

# TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCES IN IMPROVED AND ALTERNATIVE SOURCES OF LIPIDS

Edited by  
B. S. Kamel  
and Y. Kakuda

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# **Technological Advances in Improved and Alternative Sources of Lipids**

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## **Technological Advances in Improved and Alternative Sources of Lipids**

## Preface

Lipids are very important both as components of human nutrition and in applications such as the chemical, cosmetics and food industries. At present the world oil supply depends on conventional sources and changes in the political and economical map of the world may mean consumer demand will surpass supplies. In developed nations consumer preferences due to nutrition and health factors have also created a need to produce new types of oil.

Many nations lack the power to purchase fats and oil due to shortages in hard currency. These nations have a vast number of plants that can be developed and used in extracting oil for home use and for sale as cash crops. Also, a vast amount of waste from food processing, such as tomatoes, peaches, plums and grapes, can be utilized to extract valuable amounts of usable oil. Biotechnology, genetic engineering, enzyme technologies and new processes are all being utilized in lipids research to develop new and modified types of oil for different applications; such developments include the high oleic acid, sunflower and rapeseed oils. The development of cocoa butter substitute is another example.

This highly practical book reviews the methods of improving oil characteristics from existing sources, and the technology and economics of developing under-utilized sources. It is written for lipid chemists, chemical engineers, food technologists, cosmetologists and nutritionists. Graduate and undergraduate students will find value in the data.

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Y.K.

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# Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>Present and future outlook of the world fats and oil supplies</b>	<b>1</b>
	V.K.S. SHUKLA	
1.1	Introduction	1
1.2	Composition of oils and fats	4
1.3	Availability of oils and fats	6
1.4	Applications of oils and fats	8
1.5	Newer developments within oils and fats	8
1.6	Global trends in production, consumption and trade of fats and oils	9
1.7	Pricing policies	12
1.8	Other developments	12
1.9	World demand and supply situation	12
1.10	Concluding remarks	14
	References	14
<b>2</b>	<b>Nutritional aspects of fats and oils</b>	<b>16</b>
	L.M. THOMAS and B.J. HOLUB	
2.1	Introduction	16
2.2	Cholesterol	16
2.2.1	Structure and function	16
2.2.2	Sources of cholesterol	17
2.2.3	Digestion, absorption and transport in the blood	17
2.2.4	Role of plasma cholesterol in atherosclerosis	19
2.2.5	Dietary cholesterol, atherosclerosis and plasma cholesterol	20
2.2.6	Dietary recommendations	22
2.3	Saturated, mono-unsaturated and polyunsaturated fatty acids	22
2.3.1	Structure and function	22
2.3.2	Sources of fatty acids	23
2.3.3	Digestion, absorption and transport in the blood	24
2.3.4	Role of various types of fatty acids and total fat in disease	24
2.3.5	Dietary recommendations	27
2.4	$\omega$ -6 and $\omega$ -3 essential fatty acids	27
2.4.1	Structure and sources	27
2.4.2	Deficiency symptoms	29
2.4.3	Recommended intakes of essential fatty acids to prevent deficiency	30
2.5	Roles of $\omega$ -6 and $\omega$ -3 fatty acids in nutrition and disease	31
2.5.1	Nutrition	31
2.5.2	Disease	32
2.6	Phospholipids and lecithin	35
2.6.1	Structure and functions	35
2.6.2	Functions and commercial uses of lecithin	37
2.7	Medium-chain triglycerides	37
2.7.1	Structure and sources	37
2.7.2	Digestion and absorption	37
2.7.3	Importance of medium-chain triglycerides	38



