

BIOEFFECTIVE KRILL OIL COMPOSITIONS

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

This application is a continuation of pending U.S. Patent Application No. 12/057,775,
5 filed March 28, 2008, which claims the benefit of expired U.S. Provisional Patent Application
No. 60/920,483, filed March 28, 2007, expired U.S. Provisional Patent Application No.
60/975,058, filed September 25, 2007, expired U.S. Provisional Patent Application No.
60/983,446, filed October 29, 2007, and expired U.S. Provisional Patent Application No.
61/024,072, filed January 28, 2008, all of which are incorporated by reference herein in their
10 entirety.

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

This invention relates to extracts from Antarctic krill that comprise bioactive fatty acids.

15 BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

In the Southern Ocean, off the coast of Antarctica, Antarctic krill (*Euphausia superba*)
can be found in large quantities, ranging from 300-500 million metric tons of biomass. It feeds on
phytoplankton during the short Antarctic summer. During winter, however, its food supply is
limited to ice algae, bacteria, marine detritus as well as depleting body protein for energy.

20 In order to isolate the krill oil from the krill, solvent extraction methods have been used.
See, e.g., WO 00/23546. Krill lipids have been extracted by placing the material in a ketone
solvent (e.g. acetone) in order to extract the lipid soluble fraction. This method involves
separating the liquid and solid contents and recovering a lipid rich fraction from the liquid
fraction by evaporation. Further processing steps include extracting and recovering by
25 evaporation the remaining soluble lipid fraction from the solid contents by using a solvent such as
ethanol. See, e.g., WO 00/23546. The compositions produced by these methods are characterized
by containing at least 75 µg/g astaxanthin, preferably 90 µg/g astaxanthin. Another krill lipid
extract disclosed contained at least 250 µg/g canastaxanthin, preferably 270 µg/g canastaxanthin.

Krill oil compositions have been described as being effective for decreasing cholesterol,
30 inhibiting platelet adhesion, inhibiting artery plaque formation, preventing hypertension,
controlling arthritis symptoms, preventing skin cancer, enhancing transdermal transport, reducing

the symptoms of premenstrual symptoms or controlling blood glucose levels in a patient. See, e.g., WO 02/102394. In yet another application, a krill oil composition has been disclosed comprising a phospholipid and/or a flavonoid. The phospholipid content in the krill lipid extract could be as high as 60% w/w and the EPA/DHA content as high as 35% (w/w). See, e.g., WO
5 03/011873.

Furthermore, nutraceuticals, pharmaceuticals and cosmetics comprising the phospholipid extract were disclosed. Previously, it was also shown that supercritical fluid extraction using neat CO₂ could be used to prevent the extraction of phospholipids in order to extract the neutral lipid fraction from krill, which comprised of esterified and free astaxanthin. See, e.g., Yamaguchi et
10 al., *J. Agric. Food Chem.* (1986), 34(5), 904-7. Supercritical fluid extraction with solvent modifier has previously been used to extract marine phospholipids from salmon roe, but has not been previously used to extract phospholipids from krill meal. See, e.g., Tanaka et al., *J. Oleo Sci.* (2004), 53(9), 417-424.

The methods described above rely on the processing of frozen krill that are transported
15 from the Southern Ocean to the processing site. This transportation is both expensive and can result in degradation of the krill starting material. Data in the literature showing a rapid decomposition of the oil in krill explains why some krill oil currently offered as an omega-3 supplement in the marketplace contains very high amounts of partly decomposed phosphatidylcholine and also partly decomposed glycerides. Saether et al., *Comp. Biochem*
20 *Phys. B* 83B(1): 51-55 (1986). The products offered also contain high levels of free fatty acids.

What is needed in the art are methods for processing krill that do not require transport of frozen krill material over long distances and the products produced by those methods.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

25 In a first aspect of the invention is a composition characterized by comprising at least 65% (w/w) phospholipids.

In another aspect of the invention is a composition obtained from aquatic or marine sources, characterized by comprising 65% (w/w) phospholipids.

In yet another aspect of the invention is a composition obtained from krill, characterized
30 by comprising at least 65% (w/w) phospholipids.

In another aspect of the invention is a composition obtained from krill, characterized by comprising at least 65% (w/w) phospholipids and at least 39% omega-3 fatty acids (w/w).

In yet another aspect of the invention is a composition obtained from krill, characterized by comprising at least 65% (w/w) phospholipids, at least 39% omega-3 fatty acids (w/w) and at
5 least 580 mg/kg astaxanthin esters.

In another aspect of the invention is a composition obtained from krill, characterized by comprising at least 39% omega-3 fatty acids (w/w) and at least 580 mg/kg astaxanthin esters.

In yet another aspect of the invention is a composition obtained from krill, characterized by comprising at least 65% (w/w) phospholipids and at least 580mg/kg astaxanthin esters.

10 In yet another aspect, the present invention provides a krill oil effective for reducing insulin resistance, improving blood lipid profile, reducing inflammation or reducing oxidative stress.

