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PREPARING CARAMEL COLOUR CONCENTRATES

This process for treating Type CP-1 or CP-2 caramel colour to prepare a caramel colour concentrate therefrom, comprises: (a) subjecting a mixture of said caramel colour and water to ultrafiltration through a semi-permeable membrane to yield a permeated fraction which passes through the membrane and a retained fraction which does not pass through the membrane, said retained fraction comprising high molecular weight colour bodies and water in an amount reduced from that present in the original mixture of caramel colour and water; (b) adding water to the retained fraction and subjecting the resultant mixture to ultrafiltration through a semi-permeable membrane to yield a permeated fraction which passes through the membrane and a retained fraction which does not pass through the membrane, said retained fraction comprising high molecular weight colour bodies and water in an amount reduced from that present in the resultant mixture; and (c) subjecting the retained fraction of step (b), without any significant addition of water thereto, to ultrafiltration through a semi-permeable membrane to yield a permeated fraction which passes through the membrane and a retained concentrated product fraction, which does not pass through the membrane, said retained concentrated product fraction comprising high molecular weight colour bodies and water in an amount reduced from that present in the retained fraction of step (b), wherein the pH of said mixture of caramel colour and water, said resultant mixture and said retained fraction is maintained above 6.5 during said ultrafiltration.

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COMPLETE SPECIFICATION

"PROCESS FOR TREATING CARAMEL COLORS"



-I, WE The Coca-Cola Company, of 310 North Avenue, Atlanta, Georgia 30313, U.S.A. a corporation organised and existing under the laws of the State of Delaware, U.S.A.

hereby declare the invention, for which I/we pray that a patent may be granted to me/us, and the method by which it is to be performed, to be particularly described in and by the following statement:-

PROCESS FOR TREATING CARAMEL COLORS

1 BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

2 The present invention relates to a process for
3 treating caramel colors and, more particularly, to
4 a process for treating caramel colors to prepare
5 caramel color concentrates.

6 Caramel colors are widely-used colorants which
7 are prepared commercially from food grade nutritive
8 carbohydrate sweeteners (glucose and fructose and/or
9 polymers thereof, e.g., sugar, corn-syrup and starch
10 hydrolyzates) by controlled heating of these mate-
11 rials to generate desired degrees of unsaturation,
12 polymerization and color. For most food or beverage-
13 grade applications, the preparation processes are
14 augmented or catalyzed by the addition of ammonia,
15 sulfite or combinations thereof. An identity scheme
16 proposed by the International Technical Caramel
17 Association (ITCA) classifies caramel colors accord-
18 ing to four general "Classes", based upon whether
19 ammonia and/or sulfite are employed in their prepara-
20 tion (and the nitrogen and sulfur content resulting
21 therefrom) and ten specific "Types" based upon their
22 color intensity, as shown in Table I.

23 The coloring properties of caramel colors are
24 substantially attributable to the presence therein of
25 high molecular weight materials commonly referred to
26 as "color bodies". Caramel colors also contain a
27 variety of low molecular weight materials which are
28 largely devoid of any particular beneficial function

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TABLE I: CLASSIFICATION OF CARAMEL COLORS (PROPOSED)

Class No.	I	II	III	IV
Class Name	Caramel Color, Plain	Caramel Color, Caustic Sulfite process	Caramel Color, Ammonia process	Caramel Color, Sulfite ammonia process
Class Code	CP	CCS	AC	SAC
Use of ammonia	-	-	+	+
Use of sulfite	-	+	-	+
Total N, %	< 0.1	< 0.1	> 0.1	> 0.1
Total S, %	< 0.1	$\geq$ 0.1	$\leq$ 0.3	$\geq$ 0.3
Type	CP-1	CP-2	AC-1	AC-2
Color				
Intensity*	5-35	40-80	40-80	60-90 100-140 150-200 35-70 75-100 105-150 210-270

* of an 0.1% w/v solution at 610 nm in a 10 mm cell.

1 with respect to the coloring properties of caramel
2 colors but may contribute to some degree to the
3 flavor, stability and foaming properties of caramel
4 colors.

5 The prior art evidences attempts to treat caramel
6 color to separate its color-contributing materials
7 from its non-colorant materials and thereby obtain
8 a concentrated product which, in addition to its
9 decreased weight and volume, possesses increased
10 coloring or "tinctorial" power, i.e., as compared to
11 untreated caramel colors, less caramel color concen-
12 trate need be utilized to obtain a particular level
13 or intensity of color in a product. The methods
14 proposed for this purpose seek, in particular, to
15 isolate the color bodies from caramel colors. Thus,
16 for example, U.S. Patents 2,533,221; 2,637,655 and
17 2,902,393 describe processes wherein coagulating and
18 precipitating agents are added to caramel colors to
19 isolate caramel color concentrates high in color
20 bodies; U.S. Patent No. 2,701,768 discloses a process
21 utilizing dialysis to remove non-color materials from
22 caramel color; and U.S. Patent No. 3,249,444 dis-
23 closes a process utilizing ultrafiltration to separ-
24 ate the color bodies of caramel colors from non-color
25 materials.

26 Each of the described processes exhibits its own
27 particular disadvantages in the context of the de-
28 sired objective, i.e., in producing caramel colors of
29 increased coloring power. For example, some recom-
30 mended treatments are difficult to practice on a
31 practical, commercial scale involving significant
32 quantities of materials and rapid throughputs through
33 required equipment and operations. More importantly,
34 however, the products of these processes, although
35 containing concentrated amounts of colorant mate-
36 rials, do not necessarily retain the desirable
37 properties present in the parent caramel color.

1 SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

2 According to the present invention, a process is
3 provided for the treatment of caramel colors for the
4 purpose of preparing a caramel color concentrate
5 therefrom based upon the treatment of caramel color
6 by ultrafiltration at conditions designed not only to
7 increase the concentration of color bodies but also
8 to preserve and maintain all the desirable functional
9 properties of the parent caramel color. In particu-
10 lar, the process of the present invention provides
11 for the treatment of caramel color by ultrafiltration
12 wherein the pH and/or ionic strength of the caramel
13 color or a portion thereof is regulated in a manner
14 which, inter alia, enhances the operability and
15 efficiency of the process and reduces or prevents the
16 loss or substantial decrease in the many desirable
17 functional properties of the parent caramel color.

18 As is known in the art, ultrafiltration is a
19 process by which a sample can be treated to separate
20 materials of relatively high molecular weight from
21 those of lower molecular weight. The process nor-
22 mally encompasses placement of a solvent (e.g.,
23 water) solution of the sample on one side (retentate
24 side) of a semi-permeable membrane sized so as to
25 retain materials in the sample above a particular
26 molecular weight but allow the passage, with sol-
27 vent, of those below a particular molecular weight.
28 Hydrostatic or hydrokinetic pressure is applied to
29 the sample solution, and continuous or periodic addi-
30 tion of solvent to the sample solution allows the
31 ultrafiltration to continue for a time sufficient
32 to reach a theoretically high degree of removal of
33 permeable materials from the sample.

34 In theory, ultrafiltration of caramel color
35 should result in a useful caramel color concentrate
36 since, for caramel colors, the high molecular
37 weight materials which do not permeate through the
38 semi-permeable membrane in fact constitute a large

1 portion of the materials responsible for the coloring
2 properties of caramel color whereas those materials
3 which do permeate constitute a large portion of the
4 non-colorant materials. In practice, however, it has
5 been found, for example, that certain types of cara-
6 mel colors are not capable of being processed at all
7 by application of known ultrafiltration techniques;
8 that ultrafiltration of certain caramel colors to
9 prepare a caramel color concentrate, to the extent
10 possible at all, typically proceeds at uneconomically
11 slow rates; that preparation of color concentrates of
12 high concentration is attainable only at very slow
13 rates; and that known ultrafiltration techniques are
14 inadequate for preparing a caramel color concentrate
15 where it is desired that the concentrate be substan-
16 tially devoid of all (or particular) low molecular
17 weight materials. More importantly, caramel color
18 concentrates prepared by ultrafiltration do not
19 necessarily possess the desirable functional charac-
20 teristics and properties of the starting caramel
21 color.

22 According to the present invention, it has
23 been found that each of the foregoing disadvantages
24 encountered in attempting simply to apply known
25 ultrafiltration techniques to caramel colors can be
26 overcome to a substantial degree by attention to the
27 pH and/or ionic strength of the caramel color during
28 ultrafiltration.

29 The process of this invention involves the
30 following steps performed in either a continuous,
31 semi-continuous or batch manner:

32 (a) subjecting a mixture of caramel color and
33 water to ultrafiltration through a semi-permeable
34 membrane to yield a permeated fraction passing
35 through the membrane and a retained fraction, which
36 does not pass through the membrane, comprised of high
37 molecular weight color bodies and water, the latter

1 in an amount reduced from that present in the
2 original mixture of caramel color and water;

3 (b) adding water to the retained fraction and
4 subjecting the resultant mixture to ultrafiltration
5 through a semi-permeable membrane to yield a per-
6 meated fraction passing through the membrane and a
7 retained fraction, which does not pass through the
8 membrane, comprised of high molecular weight color
9 bodies and water, the latter in an amount reduced
10 from that present in the resultant mixture; and

11 (c) subjecting the retained fraction of
12 step (b), without any significant addition of water
13 thereto, to ultrafiltration through a semi-permeable
14 membrane to yield a permeated fraction which passes
15 through the membrane and a retained, product frac-
16 tion, which does not pass through the membrane, com-
17 prised of high molecular weight color bodies and
18 water, the latter in an amount reduced from that
19 present in the retained fraction of step (b).

20 In the process of this invention, the pH and/or
21 ionic strength of the starting caramel color solution
22 or one or more of the retained fractions resulting
23 from ultrafiltration is regulated so as to result in
24 a caramel color concentrate which substantially re-
25 tains the desirable functional attributes of caramel
26 colors. In addition, regulation of the pH and/or
27 ionic strength of the caramel color may be utilized
28 as a means for, inter alia, improving the rate of the
29 overall ultrafiltration process and for producing
30 caramel color concentrates substantially free of all
31 or of particular low molecular weight materials.

32 As used hereinafter, "caramel color concentrate"
33 is intended to refer to the retained, product
34 fraction of step (c) above. In fact, however,
35 the "retained fraction" resulting from practice of
36 steps (a) or (b) above is literally a caramel color
37 concentrate and may be utilized to advantage as such

1 with or without further non-ultrafiltration concen-
2 tration and/or drying. As discussed in further de-
3 tail hereinafter, subjecting these retained fractions
4 to the further processing in step (c) to obtain a
5 retained, product fraction offers advantages in the
6 overall processing and, particularly, in affording
7 non-degradative means for obtaining further concen-
8 tration. As such, utilization of step (c) consti-
9 tutes a most preferred manner of processing and is
10 emphasized hereinafter.

11 The regulation of pH and/or ionic strength of
12 caramel color or retained fractions thereof according
13 to the present invention typically will involve
14 some adjustment of these parameters as found in the
15 commercially available caramel colors utilized as
16 starting materials. In certain instances, however,
17 it may be possible simply to utilize available
18 caramel colors as the starting materials herein
19 which, as a result of the choice thereof in accor-
20 dance with the guidelines disclosed in the present
21 invention, do not require overt alteration of their
22 pH and/or ionic strength in order to function effec-
23 tively and result in a high quality caramel color
24 concentrate.

25 According to specific embodiments of the present
26 invention, the pH of caramel color subjected to
27 ultrafiltration is regulated at the commencement of
28 and throughout the process in order to render the
29 process "mechanically" feasible and practical, i.e.,
30 in order to render the caramel color capable of being
31 processed by ultrafiltration to achieve separation of
32 high and low molecular weight materials. In another
33 embodiment, the pH of caramel color is regulated at
34 at least one point during the process, including, if
35 necessary, at the commencement of and throughout the
36 entire process, in order to insure that the caramel
37 color concentrate produced exhibits color, solu-
38 bility, foaming, stability and other properties

1 (e.g., salt tolerance; tannin resistance) substan-
2 tially the same as that of the starting material so
3 as to render the concentrate useful for all purposes
4 and to substantially the same degree as compared to
5 caramel colors. A further specific embodiment in-
6 volves the regulation of the ionic strength of the
7 caramel color, typically of retained fractions there-
8 of produced in later stages of the ultrafiltration
9 process, to improve the rate at which materials
10 (e.g., low molecular weight materials and water) are
11 removed therefrom. In yet another embodiment, the
12 ionic strength of caramel color or of a retained
13 fraction thereof is regulated during ultrafiltration
14 to enhance the removal to a high degree of all or
15 particular low molecular weight materials therefrom.

16 With respect to the ultrafiltration process
17 per se, the steps or stages described earlier as (a),
18 (b) and (c) constitute the fundamental operating pro-
19 cedure for the process, in the context of which pH
20 and/or ionic strength regulation and/or adjustment
21 is utilized.

22 The various ultrafiltration processes of
23 steps (a), (b) and (c) may be performed in the same
24 apparatus containing the semi-permeable membrane,
25 i.e., simply by recycling of the retained fraction
26 from each step through the same apparatus in which it
27 was generated. However, the various retained frac-
28 tions can, in one or more of the above steps, be sub-
29 jected to ultrafiltration through different physical
30 apparatus containing either the same or different
31 semi-permeable membranes.

