

onment, modified enzymes working in organic media, coupled with an increasing awareness of the ecological and health benefits associated with bioprocessing, has triggered the search for new biotechnological processes and products. This challenging and interesting discipline is highly applicable in the food, pharmaceutical and fine chemical sectors.

The book is designed to meet predominantly the needs of researchers and academia with advanced knowledge of lipid chemistry. However, the price is rather expensive to justify the value of materials presented in the book. From the title of the book, one might expect the contents would include a general discussion on the chemistry and biochemistry of lipid synthesis in plants, animals and microorganisms. Nevertheless, the book highlights the latest state of the synthesis of lipids with many possible and commercial applications in food, nutrition, medicine and oleochemical sectors. People working in a lipid-based area of research will find the book an extra asset to broaden their knowledge of the chemistry of fats and oils.

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Dietary Fibre Analysis. D. A. T. Southgate, Royal Society of Chemistry, Cambridge, 1995, x + 174 pp., Price £37.50, ISBN 0-85404 556 2.

Dietary Fibre Analysis is the first book in the new RSC Food Analysis Monograph series. The aim of this series is to provide guidance and advice to the practising food analyst. The primary reason for measuring 'dietary fibre' is the hypothesis that a high intake is protective against a range of chronic degenerative diseases such as obesity, diabetes, coronary heart, gall stones, diverticular disease, large bowel cancer, etc.

'Dietary fibre' is a collective term for the plant cell wall material in food. The major components are polysaccharides which make up about 80–90% of most cell walls. Other substances present are aromatic polymers, lignin, complex lipids and waxes. The analytical measuring of dietary fibre therefore requires the design of analytical procedures which are capable of measuring a wide range of types of substances which are principally polysaccharides. The central role of analytical measurement is linked to how the chemical and physical properties are related to physiological effects which, in turn, are linked to the epidemiological questions and the development of dietary recommendations, all of which depend on quantitative information on the amounts of dietary fibre in food and the diet as a whole.

This book is divided into eight chapters: The Dietary Fibre Hypothesis; Chemistry of Dietary Fibre, Analytical Strategies, Sampling and Analytical Quality Assurance; The Total Fibre Method; the Non-Starch Polysaccharide Methods; Other Components; Choice of Analytical Method. It introduces the origins of the concept of dietary fibre, gives an account of its chemistry and properties, and examines the analytical strategies involved in its measurement and characterisation. It covers food sampling and quality assurance, the evolution of major analytical methods and the range of alternatives.

Dietary Fibre Analysis deals with an area which is currently of considerable interest to professional analysts, lecturers in food chemistry, nutrition researchers and scientists with an interest in cellulose. Indeed, a useful book from a well known and established author in the field.

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