

# AMMONIUM ALGINATE

Prepared at the 49th JECFA (1997), published in FNP 52 Add 5 superseding specifications prepared at the 44th JECFA (1995), published in FNP 52 Add 3 (1995). Metals and arsenic specifications revised at the 57th JECFA (2001). An ADI 'not specified' was established at the 39th JECFA (1992)

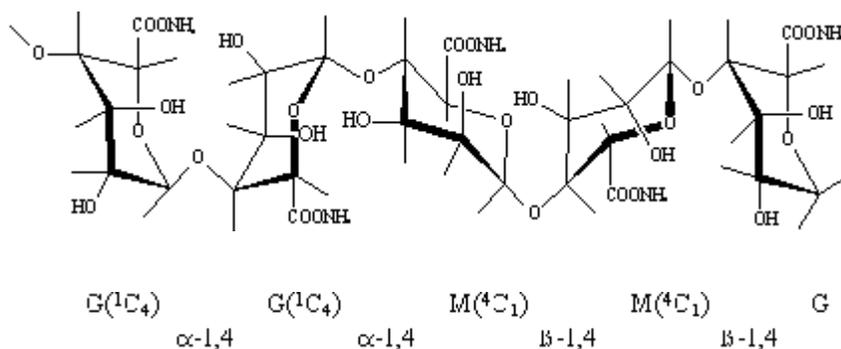
**SYNONYMS** INS No. 403

**DEFINITION** Ammonium salt of alginic acid.

C.A.S. number 9005-34-9

Chemical formula  $(C_6H_{11}NO_6)_n$

Structural formula Structural formula from Phillips, Wedlock and Williams: Gums and Stabilizers for the Food Industry 5 (1990) by permission of Oxford University Press.



The number and sequence of the Mannuronate and Glucuronate residues shown above vary in the naturally occurring alginate. The associated water molecules are not shown.

Formula weight Structural unit : 193.16 (theoretical), 217 (actual average)  
Macromolecule : 10,000 - 600,000 (typical average)

Assay Yields, on the dried basis, not less than 18.0% and not more than 21.0% of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), equivalent to not less than 88.7% and not more than 103.6% of ammonium alginate  $C_6H_{11}NO_6$ .

**DESCRIPTION** White to yellowish brown filamentous, grainy, granular or powdered forms

**FUNCTIONAL USES** Stabilizer, thickener, gelling agent, emulsifier

## CHARACTERISTICS

### IDENTIFICATION

Solubility Dissolves slowly in water forming a viscous solution; insoluble in ethanol, and ether

Precipitate formation with calcium chloride To a 0.5% solution of the sample in sodium hydroxide TS add one-fifth of its volume of a 2.5% solution of calcium chloride. A voluminous, gelatinous precipitate is formed. This test distinguishes ammonium alginate from gum arabic, sodium carboxymethyl cellulose, carrageenan, gelatin, gum ghatti, karaya gum, carob bean gum, methyl cellulose and tragacanth gum.

Precipitate formation with ammonium sulfate To a 0.5% solution of the sample in sodium hydroxide TS add one-half of its volume of a saturated solution of ammonium sulfate. No precipitate is formed. This test distinguishes ammonium alginate from agar, sodium carboxymethyl cellulose, carrageenan, de-esterified pectin, gelatin, carob bean gum, methyl cellulose and starch.

Test for alginate Passes test  
Dissolve as completely as possible 0.1 g of sample by shaking with 0.15 ml of 0.1 N sodium hydroxide and add 1 ml of acid ferric sulfate TS. Within 5 min, a cherry-red colour develops that finally becomes deep purple.

Ammonium (Vol. 4) Passes test

#### PURITY

Loss on drying (Vol. 4) Not more than 15% (105°, 4 h)

Water-insoluble matter Not more than 2% on the dried basis  
Disperse 2 g of the sample, weighed to the nearest 0.1 mg, in 800 ml of water in a 2,000-ml flask. Neutralize to pH 7 with sodium hydroxide TS and then add 3 ml in excess. Add 40 ml of hydrogen peroxide solution containing 30% by weight H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub>, cover the flask and boil for 1 h with frequent stirring. Filter while hot through a tared Gooch crucible provided with a glass fibre filter (2.4 cm, No. 934 AH, Reeve Angel & Co., Clifton, N.Y., or equivalent filter). If slow filtration is caused by high viscosity of the sample solution, boil until the viscosity is reduced enough to permit filtration. Wash the crucible thoroughly with hot water, dry the crucible and its contents at 105° for 1 h, cool and weigh. Calculate as percentage of the dry weight.

Sulfated ash (Vol. 4) Not more than 7% on the dried basis

Lead (Vol. 4) Not more than 2 mg/kg  
Determine using an atomic absorption technique appropriate to the specified level. The selection of sample size and method of sample preparation may be based on the principles of the method described in Volume 4, "Instrumental Methods."

Microbiological criteria (Vol. 4) Total plate count: Not more than 5,000 colonies per gram.  
Initially prepare a 10<sup>-1</sup> dilution by adding a 50 g sample to 450 ml of Butterfield's phosphate buffered dilution water and homogenizing in a high speed blender.  
Yeasts and moulds: Not more than 500 colonies per gram  
Coliforms: Negative by test. Salmonella: Negative by test