32 In the practice of the present invention, where
33 water is added batch-wise to the caramel color for
34 ultrafiltration, the process of step (b) may be
35 repeated one or more times by addition of additional
36 batches of water prior to practice of step (c).
37 Thus, the retained fraction resulting from the first
38 practice of step (b) will again be diluted with water

1 and subjected to ultrafiltration. The resulting
2 retained fraction can then be subjected to the pro-
3 cess of step (c), i.e., ultrafiltration without any
4 significant initial dilution, or alternatively, sub-
5 jected to still further repeated practice of step (b)
6 before the final ultrafiltration of step (c).

7 The final step, i.e., step (c) of the process of
8 this invention, although generating some degree of
9 removal of low molecular weight materials in the
10 permeated fraction, is primarily designed to remove
11 water, i.e., to concentrate the retained fraction
12 from the previous steps, in a non-degradative
13 manner. As such, it is undesirable to add any water
14 to the retained fraction for processing in this final
15 step since this will limit the amount of concentra-
16 tion that can be accomplished. It is possible, of
17 course, to add some water to the retained fraction
18 for practice of this final concentration step, e.g.,
19 in an amount significantly less than that added in
20 the practice of step (b), but there is little
21 economic or practical justification therefor.

22 In accordance with one particular embodiment of
23 the present invention, the pH of the caramel color is
24 regulated so as to enable the use of ultrafiltration
25 as a means for isolating high molecular weight mate-
26 rials from the caramel color thereby forming a cara-
27 mel color concentrate. By way of example, it has
28 been found that a solution of commercially available
29 Type CP-1 caramel color having a pH of about 3.25,
30 when subjected to ultrafiltration at conditions of
31 temperature, pressure, membrane type and porosity,
32 etc. found workable for other type caramel colors,
33 processed so slowly as to be totally impractical to
34 achieve any useful separation of high and low molecu-
35 lar weight components. However, when the solution of
36 this caramel color was raised to a pH of about 7.1 at
37 the commencement of processing, and substantially
38 maintained in the pH range of from about 6.5 to about

1 7.1 during the entire ultrafiltration process, the
2 rate of ultrafiltration rose significantly and an
3 effective isolation of high molecular weight mate-
4 rials was obtained. The caramel color concentrate
5 produced in this manner was of excellent quality with
6 respect to all desirable functional properties as
7 compared to the parent caramel color. Surprisingly,
8 although the caramel color originally was functional
9 at its pH of 3.25, readjustment of the pH of the
10 caramel color concentrate product produced by ultra-
11 filtration to this pH adversely affected the func-
12 tionality of the concentrate. Maintaining the color
13 concentrate at about pH 7.0 and above resulted in
14 retention of its desirable functional properties,
15 even if the sample was dried, by freeze-drying,
16 before evaluation.

17 The regulation and/or adjustment of pH may also
18 be utilized with respect to other Type caramel colors
19 to ensure that desired functional properties of the
20 parent caramel color are carried through to the con-
21 centrated product resulting from ultrafiltration.
22 For example, the pH of solutions of Class II and III
23 caramel colors can be adjusted at the commencement of
24 the ultrafiltration process to ensure that the cara-
25 mel color concentrate produced therefrom possesses
26 the clarity characteristics of the parent caramel
27 colors when dissolved in liquid products. For
28 Class IV Caramel Colors, the pH of solutions thereof
29 may, for example, be regulated so as to produce a
30 caramel color concentrate possessing the salt
31 tolerance exhibited by the parent caramel.

32 According to another embodiment of the present
33 invention, it has been found that the addition of one
34 or more ionic materials to the caramel color solution
35 or to some retained fraction thereof produced during
36 ultrafiltration assists the rate of ultrafiltration
37 in the last stage (i.e., step (c) above) of the over-
38 all process. Thus, it has been found advantageous to

1 provide the caramel color solution or retained frac-
2 tion with added materials, sufficient to bring about
3 an increase in the ionic strength thereof, at least
4 in the final, concentration stage of the process,
5 i.e., where the retained fraction is subjected to
6 ultrafiltration without any water addition. If these
7 materials are not added, the rate of water removal,
8 by ultrafiltration, from the retained fraction is
9 slow. To bring about the desired concentration at
10 these slow rates, the retained fraction might, there-
11 fore, have to be processed at ultrafiltration condi-
12 tions for a lengthy period of time during which
13 degradative reactions might occur. The alternative,
14 i.e., concentrating by conventional techniques (e.g.,
15 evaporative or freeze-concentration), adds addi-
16 tional, expensive unit operations to the process
17 which might result in colorant degradation or loss
18 of functionality.

19 To avoid this undesirable effect, ionic materials
20 preferably are added to a retained fraction produced
21 during ultrafiltration. The success of this manner
22 of processing is theorized to result from the fact
23 that the high molecular weight color bodies from
24 caramel colors normally contain charged groups or
25 moieties. These charges are normally satisfied by
26 the ionic materials, e.g., salts, typically present
27 in all commercially-prepared caramel. However, these
28 small ionic materials are permeable through the
29 semi-permeable membrane used in ultrafiltration. As
30 ultrafiltration continues, the concentration of such
31 small ions in the retained fraction decreases to a
32 point where they are insufficient in number to serve
33 as counterions and thus to satisfy the charges on the
34 caramel color bodies. The charged color bodies,
35 therefore, are believed to link or associate in ionic
36 bonds with each other, presenting the semi-permeable
37 ultrafiltration membrane with a highly viscous,
38 bonded layer thereover which significantly impedes

1 the passage through the membrane of water and other
2 low molecular weight materials. The addition of
3 ionic materials appears to satisfy the requirement of
4 counterions for the charges on the color bodies and
5 prevents their association, thus permitting water
6 removal during ultrafiltration to occur at acceptable
7 rates and up to higher color body concentrations.

8 The minimum requirement of the process according
9 to this embodiment of the invention is the presence
10 of added ionic materials in the retained fraction
11 which is being subjected to ultrafiltration primarily
12 for the purpose of concentration of such fraction,
13 i.e., where little or no water is being added to the
14 retained fraction prior to ultrafiltration. As such,
15 it is generally preferred to add the requisite ionic
16 materials to the retained fraction resulting from the
17 last ultrafiltration of retained fraction with added
18 water (e.g., the last operation of step (b), above).
19 It also is possible, however, to add these ionic
20 materials at earlier stages of the overall process
21 such that they will be present, as required, in the
22 retained fraction subjected to ultrafiltration with-
23 out added water for concentration purposes. However,
24 since the ionic materials pass from the retained
25 fraction to the permeated fraction during ultrafil-
26 tration, ionic materials added in earlier stages of
27 the process would have to be added in amounts such
28 that there are still sufficient quantities thereof
29 present in the retained fraction in the final, con-
30 centration stage of the process. This may result in
31 undesirably uneconomical utilization of such ionic
32 materials and the undesirable presence of large quan-
33 tities of ionic materials in the permeated fractions
34 resulting from ultrafiltration.

35 Regulation and/or adjustment of the pH and/or
36 ionic strength of caramel color solutions or retained
37 fractions thereof produced during ultrafiltration may
38 also be employed according to an embodiment of this

1 invention where it is desired to produce a caramel
2 color concentrate having a very low content of low
3 molecular weight materials. Thus, for example, it
4 has been found that some low molecular weight mate-
5 rials in caramel color, despite being of a size such
6 that they theoretically should be fully permeable
7 through the semi-permeable membranes utilized in
8 ultrafiltration, do not, in practice, appear in the
9 permeated fraction at the expected level. Experi-
10 ments on certain caramel colors have shown that a
11 decrease in the retention of these low molecular
12 weight materials in the retained fraction can be
13 achieved by addition to the solution of caramel color
14 (or to any retained fraction thereof resulting from
15 ultrafiltration) of materials sufficient to result in
16 a pH of the solution or fraction of from about 1.0
17 to 2.5 prior to or while subjecting the solution or
18 fraction to ultrafiltration. It is theorized that
19 these low molecular weight materials form a complex
20 or association of some type with color bodies of
21 caramel colors that thereby prevents the low molecu-
22 lar weight materials, despite their small size, from
23 passing through the semi-permeable membrane during
24 ultrafiltration. The pH adjustment is believed to
25 weaken or break the complex or association such that
26 these low molecular weight materials are free to
27 permeate in the expected manner.

28 The foregoing findings appear to be not unlike
29 those made by researchers at Kobe University wherein
30 it has been reported that addition, prior to ultra-
31 filtration, of either sulfuric acid (to pH 2.0) or
32 sodium hydroxide (to unspecified pH) to highly
33 diluted caramel color solutions, apparently made
34 from SAC-2 sulfite ammonia caramel color, results
35 in removal of the low molecular weight substance,
36 4-methylimidazole, more nearly approximating expected
37 theoretical values than that achieved in the case
38 where no pH adjustment is utilized. See Kishihara,

1 et al., "Removal of Imidazoles From Caramel Color
2 By Ultrafiltration", Kagaku-Kogaku Ronbunshu, 2,
3 445 (1976); Komoto, et al., "Quality Improvement
4 Of Edible Caramel Colors By Membrane Treatment",
5 Seitogikenshi, 27, 24 (1977); Fujii, et al.,
6 "Ultrafiltration of Caramel Color", Nippon Shokhin
7 Kogyo Gakkaishi, 24, 236 (1977); Kishihara, et al.,
8 "Release Of Bound Imidazoles In Caramel Color",
9 Nogeikagaku Kaishi, 53, 273 (1979); Kishihara,
10 et al., "Preparation Of Imidazole-Free Caramel Color
11 Through Hollow Fiber Module Ultrafiltration", Ibid.
12 53, (1979). However, an additional highly signifi-
13 cant finding of the present invention is that the
14 desirable increase in the removal of otherwise per-
15 meable low molecular weight materials brought about
16 by the low pH conditions mentioned may also be
17 accomplished simply through the addition to a caramel
18 color solution or a retained fraction thereof of
19 materials which increase the ionic strength of the
20 solution or fraction but which do not significantly
21 affect the pH. Thus, this effect may be achieved
22 without adversely affecting functionality since the
23 benefit is obtained at a pH at which the functionali-
24 ty is maintained during ultrafiltration. An addi-
25 tional important finding of the present invention in
26 this regard is the ability to effect removal of these
27 otherwise permeable low molecular weight materials,
28 using the noted pH and/or ionic strength adjustment,
29 from caramel color solutions not nearly so dilute as
30 those employed in the known pH adjustment process
31 earlier referred to.

32 As will be apparent from the foregoing discus-
33 sions, attention to the pH and/or ionic strength
34 of caramel colors during ultrafiltration provides
35 a means for bringing about a number of desirable
36 changes in the processing per se or in the caramel
37 color concentrate produced thereby, and that the
38 means for achieving these desired results may be

1 combined or coordinated in manners which are designed
2 to maximize beneficial results.

3 By way of example, the use of the process of this
4 invention to increase the rate of removal of water
5 and low molecular weight materials from the retained
6 fraction being subjected to ultrafiltration in the
7 final stage of the process, i.e., where no water
8 addition is made to the retained fraction, requires,
9 at a minimum, that the ionic strength of the retained
10 fraction being so treated be at a particular level
11 during this concentration stage. The ionic strength
12 value of this retained fraction may be affected both
13 by materials which affect the pH thereof and by
14 materials having little or no effect on the pH
15 (e.g., buffer salts). Moreover, the achievement of
16 a particular ionic strength value in this retained
17 fraction may be brought about, for example, either
18 by choice of an appropriate starting caramel color
19 solution or adjustment of the ionic strength of a
20 retained fraction produced during ultrafiltration,
21 giving due consideration to the fact that the ionic
22 strength of any of these solutions might have to take
23 into account an anticipated loss of ionic strength-
24 affecting materials to the permeate fraction during
25 ultrafiltration steps prior to the concentration
26 stage.

27 These features introduce an important flexibility
28 in the overall process which enables its coordination
29 with other pH or ionic strength related advantages.
30 For example, where the Type caramel color employed as
31 the starting material is one wherein pH adjustment at
32 the commencement of the ultrafiltration process is
33 required in order to achieve separation of high and
34 low molecular weight components to any practical
35 degree, the materials added for this purpose may be
36 found to provide the requisite ionic strength level
37 in the concentration stage of the process which
38 brings about increased rates of water removal in

1 this stage. Alternatively, this same increased rate
2 of water removal in the concentration stage of the
3 ultrafiltration process may result from the increased
4 ionic strength of the retained fraction at this por-
5 tion of the process resulting from the addition of pH
6 or ionic strength adjusting materials at an earlier
7 part in the process for the purpose of either en-
8 hancing the removal of low molecular weight materials
9 from the caramel color concentrate or insuring that
10 functional properties of the parent caramel are
11 carried through to the concentrate.

12 An additional benefit of the process of this
13 invention is the compatibility of the means for
14 achieving one or more desirable results during the
15 ultrafiltration process. Thus, for example, one
16 means for achieving increased removal of low molecu-
17 lar weight components involves the adjustment of the
18 pH of the starting caramel color solution to a low
19 level, and a means for achieving water removal rate
20 increases during the concentration stages of the
21 ultrafiltration process may also involve pH adjust-
22 ment (to increase the ionic strength of the retained
23 fraction being treated in the concentration stage).
24 However, the pH adjustments for these purposes might
25 be incompatible with the optimum pH range established
26 to insure a good quality product having a function-
27 ality comparable to the parent caramel. The findings
28 of the present invention with respect to the ability
29 to achieve the former advantages not only by pH
30 adjustment but also by addition of materials which
31 increase the ionic strength but which do not mate-
32 rially affect pH, make possible the coordination of
33 these processes to achieve all the particular
34 advantages attendant therewith.

