

# Isopropyl Alcohol Extraction of Oil and Lipids in the Production of Fish Protein Concentrate From Herring

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## Abstract

The extraction of lipid from fatty fish (herring) by the Halifax process for producing fish protein concentrate, using isopropyl alcohol (IPA), is virtually complete. The largest portion of the lipid is found in the first extract and high quality triglyceride oil is readily recovered by cooling this extract; under certain circumstances it can also be recovered from the second extract. The phospholipids are extracted without obvious degradation and together with free fatty acids are found mostly in the IPA-rich phase from the first extraction. Residual lipid in fish protein concentrate resembles the starting lipid of the fish. Detailed fatty acid compositions are given for various materials.

## Introduction

The production of a stable and nutritious dietary supplement from fish (commonly referred to as fish protein concentrate or FPC) requires the almost complete removal of all oxidation-susceptible lipids (1-3). Initial work on FPC in North America (2,4,5) was largely based on fish sources low in fat, such as cod (*Gadus morhua*) muscle (<1% extractable lipid), and whole hake (the Pacific hake *Merluccius productus*). The common Atlantic red hake *Urophycis chuss* may contain up to 6% lipid, depending on season. Economically, the future of FPC may depend on the utilization of very low-cost raw materials of which the Atlantic herring (*Clupea harengus*) offers considerable potential, since landings of this species from Canadian waters are now virtually on a year-round basis (6). These herring contain fluctuating amounts of body fat, the range 4-20% encompassing most extremes, but 8-16% being more usual (7,8). The recovery of this fat from the FPC production process has received little attention, although good quality herring oil is readily marketable. Numerous solvents and combinations of solvents have been associated with FPC production but the present study is confined to the use of isopropyl alcohol (IPA) in the process originated in the Halifax Laboratory, Fisheries Research Board of Canada (4,5), as modified for fatty fish (9).

There is normally some post-mortem autolysis of lipids, especially phospholipids, in the flesh of fish during any period of storage including frozen storage (10,11) or storage in a preservative such as IPA (12). A comparison has therefore been made between fresh herring (about 4 hr out of water) and herring which had been held at -25 C (-14 F) for 8 months. The latter fish were an example of what might at times be used as raw material for FPC production.

## Experimental Procedures and Results

### Examination of Lipids From Fresh Herring

Quantitative extraction by the method of Bligh and Dyer (13) yielded 16.4% total lipid of yellow-brown color. The acid value of this lipid was 2.55, the iodine value (Wijs) 118. Part of the lipid was placed on a gel column (20 mm x 35 cm) of 200-400 mesh styrene divinylbenzene copolymer beads (Dow Chemical Co.) eluted with benzene. The course of this chromatographic separation (14) was monitored (Fig. 1-I) by a continuous recording differential refractometer. Fractions collected were weighed and examined by thin layer chromatography on silica gel (hexane-ether-acetic acid 70:30:1) with the following results: fraction 1 (6.9%) showed only phospholipids, fraction 2 (90.7%) showed only triglycerides, fraction 3 (0.9%) showed mostly free fatty acids with minor amounts of sterol ester and of diglycerides or sterol (cholesterol references), or both, fractions 4-7 (1.5%) were similar to each other and to fractions 3 but contained only traces of free fatty acids.

