Pergamon

Phytochemistry, Vol. 43, No. 4, pp. 917, 1996

0031-9422/96 $15.00 + 0.00

BOOK REVIEW

Fruit Analysis, Modern Methods of Plant Analysis, Volume 18, edited by H. F. Linskens and J. F. Jackson, Springer, Berlin, 1995. 160 pp. DM 168. ISBN 3-540-59118-4.

I am currently analysing the chemical constituents of the fruits of several wild fig species, so I picked up this volume hoping that there might be some useful guidance in these pages. Regretfully, the book is concerned only with cultivated fruits and even the domestic fig fails to make an appearance. The fruits that are included are the cherry, tomato, grape, citrus, peach, persimmon, apricot, almond and chestnut, and most of the chapters are concerned with the volatile and flavouring components or the phenolics.

One of the most useful contributions is that by J. M. Witherspoon and J. F. Jackson on the apricot, since this deals with measuring a variety of parameters such as acidity, sugar, colour, pectin and starch. The following chapter on almond nut analysis also covers a variety of analytical methods, including fatty acid, protein, amino acid and polysaccharide determinations. Phenolic compounds, including tannins, come into their own in the chapters on the persimmon and the peach. The volatiles discussed in this volume include the ripening hormone ethylene, fruit aroma volatiles and the more specific flavoring compounds of the grape.

Good features of most chapters are the listings of HPLC systems for particular separations, although, unfortunately, there are no tables of retention times to indicate the resolution achieved by any given system. When several alternative methods are given, authors generally fail to indicate any preference of one over another. Nevertheless, I must admit that there is a body of useful information on fruit analysis in this book and all plant science libraries will need to add this volume to their shelves.

School of Plant Sciences,
University of Reading, U.K.

JEFFREY B. HARBORNE