35 The conditions other than pH or ionic strength at
36 which the process of this invention is performed are
37 designed to maximize the rate of production of cara-
38 mel color concentrate without damaging or otherwise

1 altering its colorant function. In general, these
2 conditions include average temperatures of the
3 starting caramel solution or retained fractions
4 thereof of from about 60°C to about 90°C during all
5 phases of the process. Although ultrafiltration
6 rates are increased with increasing temperature,
7 operation at or above about 90°C can cause degrada-
8 tion of the caramel color bodies if the process time
9 is not adequately short. Operation below about 60°C,
10 while in principle satisfactory, increases the possi-
11 bility of microbial growth in the processing equip-
12 ment and decreases the rate of processing.

13 In general, the pressure utilized during ultra-
14 filtration will depend upon a number of factors such
15 as the ultrafiltration unit employed, desired flow
16 rates and the physical strength of the semi-permeable
17 membranes or their supporting structure. For exam-
18 ple, for a DDS-RO-Module 35 ultrafiltration unit
19 (9m²) equipped with GR-8-P (10,000 molecular weight
20 cut-off) membranes, average pressures in the range of
21 from about 40 to about 170 psig have successfully
22 been employed, recognizing that pressure drops will
23 necessarily occur between the inlet and outlet ports
24 of typical ultrafiltration apparatus. In this appa-
25 ratus, the rate of ultrafiltration generally will
26 increase with increasing pressure; however, at inlet
27 pressures above about 160-170 psig, the rate appears
28 to become more nearly constant.

29 The semi-permeable membrane used for ultrafil-
30 tration is chosen such that, in general, materials
31 having a molecular weight above about 10,000 are
32 unable to pass through its pores. In general, it is
33 desirable to have a membrane which will separate the
34 higher and lower molecular weight components in a
35 useful manner. In the case of caramel colors, much
36 of the coloring components are above a molecular
37 weight of about 30,000 whereas the components below
38 about 2,000 are those of little color. Accordingly,

1 a membrane with a cut-off of about 10,000 was
2 selected for most of the studies shown in the
3 Examples described hereinafter. As will be appreci-
4 ated, however, the permeability of the membrane may
5 be affected by other system parameters such as
6 temperature, pressure, concentration, the specific
7 product being treated, and the like. Thus, according
8 to the process of this invention, both the particular
9 semi-permeable membrane and the conditions of opera-
10 tion are selected so as to result in the desired
11 exclusion of materials above a molecular weight of
12 about 10,000. Selection of membranes or conditions
13 which allow materials having molecular weights above
14 10,000 to permeate through the membrane will normally
15 result in the undesirable increased loss of color
16 bodies from the caramel. Alternatively, use of a
17 membrane which has excessively small pores would
18 result in too large a retention of low molecular
19 weight components.

20 The conditions chosen for ultrafiltration to
21 maximize to the degree possible the rate of removal
22 of water and low molecular weight material affect
23 parameters related to the flux through the semi-
24 permeable membrane, i.e., the volume of material
25 passing through a given area of the membrane per unit
26 of time in relation to the retentate volume. The
27 flux is affected by the concentration of the caramel
28 (or retained fraction thereof) passing over the
29 membrane, preferably maintained in the range of from
30 about 15 to about 40% solids by weight, and the other
31 conditions above-discussed, e.g., temperature and
32 pressure as well as the earlier-described effect of
33 pH and/or ionic strength on the flux.

34 The process of the present invention provides a
35 means for producing a caramel color concentrate rich
36 in non-degraded color bodies yet still possessing the
37 non-color related functional attributes of the parent
38 caramel color. These caramel color concentrates

1 resulting from ultrafiltration possess obvious advantages with respect to their decreased bulk and increased coloring power, the ease and effectiveness of measures for stabilizing such products against microbiological contamination, decreased costs in connection with drying the concentrate to powder form and ease of adjustment of the concentration to provide a wide range of color intensity for particular products.

9 The foregoing advantages of caramel color concentrates are attainable according to the present invention where a significant degree of removal of low molecular weight (i.e., non-colorant) materials (and water from the starting caramel color solution is obtained in the ultrafiltration process. In addition, however, it may be desirable to perform the process such that the caramel color concentrate meets a more stringent requirement, i.e., wherein it is substantially devoid of particular or all low molecular weight materials. The process of the present invention enables the attainment of this criterion by means earlier discussed. The resultant concentrate obviously possesses to an even greater degree the advantages of concentrates per se along with the additional property of freedom from low molecular weight materials. Significantly, the process of this invention enables the production of concentrates substantially devoid of low molecular weight materials yet which still possess the desirable related functional properties of the parent caramel color.

30 BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE FIGURES

31 FIG. 1 is a schematic flow diagram of the overall process of this invention.

33 FIG. 2A through 2D constitute a schematic flow sheet of the overall process of the present invention with individual stages of the process divided for ease of reference.

1 FIG. 3A through 3D constitute a schematic flow
2 sheet of a particular embodiment of the present
3 invention.

4 FIG. 4 is a schematic flow sheet of the overall
5 process utilizing continuous water addition during
6 much of the process.

7 FIG. 5 is an enlarged section of a typical
8 ultrafiltration unit utilized in the process of the
9 present invention.

10 DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

11 The fundamental operating scheme of the process
12 of the present invention is described in detail
13 hereinafter with the aid of the appended figures.

14 Referring to FIG. 1, a commercial caramel color 1
15 and water 2 are added to a vessel 3 to form a batch
16 of diluted caramel solution having a solids content
17 of from about 15 to about 40% by weight, preferably
18 above about 20% by weight. The diluted caramel
19 solution then is passed through the ultrafiltration
20 unit 4 where it is divided into a permeated fraction,
21 which passes through the semi-permeable membranes in
22 the ultrafiltration unit in line 5 to collection
23 vessel 6, and a retained fraction which does not pass
24 through the membranes.

25 The retained fraction is circulated through
26 line 7, partially to the original holding vessel 3
27 and partially directed by line 9 again through the
28 ultrafiltration unit 4, with some liquid from
29 vessel 3. The more of the retained fraction that is
30 diverted to line 9, the higher the operating pressure
31 can be whereas the more that is diverted to vessel 3,
32 the more thorough the mixing of the total solution.
33 During such recirculation, no additional caramel or
34 water need be added to the system. After a number of
35 such recirculations, the retained fraction, which now
36 has lost much of its original water content to the
37 permeated fraction, is then mixed with additional

1 water in vessel 3 and the overall recirculation con-
2 tinued until a predetermined amount of permeate is
3 removed. The retained fraction resulting from this
4 recirculation, having decreased quantities of water
5 and low molecular weight solids which have passed to
6 the permeated fraction, may again be diluted with
7 additional water and subjected to ultrafiltration
8 using a number of recirculation passes. After a
9 given number of these dilutions with additional water
10 and ultrafiltration have been performed (or alterna-
11 tively, recirculation while water has been continu-
12 ously added to the retained fraction, generally at a
13 rate equal to the rate at which permeate has been
14 removed, so as to keep the volume constant, as in
15 FIG. 4), the retained fraction is permitted to re-
16 circulate through the ultrafiltration unit with no
17 further addition of water thereto. In this manner,
18 additional permeate is removed and a concentrated
19 retained product fraction is produced and drawn-off
20 at line 8 having decreased quantities of water and
21 low molecular weight materials.

22 FIGS. 2A through 2D show the above process split
23 into the various recirculation stages for ease of
24 description. Thus, in the first step (FIG. 2A),
25 caramel 1 and water 2 are mixed in vessel 3 and
26 passed through ultrafiltration unit 4. The retained
27 fraction 7 resulting from this ultrafiltration is
28 recirculated through line 9 and/or vessel 3 (without
29 addition of water) to ultrafiltration unit 4 until
30 a predetermined amount of water with low molecular
31 weight solids are lost from the caramel to the
32 permeated fraction 5 and collected in vessel 6.

33 After this process, water is added to the re-
34 tained fraction (FIG. 2B) and the circulation through
35 the ultrafiltration unit conducted as described
36 above. In the preferred practice of this invention,
37 the ultrafiltration unit utilized in these various
38 steps of the process (FIGS. 2A through 2D) is the

1 same single unit. It is, however, possible to
2 utilize separate ultrafiltration units for any one or
3 more of the steps shown.

4 After a pre-determined amount of permeate has
5 been collected without addition of water, the re-
6 tained fraction from the step shown in FIG. 2B, that
7 has now lost water and further low molecular weight
8 materials to the permeated fraction 5, is diluted
9 again with water (FIG. 2C) and processed as described
10 above for FIG. 2B. Finally, the retained fraction 7
11 resulting from this step (FIG. 2C) is continuously
12 circulated through the process (FIG. 2D), with no
13 further addition of water, to effect concentration
14 of the retained fraction and further removal of low
15 molecular weight materials to the permeated frac-
16 tion. After sufficient concentration and removal
17 of low molecular weight components has occurred, the
18 retained product fraction is taken off, for example,
19 at line 8.

20 A particular embodiment of the process of this
21 invention, involving the addition of ionic materials
22 in the process to bring about increased rates of
23 concentration of the retained fraction in the final
24 stage of the process, is shown in FIGS. 3A through
25 3D. As earlier noted, the minimum requirement for
26 this process is the presence of added ionic materials
27 in the retained fraction being subjected to ultra-
28 filtration in the final stage of the step process
29 (FIG. 3D), i.e., in the primarily concentration
30 stage of the process. This presence of added ionic
31 materials can be accomplished by addition of such
32 materials through line 10 to the retained fraction
33 at the later stage of the step shown in FIG. 3C or the
34 beginning of the final stage (FIG. 3D), e.g., after
35 the final addition of water has been made to the
36 retained fraction (beginning of process stage shown
37 in Fig. 3C) and a given removal of permeate from the
38 thus diluted retained fraction through the unit has

1 occurred. Thus, ionic materials will be added
2 through line 10 in FIG. 3D or FIG. 3C (some time
3 after water has been added to the retained fraction
4 through line 2 in FIG. 3C).

5 Although it is possible to accomplish the desired
6 presence of added ionic materials in the retained
7 fraction undergoing concentration by addition of
8 ionic materials earlier in the overall process, the
9 loss of such added ionic materials to the permeated
10 fraction during these earlier passes through the
11 ultrafiltration unit will require that significant
12 quantities of ionic materials be added in order to
13 insure that, after losses to the permeated fraction,
14 sufficient amounts thereof are present at the desired
15 later point in the process (Ionic species that are
16 not freely permeable (e.g., of high molecular weight)
17 might be added (or generated in addition to those
18 already present by modification to the caramelization
19 process) and thereby alleviate the problem of waste
20 of the ionic species in the permeate.). This addi-
21 tion at an early stage is not generally considered
22 economical unless, as earlier noted, other benefits,
23 such as increased removal of otherwise difficulty-
24 permeable or impermeable low molecular weight
25 materials and/or maximum retention of functional
26 properties of the caramel color are obtained. Thus,
27 ionic materials in sufficient quantities can be
28 added through line 10 in FIG. 3A or 3B as shown.
29 Of course, it is possible to add a quantity of ionic
30 materials early in the process sufficient to achieve
31 a first objective (e.g., increased removal of low
32 molecular weight materials) and then a second quanti-
33 ty of ionic materials in a later stage to achieve a
34 second objective (e.g., increased concentration
35 rates).

36 In another particular embodiment, pH adjusting
37 materials may be added at the commencement of the

1 process in order to insure maximum retention of
2 functional properties of the caramel color. The
3 presence of such materials may yield other advantages
4 earlier noted throughout or in later stages of the
5 process. Alternatively, additional pH and/or ionic
6 strength materials can be added at appropriate stages
7 to achieve these other advantages.

8 As noted earlier, the process for adding water
9 can be done on a continuous basis, wherein, in FIG. 4
10 water is added at line 2 so as to maintain a constant
11 volume in tank 3. After the desired degree of re-
12 moval of low molecular weight materials has been
13 removed, the retained solution can be concentrated,
14 as in FIG. 2D or FIG. 3D. In fact, in order to
15 optimize the rate of processing or to minimize the
16 volume of permeate, or for other reasons, the water
17 might be added at such a rate as to give a slowly
18 changing retained fraction volume and/or the batch
19 and continuous water addition processes might be
20 combined.

21 FIG. 5 is a longitudinal section through a typi-
22 cal membrane ultrafiltration apparatus which illus-
23 trates the flow of the caramel solution (or a
24 retained fraction thereof from an earlier ultrafil-
25 tration) over the semi-permeable membranes. Thus, a
26 solution of caramel color, as an example, enters the
27 ultrafiltration unit 4 through line 20 and passes
28 downward past a first group of spaced-apart, paral-
29 lel, semi-permeable membranes 22. Materials from
30 the solution which permeate the membranes pass into
31 recess channels 23 and are collected in tubes that
32 lead to channel 29. Impermeable retained materials
33 pass to channel 25 and then upward past a second
34 series of semi-permeable membranes 26. The second
35 series of membranes is separated from the first
36 series by a solid retaining plate 28. Again, mate-
37 rials which permeate the membrane pass into recess
38 channels 27 and are collected in the tubes that lead

1 to channel 29. The remaining impermeable materials
2 exit the ultrafiltration unit at 5 for collection.