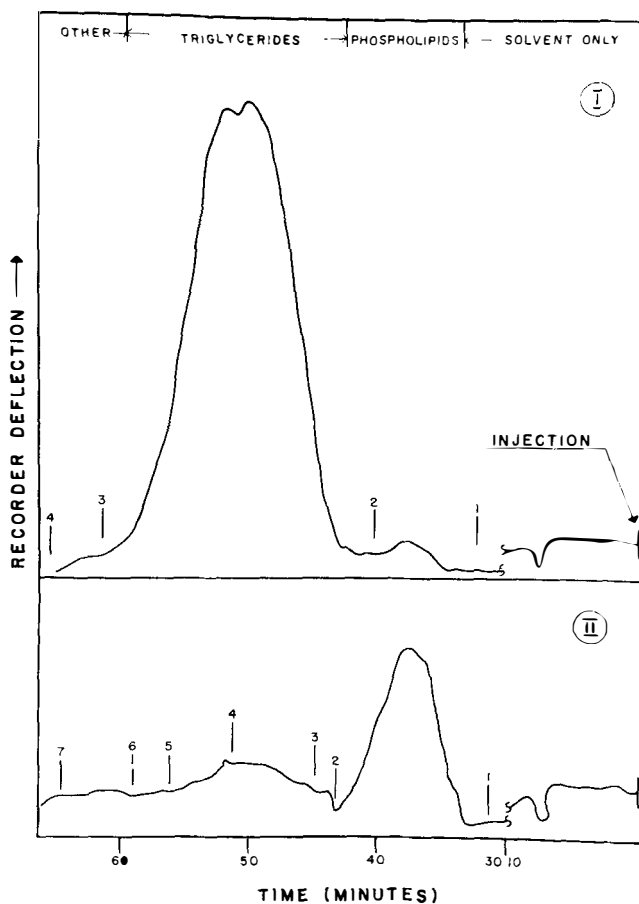


FIG. 1. Part of chart recording differential refractometer output of initial eluants from polystyrene bead column. Times given at bottom (part of solvent only omitted) and approximate regions corresponding to principal lipids noted at top. Numbers are those of fractions collected as discussed in text. I, 0.2036 g of total lipid extracted in the laboratory from fresh herring. II, 0.2154 g of IPA-soluble material from first extract after removal of triglyceride oil at 3 C.

TABLE I  
Composition of Esters of Fatty Acids From Fractions of a Chromatographic Separation of Lipids  
Obtained From Fresh Herring by the Bligh and Dyer Method and From Extract I of the  
FPC Production Process

Fatty acid <sup>a</sup>	Weight per cent fatty acid					
	Bligh and Dyer extraction on raw fish			Extract I from FPC production process		
	Phospholipid	Triglyceride	Other lipids	Soluble phospholipid	Insoluble oil (3 C)	Other solubles
12:0	Trace	Trace	4.4	Trace	0.1	2.2
13:0	Trace	Trace	0.6	Trace	0.1	0.1
14:0	1.8	5.6	2.7	1.5	5.9	6.3
14:1 <sup>b,c</sup>	0.2	0.7	1.1	Trace	0.4	0.7
15:0	0.3	0.4	1.2	Trace	0.4	0.6
15:1 + I 16:0 <sup>d</sup>	0.2	Trace	1.2	Trace	0.1	0.2
16:0	21.4	12.5	19.5	23.1	12.9	15.9
16:1 <sup>e</sup>	4.6	13.6	10.1	5.1	12.3	14.8
16:2 + 17:0 <sup>f</sup>	0.7	1.4	1.3	0.8	0.6	1.6
16:3 + 17:1	Trace	0.8	0.4	Trace	0.5	0.7
16:4 <sup>ω</sup> 1	Trace	1.8	1.2	Trace	0.7	1.1
18:0	3.2	1.1	3.2	3.8	0.8	1.5
18:1 <sup>b</sup>	13.0	15.5	11.3	12.1	14.7	13.4
18:2 <sup>ω</sup> 6	0.9	1.1	0.7	1.3	0.8	1.0
18:3 <sup>ω</sup> 6 + 19:1	0.1	0.2	0.2	Trace	0.1	0.3
18:3 <sup>ω</sup> 3	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.2	0.4	0.4
18:4 <sup>ω</sup> 3	0.2	1.2	0.4	0.3	1.2	1.3
20:0	0.2	Trace	0.1	Trace	0.1	?
20:1 <sup>b</sup>	2.4	13.7	5.3	1.8	14.8	5.3
20:2 <sup>ω</sup> 6	0.1	0.2	Trace	?	0.1	Trace
20:3 <sup>ω</sup> 6	Trace	Trace	Trace	Trace	Trace	?
20:4 <sup>ω</sup> 6	1.4	0.3	Trace	1.0	0.1	0.7
20:4 <sup>ω</sup> 3	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.1
20:5 <sup>ω</sup> 3	12.2	6.8	13.1	15.6	6.4	12.3
21:5 <sup>ω</sup> 2(?) <sup>g</sup>	0.2	0.2	0.6	0.2	0.2	0.1
22:1 <sup>b</sup>	1.6	19.4	2.9	0.9	21.5	4.6
22:5 <sup>ω</sup> 6	0.2	Trace	Trace	Trace	0.1	Trace
22:5 <sup>ω</sup> 3	0.8	0.2	0.6	0.2	0.5	0.6
22:6 <sup>ω</sup> 3	32.7	3.1	16.2	31.3	3.3	13.4
24:1	1.3	Trace	Trace	0.4	0.7	0.4

<sup>a</sup> Chain length, number of double bonds and position of nearest double bond relative to terminal methyl.