2.8	Fat substitutes	38
2.8.1	Benefit of fat substitutes	38
2.8.2	Safety considerations	39
2.8.3	Types of fat substitutes	39
2.9	<i>Trans</i> fatty acids	41
2.9.1	Origins, intake levels and food sources	41
2.9.2	Effects on health and disease risk	42
2.9.3	Food labelling and regulatory policies	43
2.10	Future developments	44
	References	44
<b>3</b>	<b>Biotechnological advances in improved and alternative sources of lipids</b>	<b>50</b>
	J.B.M. RATTRAY	
3.1	Introduction	50
3.2	Techniques of biotechnology and genetic engineering	51
3.2.1	Plant selection	51
3.2.2	Genetic engineering	56
3.3	Enzyme systems for fatty acid and oil synthesis	58
3.3.1	Glycolytic enzymes	59
3.3.2	<i>De novo</i> fatty acid synthesis	60
3.3.3	Glycerolipid synthesis	66
3.4	Oil body proteins	75
3.5	Commentary	77
	References	80
<b>4</b>	<b>Edible oils from herbaceous crops</b>	<b>93</b>
	E.G. HAMMOND	
4.1	Typical compositions of oilseed unselected for lipid composition	93
4.2	Genetic alteration of oilseed composition	96
4.2.1	Oil percentage	96
4.2.2	Fatty acid composition	97
4.2.3	Other goals of plant breeding in oilseed crops	105
4.3	The introduction of new oilseed crops and crops with special characteristics	107
4.4	Potential herbaceous edible oilseed crops	109
4.4.1	<i>Cuphea</i>	109
4.4.2	<i>Apiaceae</i>	110
4.4.3	Evening primrose ( <i>Oenothera</i> )	110
4.4.4	<i>Salicornia bigelovii</i> Torr	110
4.4.5	<i>Madia sativa</i> and <i>Iva annua</i>	110
4.4.6	Lupine	111
	References	111
<b>5</b>	<b>Tropical fruits: a source of lipids</b>	<b>116</b>
	B.S. KAMEL and Y. KAKUDA	
5.1	Introduction	116
5.2	Potential sources of fats and oils	118
5.3	Important sources of lipid	123
5.3.1	Mango	123

5.3.2	Papaya	127
5.3.3	Avocado	129
5.3.4	Buffalo gourd	132
5.3.5	Okra	134
5.3.6	Passion fruit	135
5.3.7	Tamarind	136
5.3.8	Guava	138
5.3.9	Durian	139
5.3.10	Breadfruit	140
5.3.11	Jackfruit	140
5.4	Commercial and village processing	140
5.5	Toxicology	143
	References	144

## 6 Nuts as a source of edible oil

150

J.G. WOODROOF

6.1	Types and geographical location of production	150
6.1.1	World production and consumption of tree nuts	150
6.1.2	World production of nuts and seeds	150
6.2	Economic feasibility	154
6.2.1	Ammonia damaged pecans	154
6.2.2	Moldy nuts	158
6.2.3	Wormy cashew nuts	158
6.3	Composition and characteristics and comparison to common oils	158
6.3.1	Stability	159
6.3.2	Labeling	159
6.3.3	Fatty acid composition of tree nut oils	160
6.4	Use of gourmet oils in confections and cosmetics	160
6.5	Nutritive value	163
6.6	General methods of processing and refining	167
6.6.1	Dehulling	167
6.6.2	Shelling	167
6.6.3	Recovering nut oil	168
6.6.4	Roasting	169
6.6.5	Nut butters and pastes	170
6.6.6	Oil refining	171
6.6.7	Debittering	171
6.6.8	Deodorizing	171
6.6.9	Hydrogenation	171
6.6.10	Dewaxing	172
6.6.11	Margarine stock	172
6.7	Utilization of cake for feed	172
6.8	Trends in the nut industry	173
6.9	The future	174
6.10	Exports and imports	175
6.10.1	Nut storage	175
	References	176