3 The foregoing is merely illustrative of one form
4 of apparatus which can be employed in carrying out
5 the ultrafiltration process of the present inven-
6 tion. Many other units of differing design capable
7 of achieving the desired ultrafiltration are
8 commercially available.

9 Further details with respect to the present
10 invention are provided with reference to the
11 following illustrative examples.

12 EXAMPLE I

13 A series of experiments was conducted to inves-
14 tigate the effect of pH adjustment and ionic strength
15 alteration on the ultrafiltration of caramel color.

16 Three runs were conducted utilizing the same
17 caramel color feedstock (Type SAC-4). The caramel
18 color for each run (348 pounds) was diluted with
19 360 pounds of soft dechlorinated water to a volume of
20 about 77 gallons and subjected to a five-stage ultra-
21 filtration process at 60°C through a DDS-RO-35 ultra-
22 filtration unit utilizing GR-6-P membranes having a
23 stated molecular weight cut-off of 25,000. In the
24 first stage, the caramel color/water mixture was
25 ultrafiltered until 465 pounds (51.5 gallons) of
26 permeate was collected. Water, 25.5 gallons (a
27 volume equal to that of the retentate), was then
28 added to the retentate and the resultant mixture
29 ultrafiltered until 25.5 gallons was collected.
30 The retentate from this process was again mixed
31 with 25.5 gallons of water and ultrafiltered until
32 25.5 gallons of permeate was collected. In the
33 fourth stage, 25.5 gallons of water was again added
34 to the retentate and this was ultrafiltered to remove
35 the 25.5 gallons of water. In the fifth stage,
36 ultrafiltration was continued, without further addi-
37 tion of water, to remove 9.5 gallons of permeate to

1 give a final volume of 16 gallons. Based on equa-
2 tions for calculating the removal of totally perme-
3 able low molecular weight materials, 97.5% of these
4 materials would have been removed.

5 The control run (Run No. 42) was conducted
6 according to the above scheme. In Run No. 46, the pH
7 of the retentate/water mixture was adjusted to pH 8.5
8 by addition of 3.25 liters of 50% NaOH solution at
9 the start of the second stage. It remained at pH 8.5
10 throughout the second and third stages, and was
11 re-adjusted back to pH 3.3 with 1.75 liters of 85%
12 phosphoric acid prior to the commencement of the
13 fourth stage. In Run No. 48, the ionic strength of
14 the retentate was raised at the start of the fourth
15 stage by addition of 7.71 pounds NaH_2PO_4 . This
16 was calculated to give the same ionic strength which
17 was present at the start of this stage when the pH
18 was adjusted as in Run No. 46.

19 The DDS unit has 120 membranes on 60 plates and
20 provides 9m^2 of membrane area. The flow pattern
21 through the membrane stack is such that there are
22 three sets of 40 parallel membranes in series. The
23 process pressures were 114 psig inlet and 43 psig
24 outlet, with the outlet pressure rising to 54 psig
25 toward the end of the run. The flux started at
26 260 gph, dropped to 35 gph at the end of the first
27 concentration stage, gradually rose to 290 gph at
28 the start of the final concentration stage and then
29 dropped to 20 gph at the end of the final concen-
30 tration stage.

31 The results of these runs as shown in TABLE II
32 reveal that ionic strength adjustment or pH adjust-
33 ment result in faster processing especially due to
34 decrease of the time in the final stages.

35 In laboratory measurements on caramel and reten-
36 tate, it was determined that the decreased processing
37 time noted for Run No. 46 was not due to a lowering
38 of the viscosity of the retentate through addition of

1 ionic material, since viscosity measurements on
2 retentate plus various amounts of NaH_2PO_4 up to
3 the level used in Run 48 showed up to about a 5%
4 increase in viscosity.

5 Portions of retentate from each run were freeze-
6 dried on a Virtis-Repp FFD-15 freeze drier with a
7 shelf temperature of about 25°C and a condenser
8 temperature of -50°C or lower for 48 hours to give
9 dark, powdered color concentrates.

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TABLE II
PROCESSING TIME (min.) FOR EXAMPLE I

<u>RUN NO.</u>	<u>STAGE 1</u>	<u>STAGE 2</u>	<u>STAGE 3</u>	<u>STAGES 1-3</u>	<u>STAGES 4 & 5</u>	<u>STAGES 1-5</u>
42 (Control, pH 3.3)	32	15	16	63.5	80	143
46 (pH 8.5)	28	13	12	53	20	73
48 (NaH ₂ PO ₄ , pH 3.3)	24	10	9	43	17	60

EXAMPLE II

1
2 A series of experiments was carried out to demon-
3 strate further the usefulness of increasing the ionic
4 strength of the caramel color retentate in order to
5 increase the permeate flux (decrease the processing
6 time) and to increase the maximum concentration of
7 solids that is conveniently achieved during the
8 final, concentration stage.

9 Two control and three experimental runs were con-
10 ducted utilizing the same lot of caramel color feed-
11 stock (Type SAC-4). The caramel color for each run
12 (348 pounds) was diluted with 360 pounds of soft
13 dechlorinated water to about 77 gallons and subjected
14 to a three-stage ultrafiltration process at 60°C in
15 a DDS-RO-35 ultrafiltration unit (9m²) utilizing
16 GR-8-P membranes having a stated molecular weight
17 cut-off of 10,000. In the first stage, the volume
18 of the diluted caramel color was reduced to about
19 51.2 gallons by ultrafiltration by removing
20 231 pounds of permeate. In the second stage, water
21 was added and permeate was continuously removed so as
22 to maintain the retentate at constant volume while
23 1827 pounds of permeate was collected. Finally,
24 the water addition was stopped and an additional
25 307-320 pounds of permeate was collected to reduce
26 the retentate volume to about 16 gallons. In the
27 experimental runs, 7.71 pounds of NaH₂PO₄ was
28 added at the start of the concentration phase. In
29 all cases, the permeate flux and the solids concen-
30 tration were measured at regular intervals during the
31 concentration phase. When the permeate flux as a
32 function of solids concentration is plotted, it can
33 readily be seen that the addition of NaH₂PO₄
34 gives a higher permeation rate at any given solids
35 concentration and allows attainment of a higher
36 maximum solids concentration. In situations where
37 higher color concentration is essential, such as when
38 a highly colored final product is needed, either as

1 a liquid color concentrate or one which is to be
2 stabilized against microbiological spoilage by mix-
3 ture with corn syrup solids to give a high total
4 solids concentration and a high color concentration.
5 The process of this invention may be used to allevi-
6 ate the need for a separate unit operation, such as
7 an evaporation stage, for obtaining the desired final
8 product.

9 The effect is also seen as the time required to
10 collect 312 pounds of permeate in the concentration
11 phase and the flux at that point, as shown in
12 Table III below.

TABLE IIISUMMARY OF RESULTS FROM EXAMPLE II

<u>Experiment No.</u>	<u>Time to Collect 312 pounds permeate (minutes)</u>	<u>Final Flux, liters/min.</u>
197 (Control no ionic additives)	24	1.0
200 (Control no ionic additives)	22	1
196 (Experimental)	17	2
199 (Experimental)	19	1.5
205 (Experimental)	16	1.5

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8 In the manufacture of commercial SAC caramel
9 colors, the final pH may be 2.0 or lower. This pH is
0 frequently raised immediately after manufacture to
1 about 3.0 or so with alkali such as sodium hydroxide
2 solution. Raising the pH may be done to meet a
3 specific requirement of a user. It is well known in
4 the trade that this pH adjustment will give somewhat
5 improved storage stability of the caramel color, for
6 instance it may be stored at a given temperature for
7 a longer time without developing an increased ten-
8 dency to form haze. A number of experiments were,
9 therefore, carried out at different pH's and differ-
0 ent levels of added ionic strength, with an SAC-4
1 caramel color that had been left unadjusted by the
2 manufacture (pH = 2.35).

To 149 pounds of caramel color feedstock (Type SAC-4, whose pH was 2.35 from the manufacture; solids, 50% by weight; absorbance, 0.320 at 560 nm (0.1% w/v dilution)) was added 250 pounds of soft dechlorinated water to a volume of about 45 gallons. This solution was warmed to 60°C and ultrafiltered on a DDS-RO-Module 35 ultrafiltration unit (9m² membrane area) at constant volume (warm water was continuously added at the same rate at which permeate was being removed) collecting 1860 pounds of permeate (approx. 221 gallons). The process pH's are given in Table IV. The retentate was then concentrated by ultrafiltration in the absence of any further water addition by removing 224 pounds of permeate. The pH of the retentate was adjusted to 3.0 to 3.2, either before or after the concentration stage, with 50%

1 NaOH. A portion was freeze-dried on a Virtis-Repp
2 FFD-15 freeze drier with a shelf temperature of about
3 25°C and a condenser temperature of -50°C or lower
4 for 48 hours to give a dark, powdered color
5 concentrate.

6 The aforementioned general procedure was carried
7 out in duplicate with four variations, as follows:

- 8 1) No variation from the general procedure
9 (pH = 2.3).
- 10 2) The initial pH was raised to 3.0 with 50%
11 NaOH before ultrafiltration.
- 12 3) No adjustment of pH until after collection
13 of 660 pounds of permeate (about 1/3 through
14 the process), at which point the pH was
15 lowered to 2.0 by adding 1010 ml of 85%
16 phosphoric acid.
- 17 4) No adjustment of pH until after collecting
18 660 pounds of permeate, at which point the
19 pH was adjusted to 1.4 by adding 1010 ml of
20 concentrated sulfuric acid.

21 Based on equations for calculating the removal
22 of freely permeable low molecular weight materials,
23 99.97% of these materials would have been removed.
24 Analyses were performed on the parent caramel and
25 on the color concentrate for 4-MeI for each of the
26 process variations. The results for duplicate
27 experiments (a) and (b) were as shown in Table IV.

TABLE IV
4-MeI CONTENT OF COLOR CONCENTRATES FOR EXAMPLE III

Process Variations pH	4-MeI of Parent Caramel mg/kg (as is basis)	4-MeI of Color Conc., mg/kg solids	4-MeI of Color Conc., Diluted To Original Color Strength (mg/l)***	Solids % Recovery	% Removal of 4-MeI solids basis*
(A)	(B)	(B ¹)	(C)	(D)=100-B x C x 50% A 100	
1 (a) 2.3	253	297	54	26.7	84.3
(b) 2.3	253	312	40	19.2	88.2
2 (a) 3.0	253	334	64	28.1	81.4
(b) 3.0	253	322	51	22.6	85.6
3 (a) 2.1	253	227	43	28.0	87.4
(b) 2.1	253	271	51	27.5	85.3
4 (a) 1.4	253	176	30	24.3	91.5
(b) 1.4	253	161	26	23.0	92.7

* Theoretical removal of freely permeable low molecular weight materials = 99.97%

** 50% corrects for the original solids content of the whole caramel. A caramel with 250 ppm 4-MeI initially which gave 99.97% removal would have 0.6 ppm 4-MeI in the color concentrate.

*** $B^1 = B \times C \times 0.5 \times \frac{100}{\% \text{ color recovery}}$, where 0.5 is the initial caramel concentration (50%); % color recovery is from Column 2 in Table VI and ρ is the density of the parent caramel (=1.23)

1 As can be seen from this Table, lower pH's gave
2 better removal of 4-MeI.

3 It should be noted that the use of a caramel
4 with a low pH (unadjusted in the process), as would
5 be readily available in a caramel color manufacturing
6 plant, requires less addition of acid to reduce the
7 pH.

8 Operating data for the runs are given in Table V,
9 and color, UV and solids recoveries for the above
10 runs are shown in Table VI.

TABLE V
OPERATING DATA FOR EXAMPLE III

Process Variation	Initial Inlet/Outlet Pressure (PSIG)	Final Inlet/Outlet Pressure (PSIG)	Initial/Final Flux (GPM)	Initial/Final Flow (GPM)	Initial/Final Re-circulation Flow (GPM)	Total Membrane Process Time (Hours)
1 (a)	160/80	160/80	226/218	214/207	37/36	1
(b)	160/80	160/78	210/190	213/206	37/37	0.8
2 (a)	160/80	152/73	237/206	214/212	42/37	0.8
(b)	160/80	160/78	222/198	222/198	42/36	0.9
3 (a)	160/81	150/70	230/166	214/204	36/36	1
(b)	162/80	160/80	230/123	214/196	36/36	0.9
4 (a)	160/80	158/76	218/178	214/212	40/39	1
(b)	160/80	152/76	246/218	214/206	43/42	0.9

TABLE VIRECOVERY OF COLOR, U.V. ABSORBANCE AND SOLIDSFOR EXAMPLE III

<u>Process Variation (Run No.)</u>	<u>% Recovery Color</u>	<u>% Recovery U.V.</u>	<u>% Recovery Solids</u>
1 (a) (180)	90.2	50.8	26.7
(b) (181)	90.9	40.7	29.2
2 (a) (182)	89.8	49.7	28.1
(b) (183)	87.1	42.5	22.6
3 (a) (184)	90.1	51.4	28.0
(b) (185)	90.5	50.3	27.5
4 (a) (186)	89.0	48.0	24.3
(b) (187)	87.7	46.2	23.0

1 EXAMPLE IV

2 Two experiments were carried out on an Amicon
3 Ultra-Sept ultrafiltration unit with 1266 cm² of
4 Amicon P-10 (10,000 Mol. wt. cut-off) membranes at a
5 temperature of 30-40°C.

