

23. The composition of claim 13 wherein said aldehyde compound comprises a reducing sugar.

24. A synthetic dietary composition in powder form having a moisture content not greater than about 8% by weight, for dilution with varying amounts of water to prepare a liquid or semi-solid low residue essential diet beverage, soup, pudding or sauce, said powder composition comprising at least one reducing sugar and at least one essential amino acid in free or combined form, said amino acid as well as any other nitrogen-containing ingredients of said composition having coated thereon a sufficient amount of a material consisting essentially of a starch having a D.E. number of from in excess of 0 to about 24 to retard the Maillard reaction to the extent that there is no visible discoloration of said powder nor deterioration in the organoleptic properties thereof during storage over a period of at least about 1 year at ambient temperatures averaging about 30° C.

25. A method for preventing the Maillard reaction between a solid dietary nitrogen compound and a solid carbonyl compound comprising the prevention of contact between said reactive compounds by interposing between said nitrogen compound and said carbonyl compound a material consisting essentially of a starch having a D.E. number between 0 and about 24, maintaining the moisture content of the resulting composition below about 8% by weight, and maintaining the temperature of said composition below about 38° C.

26. The method of claim 25 wherein said contact prevention is accomplished by coating at least one of said reactive compounds with said starch.

27. The method of claim 26 wherein said coating is effected by slurring said starch with one of said reac-

tive compounds in aqueous medium and subsequently drying the slurry.

28. The method of claim 27 wherein said drying is effected by spray drying.

29. The method of claim 27 wherein said drying is effected by freeze-drying.

30. The method of claim 27 wherein said drying is effected by vacuum drying.

31. The method of claim 26 wherein said coated reactive compound is a nitrogen compound.

32. The method of claim 31 wherein said nitrogen compound comprises proteinaceous material selected from the group consisting of the individual amino acids, the proteins and the peptides.

33. The method of claim 32 wherein said nitrogen compound comprises at least one essential amino acid.

34. The method of claim 26 wherein said coated reactive compound comprises an aldehyde compound.

35. The method of claim 30 wherein said starch has a D.E. number in excess of 0.

36. The method of claim 35 wherein said D.E. number is between about 5 and about 15.

37. The method of claim 36 wherein said D.E. number is about 10.

38. The method of claim 30 wherein said temperature is generally maintained below about 30° C.

39. The method of claim 30 wherein said moisture content is maintained at a level not in excess of about 8% by weight.

40. The method of claim 39 wherein said moisture level is not in excess of about 5% by weight.

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