<sup>b</sup> Mostly with  $\omega$ 9 isomer predominating; other isomers present.

<sup>c</sup> Includes iso and anteiso 15:0 and possibly 4,8,12-trimethyltridecanoic acids.

<sup>d</sup> Includes pristanic acid.

<sup>e</sup> Includes iso and anteiso 17:0 acids.

<sup>f</sup> Includes phytanic acid.

<sup>g</sup> Includes traces of 22:4 $\omega$ 6.

Fraction 1 was examined by thin layer chromatography on silica gel (chloroform-methanol-water 70:30:5) and showed spots of roughly equal size for major components identified as phosphatidyl ethanolamine and phosphatidyl choline, with minor components identified as sphingomyelin and lyso-phosphatidyl ethanolamine. Fractions 1,2 and 3-7 (pooled) were respectively transesterified with methanol-boron trifluoride (15). The methyl esters were recovered and analyzed by gas liquid chromatography (16) with the results presented in Table I. The starting material total fatty acid composition is included in Table IV.

#### Examination of Lipids From Frozen Herring

A representative 1 kg sample was collected as the thawed herring were being ground. The lipid was extracted quantitatively. Recovery was 12.6% lipid of a very dark brown color, with an acid value of 13.1. This lipid was not examined in detail but the total lipid fatty acid composition was determined after transesterification (Table IV).

#### Manipulation of Extracts Recovered From Herring Processing

The processing involved three successive extractions. In addition to IPA a small amount of phosphoric acid was added to adjust the pH in the initial extraction. All extractions were carried out at 81 C (178-180 F) (9) and the hot slurry was centrifuged in a basket centrifuge. The recovered liquors were filtered through Whatman No. 1 filter paper (suction, Buchner funnel) to remove fine particles. The filter was rinsed with petroleum ether to recover adherent oils.

*Extract I.* The IPA added to the ground fish was intended to produce a 70:30 IPA:H<sub>2</sub>O ratio. The extract from the stored herring was dark brown in

was 99% and the water content of the resulting extract was thus about 5%. This step differs from that used for lean fish where this extraction is normally performed with 70:30 IPA:H<sub>2</sub>O. The extract from the stored herring was dark yellow in color, that from the fresh herring a slightly lighter yellow.

*Extract III.* The third extraction was carried out with 99% IPA and yielded pale yellow extracts.

The further treatment of the extracts from fresh herring followed the scheme of Figure 2. On cooling to room temperature (25 C) two phases formed in Extract I from stored herring and in Extracts I and II from fresh herring. The oil was found in the bottom layer and was removed in the case of Extracts I and II from fresh herring. Extract I from stored herring was examined for lipid content in the upper (IPA-rich) phase, and oil in the bottom phase was determined, but the two layers were not separated. Extract I from stored herring, and the IPA-rich upper phases from Extracts I and II from fresh herring, were cooled slowly to +3 C. Additional layers of oil separated from the latter extracts, and when Extract II from stored herring (homogeneous at room temperature) was similarly cooled to +3 C, an oil phase formed. In both Extracts II at +3 C the oil formed semisolid bottom layers (A) and in the upper IPA-rich layers there appeared crystals which could be filtered off as separate oil material (B). The A and B materials were recovered individually from the stored herring extract for examination but are otherwise taken as one phase, except in Table IV. Recovered B, after solvent removal, was a very pale oil, semisolid at room temperature and of i.v. 80.6. Recovered A was a clear yellow oil at room temperature, with i.v. 101.3. The ratio of B to A was 0.6 to 1, the combined oils having an i.v. of 94. The acid values of A and B were