6 In the first run (557-13), 1.195 kg. of an SAC-2
7 caramel (containing 144 ppm of 4-methylimidazole)
8 was diluted to 4 liters with water, to give a solids
9 concentration of 20.4%. This was concentrated to
10 3.23 liters in the Ultra-Sept and then 25.27 liters
11 of water was added in a continuous manner at the same
12 rate as the permeate was removed, over a period of
13 2 hours, maintaining a constant retentate volume.
14 After this, the retentate was concentrated to
15 1.6 liter and freeze-dried.

16 A further experiment (557-15) was carried out in
17 a similar manner except that the same caramel color
18 was initially diluted with 0.625 M NaCl solution to
19 give a molarity of 0.49. Thus, to 1.180 kg. SAC-2
20 was added 0.625 M NaCl to give 4 liters of
21 0.49 M NaCl solution with 20.1% caramel color solids.
22 It was concentrated to 3.23 liters in the Ultra-Sept
23 unit and then 27.07 liters of water was added in a
24 continuous manner at the same rate as the permeate
25 was removed, over a period of 2.75 hours, maintaining
26 a constant retentate volume. After this, the
27 retentate was concentrated to about 1.6 liter and
28 freeze-dried.

29 With this apparatus and under these conditions,
30 the salt reduced the rate of ultrafiltration, as seen
31 by the slightly longer process time mentioned above,
32 but improved the removal of 4-methylimidazole as
33 shown below.

34	<u>Run No.</u>	<u>Variable</u>	<u>4-MeI, final conc.*</u>
35	557-13	control	15 ppm
36	557-15	0.49 M NaCl	4 ppm
37	(*diluted to original caramel color concentration)		

1 Experiments similar to these were also performed
2 on an Amicon Model 401 stirred cell ultrafiltration
3 unit equipped with a PM-10 membrane. In these
4 experiments, the high ionic strength improved the
5 removal of 4-methylimidazole.

6	<u>Run No.</u>	<u>Variable</u>	<u>4-MeI, final conc.</u>
7	543-45-LOC	control	17.9 ppm
8	543-45-10	0.5 M NaCl	0 (< 5 ppm)

9 EXAMPLE V

10 Effect of pH on Retention of Foaming Characteristic
11 of SAC-1 Caramel Color During Ultrafiltration

12 A series of three experiments, Runs 219, 220, and
13 221, was performed on an SAC-1 caramel color which
14 was selected for its good foaming characteristics.
15 To 149 lbs. of caramel color was added 250 lbs. of
16 water. In Run 219, the pH was left unadjusted
17 (3.8). In Runs 220 and 221, the pH was adjusted
18 to 5.9 and 2.65 at the start, respectively.

19 The samples were ultrafiltered with a DDS-RO
20 9m² ultrafiltration unit equipped with GR8P (10,000
21 molecular weight cut-off) membranes. The process
22 temperature was adjusted to 60°C. Continuous diafil-
23 tration (ultrafiltration with continuous addition of
24 water at the same rate as removal of permeate) was
25 carried out until approximately 870 lbs. of permeate
26 was collected. Water addition then was stopped and
27 ultrafiltration was carried out until approximately
28 230 lbs. of additional permeate was collected. For
29 each experiment, a portion of the retentate was saved
30 as a liquid and a portion was freeze dried. In addi-
31 tion, in Runs 220 and 221 the pH of a portion of the
32 retentate was readjusted to the initial caramel color
33 pH and portions of the pH adjusted material were
34 saved as liquid and as freeze-dried powder.

35 The ability of the samples to produce foam in the
36 foam test was evaluated. The foam test consisted of
37 using 6.7 g of whole caramel diluted to 100 ml with
38 water in a graduated cylinder so that the resulting

1 concentration is 4% solids, shaking vigorously for
2 one minute, and recording the foam height and the
3 time until the foam degraded to only 20% of its
4 initial height. When testing color concentrates,
5 an amount of liquid or freeze-dried powder was used
6 which would give the same color intensity as obtained
7 when the whole caramel color was tested. A further
8 sample, reconstituted caramel, made by combining
9 permeate and retentate in the proportions in which
10 they were separated, was also tested. The results
11 are given in Table VII.

12 As can be seen, the foaming is not destroyed in
13 ultrafiltration, and in fact, the height is enhanced
14 by processing at pH 2.6 (see data for reconstituted
15 caramel). However, the foam of the reconstituted
16 caramel is not as stable as the control, except when
17 processed at pH 3.8.

18 The data on the liquid retentate confirm this and
19 show that the majority of the foaming character has
20 stayed with the retentate (color concentrate).

21 However, after drying the color concentrates at
22 pH 3.8, about one-half the foam height and two-thirds
23 of the foam stability were lost. This indicates that
24 most of the loss of foaming capability occurs during
25 drying rather than during ultrafiltration.

26 On freeze-drying at the processing pH and then
27 dissolving and adjusting to pH 3.8, the best reten-
28 tion of foaming character was obtained at pH 2.6.
29 This demonstrates that some of the deleterious action
30 of freeze-drying of color concentrates can be
31 prevented by proper attention to pH.

32 EXAMPLE VI

33 Eight hundred pounds of caramel color feedstock
34 (Type SAC-4; solids, 53.6% by weight; absorbance,
35 0.370 at 560 nm (0.1% w/v dilution); ash, 1.0-1.5%)
36 was diluted with 828 pounds of soft dechlorinated
37 water to a volume of about 177 gallons. This solu-
38 tion was warmed to 60°C and ultrafiltered on a

TABLE VII

FOAMING OF CARAMEL COLOR AND COLOR CONCENTRATE

<u>SAMPLE</u>	<u>RUN NO.</u>	<u>PROCESS pH</u>	<u>FOAM HEIGHT, % OF CONTROL</u>	<u>TIME TO 80% LOSS IN HEIGHT, % OF CONTROL</u>
CONTROL	(Parent)		100%	100%
<u>Combined Permeate and Retentate ("Reconstituted Caramel", pH adj. to about 3.8)</u>				
	221	2.6	124%	55%
	219	3.8	95%	92%
	220	5.9	99%	38%
<u>Retentate (pH adj. to about 3.8 before testing)</u>				
	221	2.6	120%	54%
	219	3.8	86%	85%
	220	5.9	105%	56%
<u>Freeze-dried Retentate (pH adj. to about 3.8 before freeze-drying)</u>				
	221	2.6	49%	33%
	219	3.8	46%	30%
	220	5.9	54%	21%
<u>Freeze-dried Retentate (Freeze-dried at process pH, reconstituted in water and pH adj. to about 3.8 before testing)</u>				
	221	2.6	64%	44%
	219	3.8	46%	30%
	220	5.9	54%	35%

1 DDS-RO-Module ultrafiltration unit (9m^2 membrane
2 area) equipped with GR-8-P (10,000 molecular weight
3 cut-off) membranes, to remove 531 pounds of permeate
4 (approx. 59 gallons). Ultrafiltration was then con-
5 tinued on the retentate at constant volume, i.e.,
6 warm water was continuously added at the same rate at
7 which permeate was being removed. After 4636 pounds
8 of additional permeate (approx. 551 gallons) had been
9 collected, the retentate was concentrated by ultra-
10 filtration in the absence of any further water addi-
11 tion. In this manner, 491 pounds (59 gallons) of
12 additional permeate were collected.

13 In theory, any freely permeable low molecular
14 weight molecules would be removed to an extent of
15 99.7%. Since, as discussed later, 29% of the solids
16 remained, the final concentration of low molecular
17 weight impurities would be about 1% of the dry weight
18 of the product. It has been found that, for this
19 Type SAC-4 caramel color, the low molecular weight
20 components have about one-fourth the extinction
21 coefficient (absorbance per unit weight) in the
22 ultraviolet (280 nm) as do the high molecular weight
23 components. Therefore, if the low and high molecular
24 weight components were separated chromatographically,
25 the low molecular weight component of this color
26 concentrate would be expected to have about 0.25% of
27 the total 280 nm absorbance of the color concen-
28 trate. The final product was, in fact, chromato-
29 graphed on a column of Sephadex G-15 (Pharmacia Fine
30 Chemicals, Inc.) using 0.05 M acetate buffer (Na^+),
31 pH 4.8, as eluant and the percentage low molecular
32 weight components by ultraviolet absorbance was
33 measured as 0.41%, slightly above but close to the
34 expected value.

35 The initial caramel contained 300 ppm, as is
36 basis, of 4-Methylimidazole (4-MeI). This should
37 have been reduced to 3 ppm in the dried final pro-
38 duct. The actual concentration in the final product

1 was found to be 207 ppm (dry weight basis), which
2 means, correcting for solids recovery, that only 90%
3 instead of 99.7% of the 4-MeI was removed during
4 ultrafiltration.

5 The DDS unit has 120 membrands on 60 plates and
6 provides 9m^2 of membrane area. The flow pattern
7 through the membrane stack is such that there are
8 three sets of 40 parallel membranes in series. The
9 process pressures were 170 psig inlet and 86 psig
10 outlet, with the outlet pressure dropping to
11 80-82 psig toward the end of the run. The flow rate
12 through the stack was 200 gpm for most of the run and
13 dropped to 150 gpm in the final concentration phase.
14 A flow of 45-50 gpm was maintained as a return to the
15 feed tank from the recirculating retentate. The flux
16 started at 120 gph, dropped to 65 gph at the end of
17 the first concentration phase, gradually rose to
18 200 gph during continuous ultrafiltration with water
19 addition and then dropped to 30 gph in the final
20 concentration phase. The total membrane process time
21 was 5 1/4 hours.

22 In the ultrafiltration process, 29% of the
23 solids, 94% of the color as measured by absorbance
24 at 560 nm and 60% of the ultraviolet absorbance as
25 measured at 280 nm was recovered in the retentate.

26 The retentate was then spray-dried on a DeLaval
27 spray-drier (6 ft. i.d. x about 30 ft. height;
28 475 lb/hr water removal capacity at 375°F). Initial
29 spray-drying was done at 1000 psig and 71 gph through
30 a Spraying Systems #50 orifice insert (0.070" i.d.)
31 with a #425 cup top core at 225°C inlet and 90°C
32 outlet and the product (about 20 kg) was not fully
33 dried; there were some wet lumps in the dry powder
34 which were later removed by sifting. The spray
35 drying conditions were changed to 4000 psig with a
36 #56 orifice insert (0.0465" i.d.) with a 421 cup top
37 core at 260°C inlet and 90°C outlet and the product
38 (about 20 kg) dried well. A small portion was
39 freeze-dried without any difficulty.

1 EXAMPLE VII

2 Eight hundred and ninety-six pounds (86 gallons)
3 of caramel color feedstock (Type SAC-2, solids, 69.8%
4 by weight; absorbance, 0.161 at 560 nm (0.1% w/v
5 dilution) was diluted with 1688 pounds (193 gallons)
6 of water to a volume of about 279 gallons. This
7 solution was warmed to 60°C and ultrafiltered on a
8 DDS-RO-Module 35 Ultrafiltration unit (9m² membrane
9 area) described in Example VI to remove 1411 pounds
10 (154 gallons) of permeate. Ultrafiltration was then
11 continued on the retentate at constant volume, i.e.,
12 warm water was continuously added at the same rate at
13 which permeate was being removed. After collecting
14 5281 pounds of additional permeate (approx.
15 615 gallons), the retentate was concentrated by
16 ultrafiltration in the absence of any further water
17 addition. In this manner, 619 pounds (74 gallons) of
18 additional permeate were collected.

19 The process pressures were 170 psig inlet and
20 86 psig outlet, with the outlet pressure dropping
21 to 80 psig toward the end of the run. The flow rate
22 through the stack was 210 gpm for most of the run,
23 dropping only to 206 gpm in the final concentration
24 phase. A flow of 45-50 gpm was maintained as a
25 return to the feed tank from the recirculating
26 retentate. The flux started at 150 gpm, dropped to
27 55 gph at the end of the first concentration phase,
28 gradually rose to 240 gph during continuous ultra-
29 filtration with water addition and then dropped to
30 120 gph in the final concentration phase. The total
31 membrane process time was 6 1/3 hours.

32 In the ultrafiltration process, 14% of the
33 solids, 92% of the color and 31% of the ultraviolet
34 absorbance was recovered in the retentate. The lower
35 solids recovery, as compared to that in Example VI,
36 is attributable to the difference in the feedstocks
37 employed.

