Press, Newbury, 1992. 133 pp. Price £30.00. ISBN 1-872691-75-7.

Europe has recently experienced a major legislative upheaval in terms of food regulation procedures. The implications of such changes are only now being realised. This book covers the proceedings of the 1992 International Sweeteners Association (ISA) annual conference, and endeavours to explain the effects of the EC 'single market' and recent changes in legislation, on

the low calorie sweetener industry. If and when the 'Maastricht Treaty' comes into force, the new procedure for adoption of directives by industry will be more complicated.

A wide ranging scope of topics are covered. The first few sections discuss the current status of European regulations on sweeteners, labelling and claims, dealing with the impact that such regulations will have on industry. The legislative procedure of the EC is outlined and the principal issues about how food additives should be regulated and the criteria to which they should adhere are addressed. The sweeteners directive is discussed, and includes the approval of six polyols and six intense sweeteners, the use of which instead of sugar offers nutritional advantages, as they are suitable for energy-reduced products.

Other sections discuss consumer information, and the use of consumption studies in risk assessment and management. The consumer is bombarded with many different messages about what should and should not be eaten. The EC seeks to ensure that consumers can choose a healthy and enjoyable diet from a safe and varied food supply. Topics also discussed are the purpose and potential of industry information centres, and the communication of science to the public.

Overall this is a well presented, informative tome providing useful information for individuals concerned with foodstuff legislation. It is presented in a very informal (perhaps somewhat childish) manner but is nonetheless clear and direct in its approach.

John F. Kennedy
Charles J. Knill

The Future for Low-calorie Sweeteners in the European Community and Eastern Europe. S.G. Lisansky and L. Yeomans, CPL Press, Newbury, 1991. 112 pp. Price £25.00. ISBN 1-872691-35-8.

Sugars are widely used in foods especially for their sweetening ability, although in recent years a number of bodily disorders, e.g. obesity, tooth decay and heart disease, have been associated with these versatile food components. Sucrose has largely received the blame for these disorders. Nowadays more and more people are leading 'low-calorie' lifestyles and controlling calories as part of the adoption of an overall healthy lifestyle.

There are three categories of sweeteners: natural substances, accidental discoveries, and analogs of known sweeteners. Carbohydrates are the most famous