## 7 Fruit and vegetable by-products as sources of oil

177

J.L. WEIHRAUCH and B.B. TETER

7.1	Introduction	177
7.2	Citrus seed	178
7.3	Cucurbit seed	180

7.4	Currant seed	183
7.4.1	Red currants	183
7.4.2	Black currants	183
7.4.3	Gooseberry	184
7.5	Grape seed	184
7.5.1	Agronomic statistics	185
7.5.2	Physical constants for oil	186
7.5.3	Oil composition	187
7.5.4	Other useful products obtained in oil recovery	190
7.6	Olive cake	190
7.6.1	Olive oil categories	192
7.7	Pome fruit	193
7.7.1	Apple seed ( <i>Malus sylvestris</i> )	193
7.7.2	Star apple ( <i>Crysophyllum albidum</i> )	194
7.7.3	Pear ( <i>Pyrus communis</i> )	194
7.7.4	Quince ( <i>Cydonia vulgaris</i> )	194
7.8	Stone fruits	195
7.8.1	Apricot ( <i>Prunus armeniaca</i> L.)	195
7.8.2	Peach ( <i>Prunus persica</i> Sieb)	196
7.8.3	Plum ( <i>Prunus domestica</i> L.)	196
7.8.4	Cherry	196
7.9	Rice bran	197
7.10	Tea seed	197
7.11	Tomato seed	198
7.11.1	Oil composition	199
7.11.2	Other useful products obtained in oil recovery	201
7.11.3	Economic feasibility for processing and utilization	201
7.12	Other seeds	202
7.12.1	Camellia seeds	202
7.12.2	Date seed	202
7.12.3	Red pepper	203
7.13	Summary	204
	References	205

## 8 Oils from under-utilised palm and forest products

209

K. BERGER

8.1	Palms	209
8.1.1	The African oil palm, <i>Elaeis guineensis</i>	209
8.1.2	Coconut palm, <i>Coccoloba nucifera</i>	210
8.2	Traditional processing	211
8.3	Nutritional properties of palm oil	212
8.4	Under-utilised palms	214
8.4.1	<i>Acrocomia</i>	215
8.4.2	<i>Astrocaryum</i> species	216
8.4.3	<i>Attalea colenda</i>	217
8.4.4	<i>Bactris gasipaes</i>	218
8.4.5	<i>Jessenia bataua</i>	219
8.4.6	<i>Jubaea spectabilis</i>	220
8.4.7	<i>Mauritia vinifera</i>	220
8.4.8	<i>Mauritia flexuosa</i>	220
8.4.9	<i>Maximiliana regia</i>	221
8.4.10	The babassu palm ( <i>Orbygnia</i> species)	222
8.5	Under-utilised sources of edible oil from trees	223
8.5.1	<i>Argania</i>	223
8.5.2	<i>Caryocar</i> species	223
8.5.3	<i>Caryodendron orinocense</i>	224

8.5.4	<i>Moringa</i> species	225
8.5.5	<i>Pentaclethra</i> species	225
8.6	Discussion	230
	References	231
<b>9</b>	<b>Yeasts, moulds, algae and bacteria as sources of lipids</b>	<b>235</b>
	C. RATLEDGE	
9.1	Introduction	235
9.1.1	General background to microbial lipids	235
9.1.2	Development of the concept of microorganisms as sources of lipids	237
9.2	Process of microbial oil accumulation	239
9.2.1	Physiological aspects	239
9.2.2	Biochemistry of lipid accumulation	246
9.3	Yeasts	251
9.3.1	General aspects	251
9.3.2	Yeast oil as a cocoa butter equivalent	255
9.3.3	Other yeast fatty acids	262
9.4	Moulds	264
9.4.1	$\gamma$ -Linolenic acid	266
9.4.2	Dihomo- $\gamma$ -linolenic acid	269
9.4.3	5,8,11- <i>cis</i> -Eicosatrienoic acid ('Mead acid')	270
9.4.4	Arachidonic acid	270
9.4.5	Eicosapentaenoic acid	271
9.4.6	Docosahexaenoic acid	272
9.4.7	Conclusions	273
9.5	Algae	274
9.5.1	$\gamma$ -Linolenic acid	274
9.5.2	Arachidonic acid	275
9.5.3	Eicosapentaenoic acid	276
9.5.4	Docosahexaenoic acid	277
9.5.5	Conclusions	277
9.6	Bacteria	278
9.7	Acceptability and economic considerations	280
	References	283
<b>10</b>	<b>Animal and marine lipids</b>	<b>292</b>
	R.G. ACKMAN	
10.1	Animal lipids	292
10.1.1	Lard	294
10.1.2	Tallow and butter	296
10.1.3	<i>Trans</i> acids	300
10.1.4	Poultry lipids and greases	301
10.2	Marine lipids	302
10.2.1	Triglyceride oils	302
10.2.2	Wax ester oils	310
10.2.3	Marine mammals	310
10.2.4	Shark and other fish liver oils	312
10.2.5	Production and refining of marine oils	314
10.2.6	Health aspects of marine lipids	317
	Acknowledgments	318
	References	319