1 In theory, any freely permeable low molecular
2 weight molecules would be removed to an extent of
3 99.8%. Since only 14% of the solids remained, the
4 final concentration of low molecular weight impuri-
5 ties would be about 1.5% of the dry weight of the
6 product. It has been found that, for this SAC-2, the
7 low molecular weight components have about one-third
8 the extinction coefficient (absorbance per unit
9 weight) in the ultraviolet (280 nm) as the high
10 molecular weight components. Therefore, if the low
11 and high molecular weight components in the retentate
12 were separated chromatographically, the low molecular
13 weight component of this color concentrate would be
14 expected to have about 0.5% of the total 280 nm
15 absorbance of the color concentrate. The final pro-
16 duct was, in fact, chromatographed on a column of
17 Sephadex G-15 (Pharmacia Fine Chemicals, Inc.) using
18 0.05M acetate (Na^+), pH 4.8:ethanol (80:20, V:V) as
19 eluant, and the percentage low molecular weight com-
20 ponents by ultraviolet absorbance was measured as
21 0.69%, slightly above but close to the expected value.

22 The initial caramel contained 163 ppm, as is
23 basis, of 4-Methylimidazole (4-MeI) or 1668 ppm based
24 on the recovered weight of high molecular component.
25 This should have been reduced to 3 ppm in the dried
26 final product. The actual concentration in the final
27 product was found to be 273 ppm, which means, cor-
28 recting for solids recovery, that only 84% instead of
29 99.8% of the 4-MeI was removed during ultrafiltration.

30 The retentate was then spray-dried on a DeLaval
31 spray-drier (6 ft i.d. x about 30 ft height;
32 475 lb/hr water removal capacity at 375°F). The
33 spray drying was done at 4000 psi with a #56 orifice
34 insert (0.0465" i.d.) with a 421 cup top core at
35 260°C inlet and 90°C outlet and the product dried
36 well.

37 A small portion of the retentate was freeze-dried
38 without any difficulty.

1

2 To 348 pounds of caramel color (Type SAC-4;
3 solids, 54% by weight; absorbance 0.370 at 560 nm
4 (0.1% w/v dilution); ash, 1.0-1.5%) was added
5 360 pounds of soft dechlorinated water to a volume of
6 about 77 gallons. This material was ultrafiltered
7 at 60°C on a DDS-RO-Module 35 ultrafiltration unit,
8 equipped with 9m² of GR-8-P membranes, until
9 51.5 gallons of permeate had been collected and
10 25.5 gallons of retentate remained. At this point
11 25.5 gallons of water were added bringing the volume
12 up to 51 gallons. Ultrafiltration was then continued
13 until 25.5 gallons of permeate were collected.
14 Adding 25.5 gallons of water and carrying out ultra-
15 filtration from 51 gallons to 25.5 gallons was
16 repeated four times in all. The retentate was then
17 concentrated by collecting an additional ten gallons
18 of permeate. The above process was performed three
19 times (Run Nos. 69-71) with the operating conditions
20 controlled as closely the same as practical in order
21 to determine the reproducibility of recoveries of
22 color, ultraviolet absorbance, and solids in the
23 retentate. The process parameters and recoveries
24 are listed in Table VIII.

TABLE VIII

RUN NO.	69	70	71
Initial Inlet/Outlet Pressure, PSIG	125/74	121/71	131/82
Final Inlet/Outlet Pressure, PSIG	128/64	136/74	136/74
Initial Flow, GPM	222	222	225
Final Flow, GPM	63	105	90
Initial Permeation Flux, GPH	151	107	139
Final Permeation Flux (GPH)	4	7	5.2
Process Time, Hours	2.7	3.4	3.2
% Recovery, COLOR	90.4	90.5	90.5
% Recovery, U. V. (280 nm)	48.7	48.5	48.7
% Recovery, Solids	30.0	29.6	20.1

EXAMPLE IX

1
2 A series of experiments was conducted in order to
3 investigate the effect of temperature on the ultra-
4 filtration of caramel. In these experiments, the
5 water was added batch-wise, rather than continuously
6 as in the previous examples.

7 In each experiment, 348 pounds of caramel color
8 feedstock (Type SAC-4; solids 54% by weight; absor-
9 bance 0.370 at 560 nm (0.1% w/v dilution) was
10 diluted with 360 pounds of water to a volume of
11 about 77 gallons and warmed to the temperature
12 shown below. Each solution was ultrafiltered on a
13 DDS-RO-Module 35 ultrafiltration unit utilizing 9m²
14 of GR-6-P membranes having a stated molecular weight
15 cut-off of 25,000. In each instance, ultrafiltration
16 was conducted at a pressure of about 120-130 psig
17 inlet pressure.

18 For each run shown, ultrafiltration was conducted
19 without further addition of water until approximately
20 464 pounds (51.5 gallons) of permeate had been
21 collected. Then 213 pounds of water (25.5 gallons)
22 was added to the retentate and continued at the
23 appropriate temperature until about 25.5 gallons of
24 additional permeate was collected. This step was
25 repeated twice more. Ultrafiltration was then
26 continued without further addition of water until
27 10 gallons of permeate was collected or until the
28 permeation rate was prohibitively slow. Based on
29 equations for calculating the removal of freely
30 permeable low molecular weight materials, 97.5% of
31 these materials would have been removed.

32 The retentate product resulting from each of
33 these runs was measured for the percent recovery of
34 color (absorbance measured at 560 nm), UV (absorbance
35 at 280 nm) and solids. The results are shown in
36 Table IX.

37 The product produced by processing at 90°C was
38 lumpy, due to overheating and degradation, and the

1 product produced by processing at 80°C had, as shown
2 by the high $PEAK_1/PEAK_2$ value in Table IX, under-
3 gone substantial polymerization and degradation.
4 Thus, although the increased temperature for these
5 two runs reduced the process time, it was at the
6 expense of product quality.
7 A small portion of retentate from each experiment
8 was freeze-dried.

TABLE IX

RUN NO.	TEMP (°C)	PROCESS TIME (min.)*	FINAL SOLIDS (%)	CORRECTED RECOVERY (%) A560A280 SOLIDS	TOTAL TIME AT TEMP. (min.)	PEAK1/ PEAK2**		
42	60	143	31.1	90.7	54.2	28.8	153	---
43	70	98	30.5	85.5	49.5	25.7	152	0.88
44	80	73	30.6	84.7	48.5	25.0	125	1.06
45	90	89	31.0	85.7	52.8	27.2	106	1.23

* Corrected to same end point of processing

** Higher values of PEAK₁/PEAK₂ are an indication of the polymerization and degradation of the polymeric caramel color bodies and is the ratio of two high molecular weight components resolved by gel permeation chromatography on Biogel A (1.5m) using 0.05M acetate (Na+), pH 4.8:ethanol (80:20, V:V).

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1 lot of GR8P membranes appear to have been damaged in
2 some way because they did not respond as expected and
3 the process times are extended.

4 As can be seen in Table XI, in all cases the
5 higher pressures and higher flow give higher recovery
6 of the solids, color, and, generally, ultraviolet
7 absorbance in the retentate (color concentrate).
8 Chromatography on G-15 Sephadex gel, as described
9 previously, showed that there was no significantly
10 greater amount of low molecular weight materials in
11 the retentate and, therefore, the higher recoveries
12 must have resulted from improved recovery of high
13 molecular weight materials.

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TABLE X

<u>RUN NO.(S)</u>	<u>PRESSURE (bar)</u>		<u>FLOW RATE (gpm)</u>	<u>PROCESS TIME (min.)</u>	
	<u>INLET</u>	<u>OUTLET</u>		<u>ORIGINAL GR8P</u>	<u>GR6P</u>
28, 29, 30	5.1	3	177 (est.)	167 (ave.)	
34	6.0	3.8	177	135	
79	6.0	3.8	177		174
37, 39, 41	6.0	3.8	177		153 (ave.)
35	8.5	3.3	216	108	
80	8.5	3.3	216		177
42	8.5	3.3	216		143
67, 68, 75	8.5	4.5	216		173 (ave.)
50	8.5	4.5	216		120 (est.)

TABLE XI

<u>MEMBRANE</u>	<u>RUN NO. (s)</u>	<u>SOLIDS RECOVERY (%)</u>	<u>COLOR RECOVERY (%)</u>	<u>UV RECOVERY (%)</u>	<u>FINAL SOLIDS CONC. (%)</u>
Orig. GR8P	28, 29, 30	25.1	88.3	49.3	25.3
Orig. GR8P	34	n.a	n.a	n.a	29.0
GR8P	79	25.1	88.4	49.5	25.5
GR6P	37, 39, 41	24.9	86.7	48.1	27.5
Orig. GR8P	35	27.8	92.8	55.5	29.1
GR8P	80	26.6	90.5	50.9	27.4
GR6P	42	28.8	90.7	56.2	31.1
GR8P	67, 68, 75	28.0	91.2	52.5	27.5

EXAMPLE XI

1
2 A series of experiments was performed on the DDS
3 ultrafiltration unit utilizing a stack of GR8P mem-
4 branes (approx. molecular weight cut-off, 10,000), to
5 optimize the effect of flow rate and pressure on the
6 ultrafiltration of caramel color. In each run, the
7 caramel color feedstock used was 348 pounds of SAC-4
8 which was mixed with 360 pounds of water and ultra-
9 filtered until 462 pounds of permeate was collected,
10 leaving 25.6 gallons of retentate. The retentate
11 from this first pass was mixed with 25.6 gallons of
12 additional water and ultrafiltered until 25.6 gallons
13 of permeate was removed and 25.6 gallons of retentate
14 again remained. This step was repeated two (2) addi-
15 tional times. Finally, no additional water was added
16 to the retentate, but ultrafiltration was continued
17 until approximately 16 gallons of retentate remained.

18 The results are summarized in Table XII. The
19 figures shown represent arithmetic averages of the
20 data collected for these runs. It can be seen
21 that higher pressure and flow in the DDS unit gives
22 shorter process times and better color recovery
23 in the retentate. The shorter processing time is
24 especially important since this means that larger
25 batches can be processed on a given unit without so
26 greatly prolonging the process so as to cause damage
27 to the colorant.

TABLE XII

RUN NOS.	INLET PRESSURE (PSIG)	OUTLET PRESSURE (PSIG)	FLOW (GPM) START	FLOW (GPM) END	% SOLIDS RECOVERY	% COLOR RECOVERY	% UV RECOVERY	MEAN	PROCESS TIME (min)
								INITIAL PRESSURE (PSIG)	
121									
122	165	80	210	91	29.9	94.0	55.4	122.5	108
123									
102									
103	147	64	229	93	29.4	92.0	53.6	105.5	109
129									
125									
126	141	79	177	79	29.5	93.3	53.0	110	124
127									
100									
101	126	44	225	73	29.8	91.9	54.4	85	125
104									
105									
106	100		192	85	26.9	90.8	52.8	71	154

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38 27 gallons of permeate was collected. This was

1 repeated twice more. In the fifth and final stage of
2 the process, ultrafiltration was continued without
3 the addition of more water until 5.5 more gallons of
4 permeate was collected. The average recovery in the
5 retentate during three ultrafiltration experiments
6 was 90.1% of the color, 13.2% of the solids, and
7 41.4% of the ultraviolet absorbance (as measured at
8 280 nm). Although SAC-2 is less highly colored than
9 SAC-4, a higher percentage of the color was retained
10 when SAC-2 was processed than for SAC-4.

11 Two experiments carried out with the Abcor spiral
12 wound unit equipped with polysulfone membranes were
13 done on a somewhat smaller scale than above. To
14 261 pounds of SAC-4 caramel color was added
15 270 pounds of soft dechlorinated water. This mixture
16 was ultrafiltered at 60°C until 346 pounds of per-
17 meate was collected, giving 19 gallons of retentate.
18 In the second processing stage, 19 gallons of water
19 was added to the retentate and ultrafiltration was
20 carried out until 19 gallons of permeate was col-
21 lected. This was repeated twice more and then in
22 the fifth processing stage the retentate was concen-
23 trated, without addition of more water, by ultra-
24 filtration to a volume of about 14.5 gallons. The
25 average recovery was 91.4% of the color, 30.3% of
26 the solids and 58.37% of the ultraviolet absorbance.
27 These recoveries are comparable to those obtained on
28 the DDS unit equipped with polysulfone membranes and
29 higher than obtained for SAC-4 on the Abcor using
30 HFM-180 membranes.

1

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1 The results of these experiments are summarized
2 in Tables XIII and XVI.

3 It can be seen that the retention of color for
4 the two sets of membranes (Table XIII, runs 64-66 vs.
5 runs 90-99) are slightly different, with higher color
6 and solids recovery from the original membranes
7 (runs 64-66). Unlike the DDS unit where higher
8 pressures can be used to achieve higher recirculation
9 flow rate, reducing the number of tubes is the only
10 way to increase the recirculation flow through the
11 tubes because of the limited strength of the support
12 material. In the Abcor unit, higher flow rates gave
13 no significant change in the recovery of color.
14 Higher flow rates gave higher flux through the
15 membrane (Table XVI), particularly in the case of
16 only eight membranes in series, but because of the
17 reduced membrane area, the total flux for the
18 equipment would have been reduced.

TABLE XIII

RUN NO.	# OF TUBES IN SERIES	TOTAL # OF TUBES	INITIAL RECIRCULATION FLOW (GPM)	% RECOVERY		
				COLOR	SOLIDS	UV
90 & 91	8	16	39.0	84.0	23.8	49.6
92 & 93	10	20	30.0	84.9	24.8	48.6
94 & 95	12	24	27.5	84.3	26.2	48.0
96 & 97	14	28	25.5	83.6	23.8	46.8
*64, 65 & 66	14	28	25.5	87.0	25.5	48.6
**98 & 99	8	16	34.5	84.3	23.3	47.4

* These runs were made with a previous set of 12,000 MW cut-off (HFM-100) membranes.