TABLE II  
Recovery and Distribution of Oil (from IPA-Insoluble Phase) and of Other Lipids (in IPA-Rich Phase) From Extracts Prepared From Fresh Herring and From Herring Stored at -25 C (-14 F) for 8 Months

Material examined	Temperature (C)	Lipid fractions as percentages of raw material lipid			Lipid fractions as percentages of lipid in extracts		Concentration of lipid soluble in IPA phase g/l
		Total lipid <sup>a</sup>	IPA-insoluble (oil) <sup>b</sup>	IPA-soluble <sup>c</sup>	IPA-insoluble (oil)	IPA-soluble	
Fresh herring							
Extract I	25	70.6	59.6	11.0	84.5	15.5	8.0
Extract II	25	22.1	4.7	17.3	21.5	78.5	21.8
Extract III	25	2.7	.....	2.7	.....	100	3.4
Solution I <sup>d</sup>	3	11.0	1.1	9.8	1.6 <sup>e</sup>	13.9	7.2
Solution II <sup>d</sup>	3	16.5	9.0	7.5	40.7 <sup>f</sup>	34.1	9.6
Solution III <sup>d</sup>	3	2.7	.....	2.7	.....	100	3.4
Stored herring							
Extract I	25	64.0	46.1	17.9	71.9	28.1	12.6
Extract II	3	63.8	47.6	16.2	74.6	25.4	11.5
Extract III	3	28.0	10.4	17.6	37.0	63.0	15.0
Extract III	3	1.9	.....	1.9	.....	100	1.9

<sup>a</sup> Lipid loss (e.g., through manipulation) including lipids left in FPC was 4.6% of starting lipid in fresh herring and 6.3% in frozen stored herring.  
<sup>b</sup> Total IPA-insoluble (oil) recovery was 74.4% of starting lipid in fresh herring and 58.0% in stored frozen herring.  
<sup>c</sup> Total IPA-soluble lipid after final treatment was 20.0% of starting lipid in fresh herring and 35.7% in stored frozen herring.  
<sup>d</sup> IPA phases separated from extracts at 25 C.  
<sup>e</sup> Total of 10.3% of lipid in solution I.  
<sup>f</sup> Total of 51.9% of lipid in solution II.

herring. Data for solution lipid contents and yields of oil are given in Table II. Further cooling to -18 C of IPA-rich phases from frozen stored herring after separation at +3 C yielded uneconomic amounts of lipid.

**Properties of Lipids Recovered From Herring Processing Extracts and From FPC**

The predominant lipid types in each fraction were determined by thin layer chromatography (Table III). The bulk of the solvent of the IPA-rich phases was removed with a rotary vacuum evaporator. Water was added and the lipid extracted into petroleum ether (four successive extractions). Chloroform gave similar weight recoveries of lipids. The water soluble materials were chiefly (94%) in Extract I, with some (6%) in Extract II and a trace in Extract III (experiment with stored frozen herring). The IPA-insoluble materials were washed two or three times with water to remove IPA and water soluble materials and dried over sodium sulphate. Acid values, iodine values (Wijs) and percentage of non-saponifiable materials (AOCS Official Methods) were determined on appropriate fractions (Table III). Details of fatty acid compositions for most materials are given in Table IV.

The final FPC filter cakes were extracted by the method of Bligh and Dyer (50 g, solvent ratios based on the addition of 80 ml water), with re-extraction of the filter with chloroform. The FPC was oven dried and bagged in polyethylene bags. After four days FPC samples were extracted quantitatively by the same procedure. FPC from the fresh herring

yielded 0.28% lipid; that from stored frozen herring yielded 0.19% lipid. A thin layer chromatographic examination of the filter cake and final FPC lipids showed a strong similarity to the starting material lipids, but with additional emphasis on triglycerides and on phospholipids. Details of the fatty acid composition are given in Table IV.