<b>11 Treatment, oxidation and health aspects of fats and oils</b>	<b>329</b>
C.K. CHOW and M.K. GUPTA	
11.1 Introduction	329
11.2 Oxidation of fats and oils	329
11.2.1 Autoxidation	330
11.2.2 Thermal oxidation	331
11.2.3 Enzymatic oxidation	332
11.2.4 Photo-oxidation	333
11.3 Health effects of oxidized fats and oils	333
11.3.1 Whole oxidized fats/oils	334
11.3.2 Fatty acid hydroperoxides	337
11.3.3 Secondary products	338
11.3.4 Metabolic fate of hydroperoxides and secondary products	340
11.4 Regeneration of used oil	343
11.4.1 Introduction	343
11.4.2 Techniques that have been used for oil cleaning and regeneration	344
11.5 Summary and conclusion	352
References	353
 <b>12 Enzymes in lipid technology and cocoa butter substitutes</b>	 <b>360</b>
Y.J. OWUSU-ANSAH	
12.1 Introduction	360
12.2 Oil extraction	360
12.2.1 Enzyme-assisted full pressing process	362
12.2.2 Enzyme-enhanced solvent extraction	363
12.2.3 Enzyme-assisted aqueous extraction	364
12.3 Production of lipids and oleochemical compounds	367
12.3.1 Production of free fatty acid	368
12.3.2 Production of monoacylglycerols	369
12.3.3 Diacylglycerol production processes	370
12.3.4 Production of triacylglycerols	371
12.3.5 Other enzymes: mediated processes	371
12.4 Enzyme-derived flavours from lipids	374
12.5 Enzymatic trans- and interesterification processes	375
12.6 Cocoa butter substitutes and equivalents	379
12.6.1 Characteristics of cocoa butter	379
12.6.2 Manufacturing processes for cocoa butter substitutes	380
12.7 Future developments of enzymes in lipid technology	384
12.8 Conclusion	384
References	385
 <b>Index</b>	 <b>391</b>

# **1 Present and future outlook of the world fats and oil supplies**

V.K.S. SHUKLA

## **1.1 Introduction**

Fats and oils are the most essential nutrients of both human and animal diets. They provide the most concentrated energy (9 kcal/g) of any food-stuff, supply essential fatty acids (which are precursors for the important hormones prostanooids), serve as carrier for fat soluble vitamins, make foods more palatable and contribute towards the feeling of satiety after eating.

The oil crops have been cultivated since antiquity. Rapeseed was described in the Indian Sanskrit writings of 2000 BC and sesame seed was already known in ancient times. For the past half century, the cultivation of oil-bearing plants has increased considerably. There are several species of plants in the world whose oil can be utilized for human consumption. Although Lennarts (1983) described forty different oilseeds, there are only ten edible oil crops of commercial value in the world market. Seven of these are seed crops (cottonseed, groundnuts, rapeseed, safflower seed, sesame seed, soybeans and sunflower seed), and three are tree crops (coconut, olives and oil palm/kernels). Cultivation of several of these crops (coconut with copra, and oil palm/palm kernels) is limited almost exclusively to developing countries, where the most favourable climatic and soil conditions are available. However, some are annual crops and some are perennial (tree) crops, and these have very different possibilities of responding to changes in the world market.

