Book Review

Capillary Electrophoresis for Food Analysis: Method Development

by R. A. Frazier, J. M. Ames, H. E. Nursten

Royal Society of Chemistry,
Cambridge 2000. pp. 127 + xiv.
ISBN 0-85404-492-2. Price: GBP 49.50

The number of books on capillary electrophoresis (CE) continues to increase with the present trend being towards more specialist volumes. In fact this same publisher recently published another book on the same topic as the one being reviewed here.

This book by researchers from the Department of Food Science at the University of Reading, U.K. has two aims. One is to introduce the technique to newcomers within the food analysis industry and the other is to encourage the development of the technique within that industry. Food analysis presents many challenges not least the complexity of the ma-

trices involved, but the high resolution of CE especially for charged species makes it ideal for such difficult separations.

It is a relatively slight volume with some nine chapters occupying 87 pages of text plus three appendices. The first seven chapters cover the usual topics e. g. what is CE?, how does MEKC work?, etc. These are, on the whole, written from the point of view of analysts working in a specialty and their angle on the topics can often be refreshing compared to the now standard style adopted by analytical or pharmaceutical chemists. Chapter 8 is a useful troubleshooting section with some informative tables even if not all possible problems are covered and some obvious explanations are neglected such as not using spatial areas gives poor reproducibility. Chapter 9 is a compendium of CE applications in the field of food science and includes brief details of some 94 references published up to early 1999. The growth in the area cov-

ered by this book is such that there are now over 250 published papers on the subject according to this reviewer's own database.

The appendices offer fully worked examples of three dissimilar analyses: – (1) Niacin in food by CZE, (2) Catechins in green tea by MEKC and (3), a favourite of CE training courses, artificial sweeteners and preservatives in soft drinks. These are comprehensively presented including the full optimisation details such as the role of additives. The index is comprehensive, as are the lists of CE suppliers etc. at the end of the book.

To a food laboratory analyst coming to CE for the first time then it might be a worthwhile buy. However at the end of the day this book does not really offer much more to the reader than the dozen or so reviews of CE applied to food science that have been published.

D. Perrett

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