FOOD INDUSTRY BRIEFING SERIES

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Oils and Fats in the Food Industry

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Commodity oils have to be extracted from their agricultural source and are then usually refined to produce a bland product. However, the natural oils are not always optimum for their food-use purpose – they may fall short in terms of their physical, chemical, or nutritional properties – and procedures have been devised by which the oils come closer to what is desired. These procedures will be described. It is important that those in the food industry know what can be achieved and at what financial, environmental, or other cost.

Commodity oils and fats are generally purchased with a specification. This chapter describes the terms which might appear on a specification and the analytical procedures by which these are measured.