The palm fruit has no associated oilmeals and unlike other oilseeds it cannot be transported far for economical and quality reasons. It has to be processed fresh locally, immediately after harvest and then transported all over the world. However, other oil crops are capable of being converted into varying proportions of vegetable oil and meal and because of the relatively high protein content and relatively low cost of the flour, extensive efforts are being made to utilize these by-products of seed crushing as a dietary protein source for human consumption.

Although the main input in the production of vegetable oils and fats comes from agriculture, there are close links with sectors such as chemical and capital goods, which play highly important roles as depicted in Figure

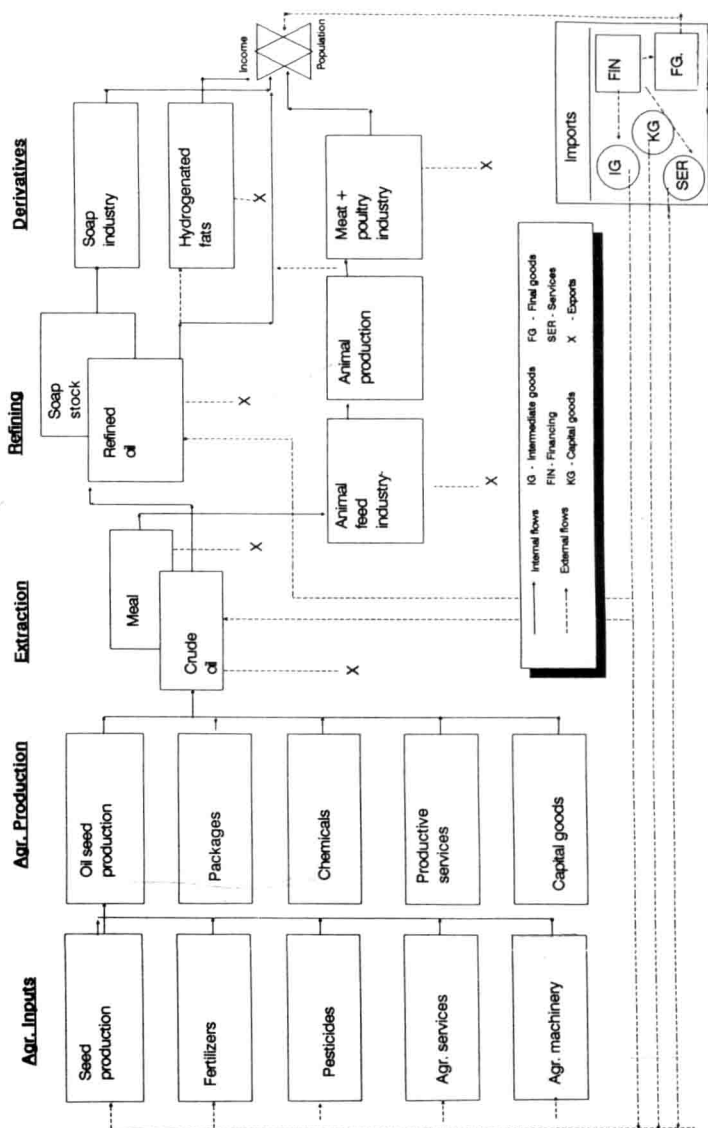
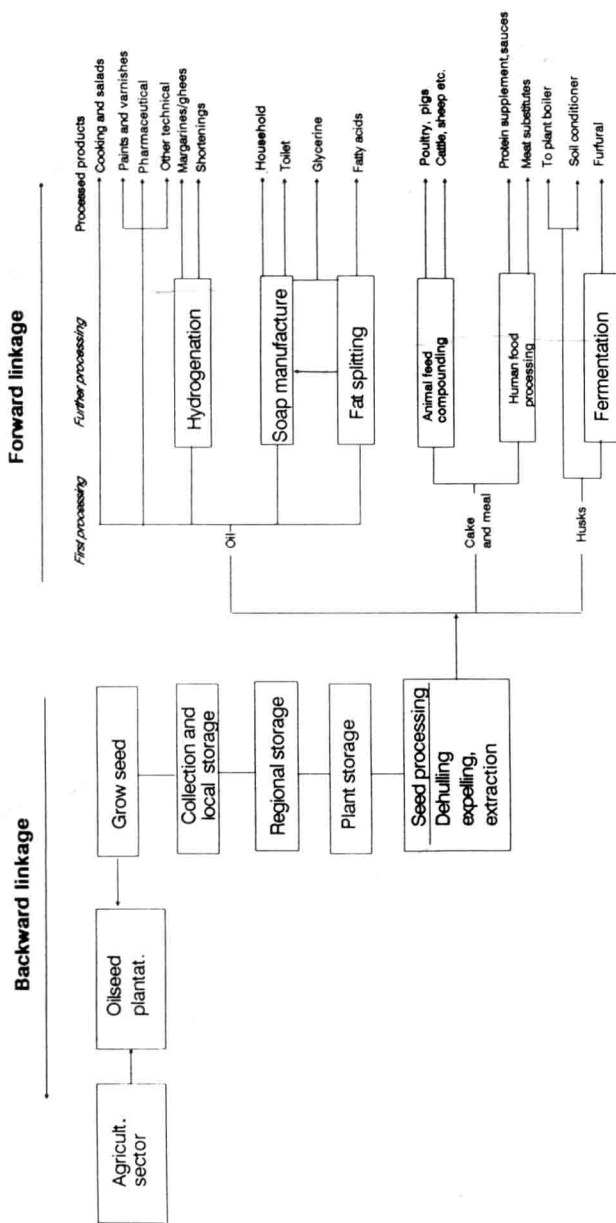


