

Extraction of Oils from Oilseeds by Accelerated Solvent Extraction (ASE®)

INTRODUCTION

Accelerated Solvent Extraction (ASE) is an extraction method that significantly streamlines sample preparation. A commonly used solvent is pumped into an extraction cell containing the sample, which is then brought to an elevated temperature and pressure. Minutes later, the extract is transferred from the heated cell to a standard collection vial for cleanup or analysis. The entire extraction process is fully automated and performed in minutes for fast and easy extraction with low solvent consumption.

Oils for foods and cooking are derived from oilseeds like canola, soybeans, corn, flax, cotton, etc. The production of oil from oilseeds is an important business, and agronomists are continuing to investigate ways to improve the oil output of the seeds as well as ways to control the composition of the oil itself.

A common method used to remove the oil from the oilseeds is solvent extraction. Existing solvent extraction methods use large volumes of solvent (typically several hundred milliliters) and long extraction times (8–16 h) to remove the oil from the seeds. Once the oil is removed, the weight percent of oil in the seeds can be determined, and the composition of the oils can be studied.

ASE is a relatively new extraction technique that uses elevated temperature and pressure to expedite the removal of analytes from various matrices. It is accepted by the U.S. EPA as Method 3545 for environmental samples, and it has been applied to other sample extraction areas. ASE can be used to extract a 10-g sample in about 14 min with a total solvent consumption of approximately 16 mL.

The procedures described in this application note apply to the determination of oil content in oilseeds. The oil content is determined by collecting the extracts in preweighed vials, evaporating the solvent with a nitrogen stream and reweighing the vials.

EQUIPMENT

ASE 200 Accelerated Solvent Extractor equipped with 11- or 22- mL cells

Analytical balance

Dionex vials for collection of extracts (40 mL, P/N 49465; 60 mL, P/N 49466)

SOLVENTS

Petroleum ether (pesticide quality or equivalent)

ASE 200 CONDITIONS

Oven Temperature:	105 °C
Pressure:	6.67 MPa (1000 psi)
Oven Heatup Time:	5 min
Static Time:	10 min
Flush Volume:	100%
Purge Time:	60 s
Solvent:	Petroleum ether
Static Cycles:	3

It may be necessary to perform three complete extractions of each sample and combine the results from each extraction. If the samples contain unsaturated fats that may be oxidized during extraction, and these fats are to be analyzed, the solvent should be degassed to avoid potential oxidative degradation.

SAMPLE PREPARATION

It is important to reduce the particle size of all samples by grinding or another appropriate procedure. The particle diameter should be less than 3 mm. Samples should also be mixed with an inert filler such as clean sand to prevent sample compaction during extraction. Wet samples (>10 wt%) should be dried in an oven at 105 °C for at least 2 h or mixed with a desiccant such as ASE Prep DE (diatomaceous earth), P/N 062819, (1:1 w/w) prior to extraction. Depending on the density of the samples, it may be necessary to use the 22-mL cells.

PROCEDURE

Grind the sample to an appropriate particle size (less than 2- to 3-mm diameter). Place a cellulose disk at the outlet end of the extraction cell. Weigh out 3 to 10 g of sample in a beaker. Mix with ASE Prep DE if the sample is wet. If not, mix with sand (approximately 1:1) and load into the extraction cell. Fill any void volume with clean sand.

Place closed cells into upper carousel with the appropriate number of clean, preweighed collection vials. (It is best to weigh the vials without the lids and septa before extraction and then again after solvent evaporation to eliminate any contribution caused by the loss of material from the lids or septa.) Set the method conditions on the ASE 200 system and initiate the run.

Upon completion of the extraction, place the collection vials in an evaporator with nitrogen to evaporate the solvent. Then, weigh the residue to determine the percent of oil in the original sample.

Table 1. AOCS Method AM 2-93

Sample Size	4 g ground seeds
Oven	130 °C, 2 h
Extract	4 h, drain solvent and cool
Regrind	7 min
Extract	2 h, drain solvent and cool
Solvent	Petroleum ether
Total Volume Solven Used	150–250 mL
Total Time	10.5 h

Table 2. Peroxide Values (PV) and Free Fatty Acid (FFA) Profiles on Grain Extracts Obtained by ASE

Extraction Temp. (°C)	PV (µg/L or ppm)	FFA (%)
50	2.24	0.57
70	3.15	0.80
110	3.23	1.05
130	2.08	1.28

DISCUSSION AND RESULTS

The example used here is of canola seeds which contain approximately 45 wt percent oil. In order to understand the advantages of ASE, it is important to understand the currently used extraction methodology. The method currently used is specified as AOCS (American Oil Chemist Society) Official Method AM 2-93 which is based on the FOSFA (Federation of Oil Seeds and Fat Association) Official Method. The specifics of this method are given in Table 1.