In some embodiments, the present invention provides compositions comprising: from about 3% to 10% ether phospholipids on a w/w basis; from about 35% to 50% non-ether
15 phospholipids on w/w basis, so that the total amount of ether phospholipids and non-ether phospholipids in the composition is from about 48% to 60% on a w/w basis; from about 20% to 45% triglycerides on a w/w basis; and from about 400 to about 2500 mg/kg astaxanthin. In some embodiments, the ether phospholipids are selected from the group consisting of alkylacylphosphatidylcholine, lyso-alkylacylphosphatidylcholine,
20 alkylacylphosphatidylethanolamine, and combinations thereof. In some embodiments, the ether lipids are greater than 90% alkylacylphosphatidylcholine. In some embodiments, the non-ether phospholipids are selected from the group consisting of phosphatidylcholine, phosphatidylserine, phosphatidylethanolamine and combinations thereof. In some embodiments, krill oil composition comprises a blend of lipid fractions obtained from krill. In some preferred embodiments, krill is
25 *Euphausia superba*, although other krill species also find use in the present invention. Other krill species include, but are not limited to *E. pacifica*, *E. frigida*, *E. longirostris*, *E. triacantha*, *E. vallentini*, *Meganyctiphanes norvegica*, *Thysanoessa raschii* and *Thysanoessa inermis*. In some embodiments, the compositions comprise from about 25% to 30% omega-3 fatty acids as a percentage of total fatty acids and wherein from about 80% to 90% of said omega-3 fatty acids
30 are attached to said phospholipids. In some embodiments, the present invention provides a capsule containing the foregoing compositions.

In further embodiments, the present inventions provide compositions comprising: from about 3% to 10% ether phospholipids on a w/w basis; and from about 400 to about 2500 mg/kg astaxanthin. In some embodiments, the compositions further comprise from about 35% to 50% non-ether phospholipids on w/w basis, so that the total amount of ether phospholipids and non-ether phospholipids in the composition is from about 38% to 60% on a w/w basis. In some 5 embodiments, the compositions further comprise from about 20% to 45% triglycerides on a w/w basis. In some embodiments, the ether phospholipids are selected from the group consisting of alkylacylphosphatidylcholine, lyso-alkylacylphosphatidylcholine, alkylacylphosphatidylethanolamine, and combinations thereof. In some embodiments, the ether 10 lipids are greater than 90% alkylacylphosphatidylcholine. In some embodiments, the non-ether phospholipids are selected from the group consisting of phosphatidylcholine, phosphatidylserine, phosphatidylethanolamine and combinations thereof. In some embodiments, krill oil composition comprises a blend of lipid fractions obtained from krill. In some preferred embodiments, krill is *Euphausia superba*, although other krill species also find use in the present invention. Other krill 15 species include, but are not limited to *E. pacifica*, *E. frigida*, *E. longirostris*, *E. triacantha*, *E. vallentini*, *Meganctiphanes norvegica*, *Thysanoessa raschii* and *Thysanoessa inermis*. In some embodiments, the compositions comprise about 25% to 30% omega-3 fatty acids as a percentage of total fatty acids and wherein from about 80% to 90% of said omega-3 fatty acids are attached to said phospholipids. In some embodiments, the present invention provides a capsule containing 20 the foregoing compositions.

In some embodiments, the present invention provides a composition comprising at least 65% (w/w) of phospholipids, said phospholipids characterized in containing at least 35% omega-3 fatty acid residues. In some preferred embodiments, the composition is derived from a marine or aquatic biomass. In some further preferred embodiments, the composition is derived from 25 krill. In some embodiments, the composition comprises less than 2% free fatty acids. In some embodiments, composition comprises less than 10% triglycerides. In some preferred embodiments, the phospholipids comprise greater than 50% phosphatidylcholine. In some embodiments, the composition comprises at least 500 mg/kg astaxanthin esters. In some embodiments, the composition comprises at least 500 mg/kg astaxanthin esters and at least 36% 30 (w/w) omega-3 fatty acids. In some embodiments, the composition comprises less than about

0.5g/100g total cholesterol. In some embodiments, the composition comprises less than about 0.45% arachidonic acid (w/w).

In some embodiments, the present invention provides a krill lipid extract comprising at least 500, 100, 1500, 2000, 2100, or 2200 mg/kg astaxanthin esters and at least 36% (w/w) omega-3 fatty acids. In further embodiments, the present invention provides a krill lipid extract comprising at least 100 mg/kg astaxanthin esters, at least 20% (w/w) omega-3 fatty acids, and less than about 0.45% arachidonic acid (w/w).

In some embodiments, the present invention provides methods comprising administering the foregoing compositions to a subject in an amount effective for reducing insulin resistance, reducing inflammation, improving blood lipid profile and reducing oxidative stress.

In some embodiments, the present invention provides a krill lipid extract comprising greater than about 80% triglycerides and greater than about 90, 100, 500, 1000, 1500, 200, 2100 or 2200 mg/kg astaxanthin esters. In some embodiments, the krill lipid extract is characterized in containing from about 5% to about 15% omega-3 fatty acid residues. In some embodiments, the krill lipid extract is characterized in containing less than about 5% phospholipids. In some embodiments, the krill lipid extract is characterized in comprising from about 5% to about 10% cholesterol.

In some embodiments, the present invention provides a krill meal composition comprising less than about 50g/kg total fat. In some embodiments, the krill meal composition comprises from about 5 to about 20 mg/kg astaxanthin esters. In some embodiments, the krill meal composition comprises greater than about 65% protein. In some embodiments, the krill meal composition of comprises greater than about 70% protein. In some further embodiments, the present invention provides an animal feed comprising the krill meal composition.

In some embodiments, the present invention provides methods of increasing flesh coloration in an aquatic species comprising feeding said aquatic species a composition comprising the krill meal described above. In some embodiments, the present invention provides methods of increasing growth and overall survival rate of aquatic species by feeding the krill meal described above.

In some embodiments, the present invention provides methods of producing krill oil comprising: a) providing krill meal; and b) extracting oil from said krill meal. In some embodiments, the krill meal is produced by heat-treating krill. In some embodiments, the krill

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