**Properties of Potential Phospholipid Product**

The thin layer chromatographic investigations of the lipids soluble in IPA indicated a substantial concentration of phospholipid in the solution remaining from Extract I from fresh herring, after consecutive removal of the materials insoluble at 25 C and 3 C. A sample of this lipid was separated by gel chromatography as described above (Fig. 1-II) into 12 fractions. After thin layer chromatographic examination these were pooled in appropriate groups summarized as follows: fractions 1-2 (78.3%) were substantially pure phospholipid; fractions 3-4 (6.7%) contained roughly equal amounts of triglycerides and free fatty acid, with some sterol and diglyceride; fractions 5-6 (7.0%) were mostly free fatty acid, with sterol and sterol ester as minor components; fractions 7-10 (7.9%) were chiefly sterol and sterol ester. Fractions 1 and 2 were compared by thin layer chromatography with the phospholipids recovered from fresh herring lipids as described above. The pattern obtained was essentially identical except for a few trace spots of low R<sub>f</sub> value. The fatty acid compositions of the phospholipids and of the balance of the lipid extract (fractions 3-10) are included in Table I.

TABLE III  
Principal Lipid Types as Indicated by TLC and Acid Values, Iodine Values and Percentage Non-saponifiables Where Relevant, of Fractions Produced From Fresh (F) and Stored (S) Herring

Material	Temperature (C)	Phase	Types of lipid present (adjudged from TLC)	Acid value	Iodine value	Per cent non-saponifiable
F Extract I	25	Insoluble	Mostly triglyceride, some sterol	0.30	115	0.71
F Extract I	25	Soluble	Mixture phospholipid, sterol, FFA, triglyceride	21.5	.....	.....
F Extract II	25	Insoluble	Nearly pure triglyceride	0.05	110	0.21
F Extract II	25	Soluble	Mostly triglyceride, some sterol and phospholipid	1.86	.....	.....
F Extract III	25	Soluble	Mostly triglyceride, some sterol and phospholipid	1.60	.....	.....
F Solution I	3	Insoluble	Mostly triglyceride, some sterol	0.79	114	0.69
F Solution I	3	Soluble	Mixture phospholipid, sterol, FFA, triglyceride	23.7	.....	.....
F Solution II	3	Insoluble	Nearly pure triglyceride	0.05	110	0.23
F Solution II	3	Soluble	Mostly triglyceride, some sterol and phospholipid	4.70	.....	.....
S Extract I	3	Insoluble	Mostly triglyceride, traces sterol, FFA, phospholipid	1.52	109	0.92
S Extract I	3	Soluble	Mostly FFA, with large amounts of sterol ester and phospholipid	69.0	.....	.....
S Extract II	3	Insoluble	Nearly pure triglyceride	0.10	81	0.38
S Extract II	3	Soluble	Mostly triglyceride, some sterol and phospholipid	1.60	94	0.34

TABLE IV  
Fatty Acid Composition of Raw Material Lipids, of Various Processing By-product Lipids, and of Lipids Extracted From Final FPC cake