Figure 1.1 Vegetable oils and fats agro-industrial system: basic scheme.



**Figure 1.2** Intersectoral production linkages in the oilseed industry.



1.1. The industrially processed materials originating from vegetable oils and fats form the basis for the establishment of a varied chain of economically linked industries as shown in Figure 1.2. The cakes and meals are the basic raw materials for modern livestock feeding techniques linked with the industry of animal husbandry as shown in Figures 1.1 and 1.2, respectively.

Vegetable oils derived from the processing of oilseeds account for about 70% of the world's edible oils and fat production, the remainder being animal fats (30%), which include fish oils (2%). Out of the total world production of major oils and fats, about 80% is consumed as human food, a further 6% is used for animal feed, leaving 14% for the oleochemical industry (Richter and Knaut, 1984).

## 1.2 Composition of oils and fats

The most common fatty acids of plant and animal origin contain an even number of carbon atoms in straight chains with a terminal carboxyl group and may be fully saturated or contain (one to six) double bonds, which generally but not always have a *cis* configuration. Due to stereochemical effect, a double bond has the possibility of existing in two alternative isomeric forms, one in which the hydrogens attached to the carbons lie on the same side of the molecular chain (the *cis* form) and the other in which they lie on opposite sides (the *trans* form). Several vegetable oils contain trace amounts of natural *trans* fatty acids.

The fatty acids of animal origin are comparatively simple in structure and can be subdivided into well defined families. On the other hand, plant fatty acids may be more complex and contain a variety of other functional groups such as acetylenic bonds, epoxyl, hydroxyl, keto groups and cyclopropane rings.

Fatty acids do not exist normally in the free state. Fats and oils are predominantly triesters of fatty acids and glycerol, commonly called 'triglycerides'. These fatty acids may be saturated, mono-unsaturated or polyunsaturated. In addition to triglycerides, oils and fats also contain monoglycerides, diglycerides, phospholipids, galactolipids, free fatty acids emerging due to the action of lipases, and small amounts of substances such as sterols, terpenes, tocopherols and other fat soluble vitamins.

The fatty acid composition of major oil sources is shown in Table 1.1. The oils and fats have been divided according to the predominance of particular fatty acids such as saturated, mono-unsaturated and polyunsaturated. It is worth mentioning here that the fatty acid composition of particular oils and fats is variable according to the strain and climate; e.g. the linoleic acid content of corn oil varies between 35 and 60% and of peanut oil from 20 to 40%.