There are several ways to compare the performance of ASE against that of the standard method. First, the weight percent of oil in the seeds was determined to be 44.9% with 0.31% RSD (n = 3) as compared to 45.2% with 0.24% RSD (n = 12) for the AOCS method. Second, the percent of the total oil extracted as a function of time can be compared for the two techniques (see Figures 1 and 2). Third, the weight of oil extracted per unit time can be contrasted for ASE and the FOSFA procedure (see Figure 3). As can be seen, ASE gives comparable results faster and with less solvent usage.

Studies were performed to determine the effect of the elevated temperatures on the triglycerides during the extraction by ASE. Two values, peroxide value (PV) and free fatty acid (FFA), were determined for oils that had been extracted at different temperatures. The resulting data are given in Table 2.

The PV is a measure of the oxidation of the triglycerides, and any value less than 5 ppm shows no significant oxidation as compared to Soxhlet. The FFA is a measurement of triglyceride degradation, and typical values from Soxhlet are 0.5–1.0%. These data show that no significant oxidation or triglyceride degradation occurs during ASE.

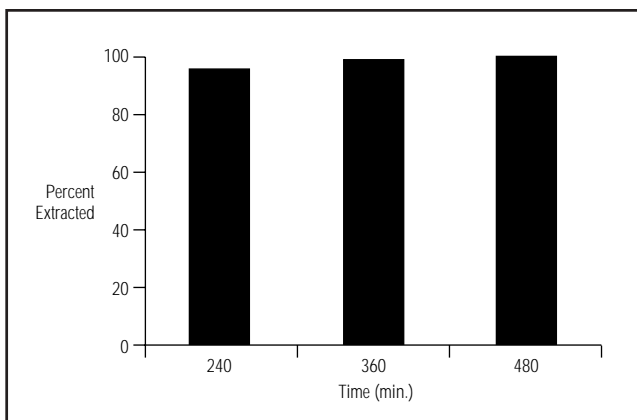


Figure 1. Extraction of oil from oilseeds: FOSFA.

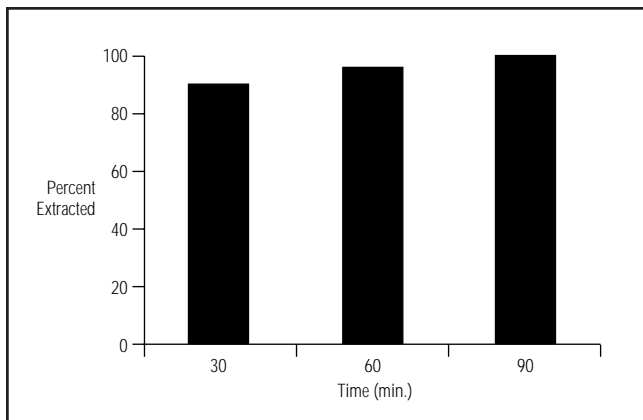


Figure 2. Extraction of oil from oilseeds: ASE.

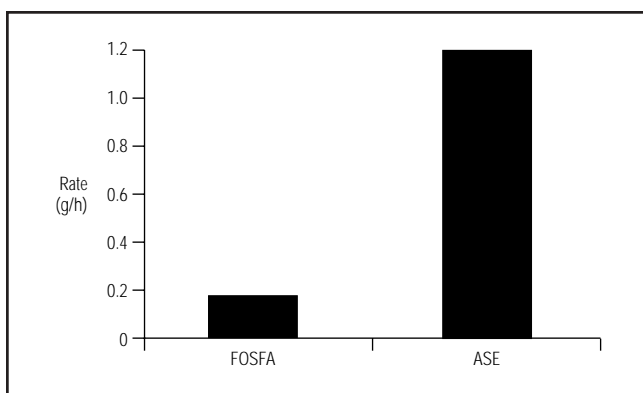


Figure 3. Rate of oil extraction from oilseeds.

CONCLUSION

The data presented here have demonstrated that ASE can be used to extract and determine the oil content of oilseeds. The data generated are equivalent to those obtained by existing methods, but the time and solvent usage are significantly less with ASE.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Dionex Corporation
1228 Titan Way
P.O. Box 3603
Sunnyvale, CA
94088-3603
(408) 737-0700

Dionex Corporation
Salt Lake City Technical Center
1515 West 2200 South, Suite A
Salt Lake City, UT
84119-1484
(801) 972-9292

Dionex U.S. Regional Offices
Sunnyvale, CA (408) 737-8522
Westmont, IL (630) 789-3660
Houston, TX (281) 847-5652
Atlanta, GA (770) 432-8100
Marlton, NJ (856) 596-06009

Dionex International Subsidiaries
Australia 61 (2) 9420 5233 Austria (01) 616 51 25 Belgium (03) 353 42 94 Canada (905) 844-9650 China (852) 2428 3282
France 01 39 30 01 10 Germany 06126-991-0 Italy (06) 66 51 50 52 Japan (06) 6885-1213 Korea 82 2 2653 2580
The Netherlands (0161) 43 43 03 Switzerland (062) 205 99 66 United Kingdom (01216) 691722
* Designed, developed, and manufactured under an NSAI registered ISO 9001 Quality System.

