Gelatin

Introduction

- Gelatin is a protein substance derived from collagen, a natural protein present in the tendons, ligaments, and tissues of mammals. It is produced by boiling the connective tissues, bones and skins of animals, usually cows and pigs.
- Fish skin and fish bones could be used as a source of gelatin, although gelatin from aquatic sources is not as good as gelatin from animal sources.
- Gelatin's ability to form strong, transparent gels and flexible films that are easily digested, soluble in hot water, and capable of forming a positive binding action have made it a valuable commodity in food processing, pharmaceuticals, photography, and paper production

Properties

- It is colorless or slightly yellow, transparent, brittle, particularly odorless, tasteless sheet, flakes or coarse powder.
- Gelatin swells up and absorbs 5 to 10 times its weight of water to form a gel in solution below 35 - 40°C.
- It is soluble in hot water, glycerol, acetic acid, insoluble in organic solvents and is amphoteric.

Production of gelatin from lumpfish

- 3 sources of lumpfish (Cyclopterus lumpus) lumpfish skin(s), headed and gutted lumpfish(HG) and gutted lumpfish(G) were used to produced lumpfish.
- The moisture content and pH for the gelatin were very similar to the reference, knox gelatin.
- However the content of ash was much higher and increased proportionally with inclusion of raw material containing increasing quantities of bones.
- The amino acid content of the HG sample most closely resemble the reference

Uses

- The principal use of gelatin is for increasing the viscosity of aqueous solutions and in the formation of solidified gels.
- It is used in food industry in conjunction with other edible ingredients as a gelling, stabilizing, emulsifying, dispersing or thickening agent.

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- Norland (1990) has characterized the applications of gelatin into the following uses:
- 1.Edible gelatin: free of heavy metals and aesthetically pleasing for eating.
- 2.Industrial gelatin: where the chemical and physical properties are uniquely suitable for industrial application like gelatin used in the microencapsulation of dye precursors for carbonless paper.

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- S. photographic gelatin: the requirements are extremely critical. Photographic film requires a long shelf life. Gelatin has major impact on silver halide chemistry and the ability to take a picture and develop it later under standard developing conditions.
- 4. Glue: especially for adhesive or gluing application.
- Fish gelatin, with the exception of photographic film, has been use in all these applications.
- Fish gelatin is also used as the base for a light sensitive coating (photoresist) for electronics trade.

Drawbacks

- Nutritionally, gelatin is an incomplete protein, since it lacks tryptophan, an essential amino acid.
- An animal or human being could survive if it had to subsist on gelatin as its soul source of protein.
- However, gelatin is relatively high in lysine and methionine.