** Booster pump added to maintain pressure and flow throughout the runs.

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TABLE XIV

INLET PRESSURE** (PSIG)

RUN NO.	# OF TUBES IN SERIES	PASS 1		PASS 2		PASS 3		PASS 4		PASS 5	
		START	END	START	END	START	END	START	END	START	END
90/91	8	55/55	35/35	55/55	36/35	55/55	41/43	55/55	40/50	40/50	30/42
92/93	10	55/55	38/35	55/55	40/32	55/55	50/42	55/55	52/54	52/54	37/43
94/95	12	55/55	42/46	55/55	50/52	55/55	54/55	55/55	54/54	54/54	40/55
96/97	14	55/55	38/37	55/55	48/34	55/55	55/51	55/55	55/52	55/52	36/30
*98/99	8	55/55	55/55	55/55	55/50	55/55	55/55	55/55	55/55	55/55	55/20
***64/65/66	14	55/56/55	56/55/56	55/55/55	56/58/57	55/55/55	57/56/56	55/55/56			55/57/56

* Two pumps were used.

** Outlet pressure = 13 psig.

*** These runs were made with a previous set of 12,000 MW cut-off (HFM-10) membranes.

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TABLE XV

INITIAL AND FINAL FLOW THROUGH MEMBRANE STACK (GPM)

RUN NO.	# OF TUBES IN SERIES	PASS 1		PASS 2		PASS 3		PASS 4		PASS 5	
		START	END	START	END	START	END	START	END	START	END
90/91	8	39/39	38/30	38/33	34/32	35/33	30/32	39/33	25/33	30/33	27/33
92/93	10	30/30	25/24	32/30	25/28	30/31	27/27	30/30	27/27	27/27	24/26
94/95	12	28/28	22/23	28/28	26/26	28/27	27/27	28/27	27/26	27/26	23/26
96/97	14	26/26	24/22	26/26	24/21	26/26	24/24	26/26	25/24	25/24	20/24
*98/99	8	34/31	38/34	36/35	36/33	37/35	33/34	38/38	36/34	36/34	33/27
**64/65/66	14	26/26/25	25/26/25	26/26/26	25/25/26	26/26/26	24/25/26	25/26/26			25/26/26

63

* Two pumps were used.

** These runs were made with a previous set of 12,000 MW cut-off (HEM-100) membranes.

TABLE XVI

RUN NO.	# OF TUBES IN SERIES	AVERAGE PERMEATION FLUX		AVERAGE	AVERAGE PERMEATION FLUX		AVERAGE
		PASS 1	THRU PASS 5		PASS 1	THRU PASS 4	
98	8	18.8	}	19.4	26.8	}	26
99	8	20.0			25.2		
90	8	14.1	}	14.5	20.5	}	20
91	8	14.8			19.6		
92	10	12.8	}	12.4	18.2	}	16.6
93	10	12.0			15.0		
94	12	13.3	}	13.8	18.2	}	17.9
95	12	14.3			17.6		
96	14	12.4	}	10.8	17.3	}	15.8
97	14	9.2			14.4		
64*	14	17.4	}	17.2	20.2	}	21.7
65*	14	16.4			22.0		
66*	14	17.6			22.8		

Unit of flux is gallons/foot² day.

* These runs were made with a previous set of 12,000 MW cut off (HFM-100) membranes.

1 EXAMPLE XIV

2 To 348 pounds of caramel color feedstock
3 (Type SAC-4; solids, 54% by weight; absorbance 0.360
4 at 560 nm (0.1% w/v dilution)) was added 360 pounds
5 of soft dechlorinated water to a volume of about
6 77 gallons. The retentate was ultrafiltered until
7 51.5 gallons of permeate had been collected. At this
8 point 25.5 gallons of water were added bringing the
9 volume up to 51 gallons. Ultrafiltration was then
10 continued until 25.5 gallons of permeate were col-
11 lected. The ultrafiltering from 51 to 25.5 gallons
12 and then adding 25.5 gallons of water was repeated
13 four times in all. The retentate was then further
14 concentrated to 16 gallons by collecting an addition-
15 al 9.5 gallons of permeate. The process temperature
16 was 60°C. Calculations indicate that approximately
17 99.2% of the low molecular weight, freely permeable
18 components would have been removed. Three replica-
19 tions of each SAC-4 caramel color from each of the
20 three manufacturers were made using the process
21 described above in order to examine any variation due
22 to possible variations in manufacturing. The average
23 values for the process parameters and recoveries are
24 listed in Table XVII. As can be seen, even though
25 the nitrogen and sulfur analyses are somewhat differ-
26 ent for whole caramel #3 compared to 1 and 2 and for
27 each of the three final products, the processing and
28 the recoveries are quite similar for this Type of
29 Caramel Color.

TABLE XVII

	<u>MANUFACTURER</u>		
	#1	#2	#3
<u>RUN NUMBERS</u>	<u>67, 68, 75</u>	<u>69, 70, 71</u>	<u>76, 77, 78</u>
Initial Inlet/Outlet Press (PSIG)	119/68	125/76	115/62
Final Inlet/Outlet Press (PSIG)	131/73	133/71	117/56
Initial Flow (GPM)	217	223	221
Final Flow (GPM)	86	86	54
Initial Flux (GPH)	127	132	132
Final Flux (GPH)	3.4	5.33	3.6
Process Time (hours)	2.9	3.1	2.7
% Recovery Color	91.2	90.5	91.7
% Recovery U.V.	52.4	48.6	54.4
% Recovery Solids	28.1	29.6	29.0
% N, concentrate, DWB*	6.54	7.07	5.43
% S, concentrage, DWB	5.94	6.69	6.22
% N, whole caramel, DWB	7.21	7.33	5.20
% S, whole caramel, DWB	8.78	8.77	8.46

* DWB = dry weight basis

1 EXAMPLE XV

2 One index of the efficiency of ultrafiltration
3 for removal of low molecular weight materials is the
4 theoretical one, i.e., a calculation of the expected
5 level of low molecular weight materials which would
6 remain. These calculations have been briefly dis-
7 cussed and can be found in literature from manufac-
8 turers of ultrafiltration units or in various books
9 on ultrafiltration.

10 A method of evaluating the efficiency of ultra-
11 filtration for removal of low molecular weight com-
12 ponents is examination by chromatography, say on
13 Sephadex G-15 as mentioned in previous Examples. As
14 already mentioned, these analyses showed reasonable
15 agreement with the values obtained by calculation.

16 A further method for monitoring the ultrafiltra-
17 tion process is to examine the removal of specific
18 components. Komoto and associates have shown that
19 4-methylimidazole (4-MeI) is poorly removed by ultra-
20 filtration, unless the pH of the caramel solution is
21 adjusted to particular values during ultrafiltra-
22 tion. Based on the data given in Komoto's papers,
23 his work was limited to an SAC-2 diluted to very low
24 solids concentration and processed with impractically
25 long processes on laboratory equipment. It was
26 therefore of interest to evaluate, beyond that re-
27 vealed in Examples III and IV, the effect of some of
28 the processing variables of the present invention on
29 the removal of 4-MeI.

30 Tables XVIII and XIX contain data on the 4-MeI
31 content of the color concentrates (retentate) from a
32 number of experimental runs using various operating
33 conditions and several different SAC-4 caramel colors.

TABLE XVIII

Effect of pH and Ionic Strength on
4-MeI Content of Color Concentrates
(DDS,10,00 MW cut-off membrane)

<u>RUN NO.</u>	<u>PROCESS CONDITION</u> <u>pH</u>	<u>4-MeI, ppm</u>
182/183	3.0	328
180/181	2.3	304
184/185	2.1	249
186/187	1.4	168
162/163	1.3	70
18	3	350
20	5	315
22	7	315
19	8.5	230
48	3 (Ionic strength same as for pH 8,5)	230 (25,00 MW cut-off membrane)

TABLE XIX

Effect of Ultrafiltration Equipment and Membranes
on Residual 4-MeI Content of Color Concentrate

<u>RUN NO.</u>	<u>Degree of Removal, Theoretical</u>	<u>4-MeI, ppm*</u>	<u>Equipment</u>
57	97.4%	340	Abcor tubular, 18,000 MW membranes, 55°C
58	97.4%	374	Abcor tubular, 18,000 MW membranes, 60°C
64	97.4%	360	Abcor tubular, 12,000 MW 55°C
166	97.5%	300	Abcor spiral wound, poly- sulfone membrane, 10,000 MW cut-off, 60°C
18	97.0%	350	DDS, 10,000 MW membranes, 60°C, average pressure 60 psig
140	99.7%	207	DDS, 10,000 MW membrane, 60°C, average pressure 125 psig

*dry weight basis

1 EXAMPLE XVI

2 A series of experiments was conducted to deter-
3 mine the processability of different Classes and
4 Types of caramel colors.

5 In all cases, ultrafiltration was carried out at
6 60°C on a DDS-RO-Module 35 ultrafiltration unit. For
7 the AC-2 and AC-3 experiments, the unit was equipped
8 with GR6P (25,000 MW cut-off) polysulfone membranes.
9 For all other experiments the unit was equipped with
10 GR8P (10,000 MW cut-off) polysulfone membranes. The
11 DDS unit has 120 membranes on 60 plates and provides
12 9m² of membrane area. The flow pattern through the
13 membrane stack is such that there are three sets of
14 40 parallel membranes in series.

15 A portion of each retentate was freeze-dried
16 without difficulty on a Virtis-Repp FFD-15 freeze
17 drier with a shelf temperature of about 25°C and a
18 condenser temperature of -50°C or lower for 48 hours
19 to give, except where noted, a dark, powdered color
20 concentrate.

21 CP-1

22 To 149 pounds of caramel color feedstock
23 (Type CP-1; solids, 69.9% by weight; absorbance,
24 0.078 at 560 nm (0.1% w/v dilution); N and S, <
25 0.1%) was added 250 pounds of soft dechlorinated
26 water to a volume of about 45 gallons. This solution
27 was warmed to 60°C and ultrafiltration was begun.
28 However, the rate of ultrafiltration was extremely
29 slow and the experiment was terminated (run 171).
30 The membranes were carefully and thoroughly cleaned
31 with hot detergent and the experiment was repeated
32 with the same poor results (run 172), such that
33 ultrafiltration of CP-1 was considered to be
34 impractical. Therefore, it was decided that a study
35 would be done to determine whether altering the pH of
36 the caramel solution would increase the permeate flux.

1 In two experiments (run 175 and 177) the pH was
2 raised to about 7.1 before processing. The pro-
3 cessing was carried out at constant volume by adding
4 warm water at the same rate that the permeate was
5 removed until 1840 pounds (approx. 221 gallons) of
6 permeate was collected. The retentate was concen-
7 trated by ultrafiltration in the absence of any
8 further water addition by collecting 224 pounds
9 (25 gallons) of additional permeate. In theory,
10 99.7% of the low molecular weight materials origi-
11 nally present would have been removed. For the two
12 experiments, the average process pressures were
13 160 psig inlet and 80 psig outlet, with the outlet
14 pressure dropping to 77 psig toward the end of the
15 run. The flow rate through the stack was 208 gpm. A
16 flow of 46 gpm was maintained as a return to the feed
17 tank from the recirculating retentate. The flux
18 started at 135 gph, gradually rose to 270 gph during
19 continuous ultrafiltration with water addition and
20 then dropped to 55 gph in the final concentration
21 phase. The total membrane process time was 1.4 hr.,
22 thus indicating that pH adjustment was successful.

23 In the ultrafiltration process, 20% of the
24 solids, 80% of the color and 33% of the ultraviolet
25 absorbance was recovered in the retentate.

26 CP-2

27 As mentioned after runs 171 and 172 in the dis-
28 cussion of CP-1 caramel, it was decided to determine
29 whether adjusting the pH of the dilute CP-1 caramel
30 would give increased flux during processing--however,
31 due to the limited supply of each Type of caramel
32 color obtained for these experiments, it was decided
33 to first try ultrafiltration of CP-2 and, if the rate
34 of ultrafiltration also was low, to adjust the pH of
35 the dilute CP-2 caramel color to evaluate the effect
36 of pH on flux. To 149 pounds of CP-2 caramel color
37 (absorbance 0.095 at 560 nm (0.17 w/v solution),
38 solids 64.8% by weight, N and S < 0.1%) was added

1 250 pounds of soft dechlorinated water to a volume of
 2 about 45 gallons. This solution was warmed to 60°C
 3 and recirculated through the ultrafiltration unit,
 4 returning the permeate to the feed tank. The flux
 5 was measured and then remeasured after pH adjustment
 6 with 50% NaOH solution as shown below (run 174).

