

## Book Review

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Starch structure and functionality, eds. P.M. Frazier, A.M. Donald, P. Richmond. Cambridge, UK: Royal Society of Chemistry, 1997, pp 278, £59.50 ISBN 0-85404-742-5.

Starch acts as the storage energy source of many seeds, roots and tubers and it is cheap and ubiquitous. It provides soluble macromolecules exhibiting properties typical of such materials, i.e. high viscosity, adhesion, surface coating. These properties are highly desirable throughout both the materials and food industry. Starch is in fact the basis of a huge global industry. Over two-thirds of the industry is directed towards exploitation of starch for non-food uses. The remainder represents billions of tonnes per annum of material from a range of agricultural sources which finds its way into an increasing range of prepared food products.

This book represents the proceedings of the meeting Starch: Structure and Function which was held at Churchill College, Cambridge 15–17 April 1996. The keynote speakers had been asked to provide a fairly broad overview of a range of topics which contrast with the more focused research presented in some of the papers. The main areas dealt with in the conference were the use of starch in diet

and health, physico-chemical aspects of starch and genetic and agronomic developments. The book is divided into two parts, 28 lectures covered during the conference and 37 abstracts from the posters on show. The main emphasis of these papers was the use of starch in the food industry and how different aspects of starch structure and functionality reflect the end usage.

This book is a comprehensive guide to current research in starch for the food industry which makes a useful guide for research based industrialists and academics alike. It can be a little difficult to find your desired reference point but the work is well presented and referenced with clear diagrams and an interesting array of photomicrographs. An excellent buy for the serious starch researcher.

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