

Continuous microwave processing of olive-pomace for active compounds recovery

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1 **Extraction of compounds from natural products**

- Raw materials: plants and residues
- Uses: medicine, food, cosmetics and pharmaceuticals

The problem: slow extraction kinetics.

- Internal diffusion
- External mass transfer

Internal diffusion: Limiting step

2 **Microwave Assisted Extraction (MAE)**

Microwaves alter the cellular structure

3

Benefits

- Shorter extraction times
- Reduction of energy demand
- Reduction of solvent in process
- Quality of extracts

Numerous papers in literature

- Non-reproducible results
- Not suitable for upscale

Industrial upscale requirements

- Correct process characterization: Specific absorbed energy
- Expensive energy and oven → Pretreatment
- Efficient → Proper oven design ↔ Dielectric properties

4 **1. Correct process characterization: Specific absorbed energy**

5

Absorbed Power (W_{abs} , kJ/kg)

- Temperature increase: $W_{T\text{increase}} = m c_p (T_f - T_i)$
- Solvent evaporation: $W_{evap} = \Delta H_{vap} m_{vap}$
- Heat of reaction: $W_{reaction} \approx 0$
- Heat losses to environment: $W_{losses} = US(T - T_{env})$

$$W_{abs} = W_{T\text{increase}} + W_{evap} + W_{reaction} + W_{losses}$$

Experimental determination of heat transfer coefficient

Vessel cooling in absence of MW heating.

$$US = \frac{m c_p}{t_f} \ln \frac{T_0 - T_f}{T_f - T_{env}}$$

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6 **2. Expensive energy and oven → Pretreatment (PMAE)**

7 **Extraction results**

$$C = C_0 + (C_{\infty} - C_0) \cdot (1 - e^{-kt})$$

$$u_0 = \left. \frac{dC}{dt} \right|_{t=0} = C_{INF} \cdot k$$

SFME	Q total (kJ/g)	u ₀ (mg GAE/g DM·s)	Δu ₀ (%)
0.00	0.62	-	-
0.47	2.95	377%	-
0.89	1.77	185%	-

8 **3. Efficient → Proper oven design ↔ Dielectric properties**

Dielectric constant: $\epsilon_r = \epsilon_r' + j\epsilon_r''$

Loss tangent: $\tan \delta = \frac{\epsilon_r''}{\epsilon_r'}$

Energy density: $P''' = 2\pi f \epsilon_0 \epsilon_r'' E^2$

Water-ethanol dielectric properties as a function of temperature (water: 25.75 (v/v) ethanol/water; 50.50 (v/v) ethanol/water; 75.25 (v/v) ethanol/water; ethanol).

Olive pomace dielectric constant (A) and loss factor (B) as a function of temperature and moisture (H=0.02%, H=0.53%, H=1.09%, H=1.59%, H=1.94%). Lines correspond to the model proposed in equations [1] and [2].

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9 **3. Efficient → Proper oven design ↔ Dielectric properties**

Temperature homogeneity

Absorption efficiency

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