Fatty acids	Raw material lipids		Weight per cent of fatty acids from lipids recovered from products made from fresh herring						Weight per cent of fatty acids from stored fish lipids						
			Extract I 25°C		Extract II 25°C		Extract III	FPC filter cake extract	Final FPC extract	Raw material lipids		Extract I 3°C		Extract II 3°C	
	Insol.	Sol.	Insol.	Sol.	Insol.	Sol.				Insol.	Sol.	Insol.	Sol.	Insol.	Sol.
12:0	0.4	0.4	1.3	0.1	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.4	0.2	0.2	0.4	0.6	0.6	0.4	0.4
13:0	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.2
14:0	5.4	5.6	3.4	4.9	5.4	5.2	5.2	5.9	6.2	5.9	6.2	7.3	3.6	6.4	9.1
14:1 <sup>b,e</sup>	0.5	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.5	0.7	0.7	0.5	0.5	0.4	0.4	0.7	0.4	0.7	0.5
15:0	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.4	0.4	0.3	0.6	0.5	0.4	0.5
15:1 + 116:0 <sup>d</sup>	0.2	Trace	0.1	0.1	0.3	Trace	Trace	Trace	0.2	Trace	Trace	0.4	0.2	0.1	0.2
16:0	12.2	11.9	17.2	11.5	12.5	12.0	12.6	13.7	12.0	12.6	13.7	14.5	18.7	14.5	20.5
16:1 <sup>e</sup>	12.8	13.6	8.3	11.5	13.9	12.6	11.9	12.8	12.6	11.9	12.8	12.5	9.0	9.5	8.0
16:2 + 17:0 <sup>f</sup>	1.2	1.3	0.9	1.2	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.0	1.3	1.3	1.0	1.1	0.9	1.0	0.7
16:3 + 17:1	0.9	1.1	0.5	0.9	0.9	0.8	0.8	0.7	0.9	0.9	0.7	0.9	0.7	0.7	0.5
16:4 <sup>g</sup>	1.0	1.0	0.8	1.0	1.0	1.1	0.7	0.7	1.1	1.0	0.7	0.5	0.8	0.6	0.5
18:0	1.2	1.0	2.8	1.2	0.9	2.4	2.4	1.8	0.9	2.4	1.8	0.8	1.8	0.9	1.2
18:1 <sup>b</sup>	14.7	15.1	12.4	14.7	15.2	14.6	14.6	15.1	15.2	14.6	15.1	17.7	15.4	16.2	13.8
18:2 <sup>ω6</sup>	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.2	1.0	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.0	1.1	1.1	1.3	1.2	1.1	0.8
18:3 <sup>ω6</sup> + 19:1	0.3	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.5	0.3	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.3	0.2	0.3	0.2	0.4
18:3 <sup>ω3</sup>	0.3	0.5	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.5	0.5
18:4 <sup>ω3</sup>	1.1	1.1	0.7	1.1	1.3	1.1	0.9	1.0	1.1	1.3	1.0	1.2	1.2	0.7	0.6
20:0	0.1	0.1	Trace	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	Trace	Trace	Trace	?
20:1 <sup>b</sup>	12.7	13.2	5.0	15.5	12.3	13.5	11.5	13.1	13.5	12.3	13.1	13.0	4.0	15.1	14.5
20:2 <sup>ω6</sup>	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.3	0.1	0.1	0.3	Trace	0.1	0.1	Trace	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.3
20:3 <sup>ω6</sup>	0.2	Trace	?	?	0.3	?	0.1	0.1	?	0.3	0.1	Trace	?	?	?
20:4 <sup>ω6</sup>	0.4	0.1	0.6	0.5	0.5	0.1	0.7	0.1	0.1	0.5	0.1	0.1	0.6	?	Trace
20:4 <sup>ω3</sup>	0.2	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.3	0.1	0.3	0.2	0.1	0.3	0.2	Trace	?	Trace	Trace
20:5 <sup>ω3</sup>	7.4	6.8	13.2	6.0	7.5	6.9	8.0	6.3	6.9	7.5	6.3	5.0	13.4	3.9	2.6
21:5 <sup>ω2</sup> <sup>h</sup>	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.5	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.5	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.1	Trace
22:1 <sup>b</sup>	19.0	20.0	5.8	23.3	18.1	19.9	17.9	19.0	19.9	18.1	19.0	16.3	3.7	23.9	21.6
22:5 <sup>ω3</sup>	Trace	Trace	0.1	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	Trace	?	?	?
22:5 <sup>ω3</sup>	0.5	0.5	0.9	0.2	0.5	0.5	0.2	0.6	0.5	0.5	0.6	0.3	0.6	0.1	0.1
22:6 <sup>ω3</sup>	4.6	3.1	22.4	2.4	3.6	3.8	6.7	4.3	3.8	3.6	4.3	5.9	21.5	2.0	1.3
24:1 <sup>b</sup>	0.6	0.5	0.7	0.2	0.1	0.5	0.2	0.1	0.5	0.1	0.1	0.3	Trace	0.4	0.9

<sup>a</sup> Notation for chain length: number of double bonds and position of nearest double bond relative to terminal methyl.

<sup>b</sup> Mostly with  $\omega 9$  isomer predominating; other isomers present.

<sup>c</sup> Includes iso and anteiso 15:0 and possibly 4,8,12-trimethyltridecanoic acids.

<sup>d</sup> Includes pristanic acid.

<sup>e</sup> Includes iso and anteiso 17:0 acids.

<sup>f</sup> Includes phytanic acid.

<sup>g</sup> Includes traces of 22:4 $\omega 6$ .



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