in a ribbon blender with 45 lbs. of spray dried soluble coffee having an average particle size of about 310 microns. The blend is then put through a Fitzpatrick hammer mill (Model D/6) with no screen at 2100 r.p.m. The resulting powder has an average particle size of about 120 microns, with substantially all the particles between about 90 microns and 150 microns. This co-ground mixture is then fed to an agglomerator at 400 lbs./hr. The agglomerator is operating with a steam nozzle pressure of 24 p.s.i., an air rate of 2300 cu. ft./min., an air inlet temperature of 420° F. and an air outlet temperature of 245° F. The resulting product achieves a bulk density of about 0.210 g./cc. with an average particle size of about 1400 microns.

Two teaspoons of this product are used to prepare one cup of coffee beverage by the addition of hot (about 200° F.) water. The resulting beverage has a clean appearance, a pleasant lightened color and a good taste.

Example 2

The process of Example 1 is followed with the exception that the Fitzpatrick hammer mill is operating at 7200 r.p.m. producing a powder having an average particle size of about 14 microns. The agglomerated product has an average particle size of about 1140 microns, a bulk density of about .245 g./cc.

A lightened coffee beverage made according to Example 1 with the product of Example 2 exhibits a lightened appearance, but shows some flocking in the cup.

Example 3

The conditions of Example 1 are repeated with a lightener in which sodium tripolyphosphate replaces the sodium citrate component. The resulting lightened coffee beverage exhibits some slight feathering when prepared with 200° F. water. No feathering is in evidence when the water is at 180° F.

Although this invention is described in relation to spray-dried coffee it is obvious that comparable powdered soluble materials such as freeze-dried coffee, decaffeinated coflee, tea, etc. may be employed.

It will be apparent that there are variations and modifications of this invention and that the examples, preferred proportions and ingredients, and typical operating conditions may be varied without departing from the scope of the invention.

Having thus described the invention what is claimed is:

1. A method for producing a prelightened coffee product containing from 35% to 55% soluble coffee and from 45% to 65% soluble lightener, comprising the steps of forming a substantially homogeneous blend of spray-dried coffee solids and spray-dried, non-dairy lightener solids, grinding the homogeneous blend to a point wherein substantially all the solids in the blend possess a particle size between 90 microns and 150 microns, and agglomerating said blend.

2. The method according to claim **1** wherein the lightener solids contain sodium citrate.

3. The method according to claim **1** wherein substantially all the solids in the homogeneous blend are between about 100 microns and 125 microns.

4. The method according to claim **1** wherein the homogeneous blend contains about 45% soluble coffee solids and about 55% soluble lightener solids.

5. The method according to claim **4** wherein the lightener solids contain about 40% by weight of fat.

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