

BOOK REVIEW

Handbook of Pharmaceutical Excipients
Second Edition

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Published jointly by the American Pharmaceutica Association and the Royal
Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain 1994

651 pages, hard cover \$210.00 (non-member price)

As someone who was privileged to serve on the US Steering Committee for both the first and second editions of this book and as a member of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain, I find myself coming to review this book with feeling of both distress and pleasure.

I am distressed that it has taken us so long to produce this much-needed second edition. There was an obvious need for this book at least five years ago. The success of the first edition was outstanding, it has achieved a quasi-official status as a compendium of excipients. Our period of gestation of eight years was obviously excessive; even elephants, I believe, only require a period of two years *in utero*! The delays were not caused by staff of either of the sponsoring organizations nor by either of the two steering committees. However, the fact remains that we are late. Let us hope that the third edition can be published before the twenty-first century!

The second edition of the Handbook contains 203 monographs which the total includes 58 new monographs. The most useful Suppliers Directory (Appendix II) and the Index have also been revised and expanded.

In the preface to the second edition it is claimed that "The Handbook of Pharmaceutical Excipients is a comprehensive, uniform guide to the uses, properties, and safety of pharmaceutical excipients and is an essential reference source for those involved in the development, production, or control of pharmaceutical preparations". Although my connection with the preparation of this volume might possibly influence my judgment, I suspect that many users will strongly endorse the above view.

I believe that this second edition of the Handbook will quite properly be regarded as an essential book for laboratories in the pharmaceutical industry academia and regulatory agencies.

C.T. Rhodes