7	pH	Flux (liter/hr-m ²)	NaOH, ml (total)
8			
9	3.25	13	0
10	3.5	12	50
11	3.7	12	200
12	4.5	17	700
13	7.7	108	1700

14 The flux dropped slightly, to 96 liter/hr-m²
 15 (230 gph), then collection of permeate began and
 16 water was added at the same rate at which permeate
 17 was removed to maintain a constant volume of reten-
 18 tate until 1860 pounds (approx. 224 gallons) of per-
 19 meate was collected. The flux rose during processing
 20 to 120 liter/hr-m². The pH was reduced with 85%
 21 phosphoric acid, with the change in flux shown below
 22 and then the retentate was concentrated from
 23 45 gallons to 20 gallons by collecting 224 pounds of
 24 permeate. The flux dropped to 8 liter/m²-hr and
 25 the liquid turned from black to brownish, as though
 26 precipitation had occurred, by the end of the
 27 concentration phase.

28	pH	Flux (liter/m ² -hr)	H ₃ PO ₄ , ml (total)
29			
30	6.9	120	0
31	5.0	83	164
32	3.4	22	414

33 In theory, 99.7% of the low molecular weight
 34 materials would have been removed.

35 In the ultrafiltration process, 23% of the
 36 solids, 90% of the color and 36% of the ultraviolet
 37 absorbance was recovered in the retentate.

1 The process pressures were 160 psig inlet and
2 80 psig outlet, with the outlet pressure dropping to
3 77 psig toward the end of the run. The flow rate
4 through the stack was 208 gpm. A flow of 46 gpm was
5 maintained as a return to the feed tank from the re-
6 circulating retentate. The flux started at 230 gph,
7 gradually rose to 285 gph during continuous ultra-
8 filtration with water addition and then dropped to
9 20 gph in the final concentration phase. The total
10 membrane process time was 1.75 hours.

11 On freeze-drying of a portion, it was found to
12 give a brownish powder with hazy solubility proper-
13 ties rather than a dark powder characteristic of
14 other color concentrates.

15 The experiment was repeated (run 176) at a simi-
16 lar pH (6.8 dropping to 6.2 during ultrafiltration)
17 although the flux was only about $43 \text{ l/m}^2\text{-hr}$ during
18 ultrafiltration at constant volume and the mass
19 balance and recovery was poor. The pH was lowered to
20 about 3.4. Again, the freeze dried product was brown
21 in color. Both products were tested and found to be
22 of poor quality compared to the caramel color from
23 which they were derived. However, adjusting the pH
24 of a color concentrate solution to about 7 improved
25 its solubility and stability.

26 Therefore, the experiment was repeated one more
27 time (Run 202), but with the final pH of the product
28 left elevated. In this experiment, 348 pounds of
29 CP-2 caramel color was blended with 360 pounds of
30 soft dechlorinated water and adjusted to pH 7.1
31 with 4 liters of 50% NaOH to give a volume of about
32 77 gallons. This was ultrafiltered to remove
33 26 gallons of permeate and give a volume of
34 51 gallons. Warm water was then added continuously
35 at a rate equal to that of permeate removal so as to
36 keep the volume constant until 1827 pounds of per-
37 meate was collected at which time the warm water was
38 turned off and the retentate was concentrated by

1 ultrafiltration to a final volume of 35 gallons. In
2 theory, 99.1% of the low molecular weight materials
3 would have been removed.

4 In the ultrafiltration process, the initial flux
5 was 135 l/m²-hr, dropping to 40 at the end of the
6 initial concentration phase, rising to 200 during
7 continuous ultrafiltration and dropping to 40 at the
8 end of the process.

9 The recovery of color was 76%, of solids was
10 19.5% and of ultraviolet absorbance was 40%. The
11 freeze-dried powder was dark in color and had
12 excellent solubility properties.

13 These experiments with CP-1 and CP-2 strongly
14 demonstrate the importance of giving proper consid-
15 eration to the pH during processing. CP-1 and CP-2
16 would be virtually free of 4-MeI and, therefore, the
17 benefit is solely in the areas of processing rates
18 and product quality.

19 CCS

20 In two experiments (Runs 170 and 171), 149 pounds
21 of caramel color feedstock (Type CCS-1; solids, 66.4%
22 by weight; absorbance, 0.093 at 560 nm (0.1% w/v
23 dilution); N < 0.1%, S = 0.14%) was diluted with
24 250 pounds of soft dechlorinated water to a volume of
25 about 45 gallons. Ultrafiltration was begun and warm
26 water was continuously added at the same rate at
27 which permeate was removed. After 1860 pounds of
28 permeate (approx. 221 gallons) had been collected,
29 the retentate was concentrated by ultrafiltration in
30 the absence of any further water addition by collec-
31 tion 224 pounds (25 gallons) of additional permeate.
32 In theory, 99.7% of the low molecular weight mate-
33 rials would have been removed. The process pressures
34 were 135 psig inlet and 55 psig toward the end of the
35 run. The flow rate through the stack was 210 gpm. A
36 flow of 36 gpm was maintained as a return to the feed
37 tank from the recirculating retentate. The flux
38 started at 120 gph, gradually rose to 170 gph during

1 continuous ultrafiltration with water addition and
2 then dropped to 100 gph in the final concentration
3 phase. The total membrane process time was 1.5 hr.

4 In the ultrafiltration process, 22.2% of the
5 solids, 88.4% of the color and 38.4% of the
6 ultraviolet absorbance was recovered in the retentate.

7 The freeze-dried retentate (color concentrate)
8 had satisfactory properties when compared to the
9 caramel color from which it was derived.

10 AC-1

11 In two experiments (Runs 178 and 179), 149 pounds
12 of caramel color feedstock (Type AC-1; solids, 67.8%
13 by weight; absorbance, 0.142 at 560 nm (0.1% w/v
14 dilution); N = 2.2%, S = 0.3%) was diluted with
15 250 pounds of soft dechlorinated water to a volume of
16 about 45 gallons. This solution was warmed to 60°C
17 and ultrafiltered while at constant volume; warm
18 water was continuously added at the same rate at
19 which permeate was being removed until 1860 pounds of
20 permeate (approx. 221 gallons) was collected. The
21 retentate was concentrated by ultrafiltration in the
22 absence of any further water addition by collecting
23 224 pounds (25 gallons) of additional permeate. In
24 theory, 99.7% of the low molecular weight materials
25 would have been removed.

26 The process pressures were 160 psig inlet and
27 80 psig outlet. The flow rate through the stack was
28 210 gpm. A flow of 45 gpm was maintained as a return
29 to the feed tank from the recirculating retentate.
30 The flux in run 178 started at 76 gph, dropped to
31 63 gph at the end of the first concentration phase,
32 held constant during continuous ultrafiltration and
33 then dropped to 44 gph in the final concentration
34 phase. The total membrane process time was 2.9 hr.
35 The flux started and held constant at 60 gph in
36 Run 179 through the end of continuous ultrafiltration
37 and dropped to 50 gph at the end of the final
38 concentration phase.

1 In the ultrafiltration process, 28% of the
2 solids, 87% of the color and 50% of the ultraviolet
3 absorbance was recovered in the retentate.

4 The freeze-dried retentate (color concentrate)
5 had satisfactory properties when compared to the
6 caramel color from which it was derived.

7 AC-2

8 A sample of 332 pounds of caramel color feedstock
9 (Type AC-2; solids, 66.6% by weight; absorbance,
10 0.212 at 560 nm (0.1% w/v dilution); N = 3.5%,
11 S = 0.2%) was diluted with 624 pounds of soft de-
12 chlorinated water to a volume of about 75 gallons.
13 This solution was warmed to 60°C and ultrafiltered to
14 remove 370 pounds of permeate (approx. 43 gallons).
15 Ultrafiltration was then continued on the retentate
16 at constant volume, i.e., warm water was continuously
17 added at the same rate at which permeate was being
18 removed. After 1320 pounds of additional permeate
19 (approx. 157 gallons) had been collected, the reten-
20 tate was concentrated by ultrafiltration in the ab-
21 sence of any further water addition. In this manner,
22 314 pounds (37 gallons) of additional permeate were
23 collected. In theory, 97.7% of the low molecular
24 weight materials would have been removed. The
25 process pressures were 125 psig inlet and 70 psig
26 outlet, with the outlet pressure rising to 88 psig
27 toward the end of the run. The flow rate through the
28 stack was 210 gpm for most of the run. The flux
29 started at 140 gph, dropped to 80 gph at the end of
30 the first concentration phase, gradually rose to
31 180 gph during continuous ultrafiltration with water
32 addition and then dropped to 15 gph in the final
33 concentration phase. The total membrane process
34 time was 2.2 hours.

35 In the ultrafiltration process, 35% of the
36 solids, 83% of the color and 52% of the ultraviolet
37 absorbance was recovered in the retentate.

1 The freeze-dried retentate (color concentrate)
2 had satisfactory properties when compared to those of
3 the AC-2 caramel color from which it was derived.

4 AC-3

5 A sample of 332 pounds of caramel color feedstock
6 (Type AC-3; solids, 69.5% by weight; absorbance,
7 0.332 at 560 nm (0.1% w/v dilution); N = 3.7%,
8 S = 0.2% was diluted with 624 pounds of soft de-
9 chlorinated water to a volume of about 75 gallons.
10 This solution was warmed to 60°C and ultrafiltered at
11 constant volume (warm water was continuously added at
12 the same rate at which permeate was being removed)
13 until 1790 pounds of permeate (approx. 203 gallons)
14 was collected. The retentate was concentrated by
15 collecting 752 pounds (86 gallons) of additional per-
16 meate. In theory, 97.7% of the low molecular weight
17 materials would have been removed.

18 The process pressures were 133 psig inlet and
19 80 psig outlet, with the outlet pressure dropping to
20 71 psig toward the end of the run. The flow rate
21 through the stack was 220 gpm for most of the run and
22 dropped to 110 gpm in the final concentration phase.
23 The flux started at 80 gph, gradually rose to 83 gph
24 during continuous ultrafiltration with water addition
25 and then dropped to 13 gph in the final concentration
26 phase. The total membrane time was 3.2 hr.

27 In the ultrafiltration process, 34% of the
28 solids, 83% of the color and 36% of the ultraviolet
29 absorbance was recovered in the retentate.

30 The freeze-dried retentate had satisfactory
31 properties when compared to the parent caramel from
32 which it was derived. The quality of this color
33 concentrate was slightly better than those from AC-1
34 and AC-2. Therefore, since the total color obtained
35 would be higher per unit of caramel (because AC-3 is
36 darker), it might generally be preferable to utilize
37 AC-3 as the feedstock when an AC caramel color
38 concentrate is required.

1 Several studies on SAC-4 ultrafiltration which
2 required removal and replacement of some membranes
3 were interspersed with the AC-2 and AC-3 studies.
4 The DDS unit is designed such that the permeate from
5 each pair of membranes is collected in a separate,
6 clear permeate tube for transfer to the main col-
7 lecting tube. It was noticed that the permeate tubes
8 from new membranes contained darker permeate than
9 those from membranes which had been exposed to both
10 SAC and AC caramel colors. It appeared, therefore,
11 that the normal alkali wash was not adequate to clean
12 all traces of caramel color from the membranes and
13 that fouling of the membranes had occurred due to
14 interaction of AC components with SAC residues
15 (and/or SAC components with AC residues). A detailed
16 investigation was carried out which included cleaning
17 with various cleaning agents, then replacing some
18 membranes, and recirculating a solution of AC-3 at
19 60°C to determine if the cleaning process had fully
20 regenerated the membranes. It was found that high
21 concentrations of hypochlorite (500 ppm) or hydrogen
22 peroxide (500 ppm) would adequately clean the
23 membranes.

24 SAC-1

25 In two experiments (Runs 160 and 161) 149 pounds
26 of caramel color feedstock (Type SAC-1; solids, 66.3%
27 by weight; absorbance, 0.146 at 560 nm (0.1% w/v
28 dilution); N = 3.2% S = 5.1% dry basis) was diluted
29 with 250 pounds of soft dechlorinated water to a
30 volume of about 45 gallons. This solution was warmed
31 to 60°C and ultrafiltered at constant volume, (warm
32 water was continuously added at the same rate at
33 which permeate was being removed) until 1860 pounds
34 of permeate (approx. 221 gallons) was collected. The
35 retentate was concentrated by ultrafiltration in the
36 absence of any further water addition by collecting
37 242 pounds (29 gallons) of additional permeate. In
38 theory, 99.7% of the low molecular weight materials

1 would have been removed. The process pressures were
2 156 psig inlet and 76 psig outlet, with the outlet
3 pressure dropping to 70 psig toward the end of the
4 run. The flow rate through the stack was 200 gpm. A
5 flow of 45 gpm was maintained as a return to the feed
6 tank from the recirculating retentate. The flux
7 started at 215 gph, gradually rose to 400 gph during
8 continuous ultrafiltration with water addition and
9 then dropped to 300 gph in the final concentrate
10 phase. The total membrane process time was 0.9 hr.

11 In the ultrafiltration process, 15% of the
12 solids, 74% of the color and 27% of the ultraviolet
13 absorbance was recovered in the retentate.

14 The freeze-dried retentate (color concentrate)
15 when evaluated was found to be similar in most
16 properties to the SAC-1 from which it was derived
17 (good water and vinegar solubility, although slightly
18 hazy in alcohol). However, of the 10 caramel color
19 Types tested, this SAC-1 was the only caramel color
20 said to be a foaming caramel (which is said to be
21 useful in products such as Root Beer type soft
22 drinks). The foaming character had been markedly
23 reduced. Additional experiments designed to inves-
24 tigate this feature were performed and were earlier
25 described in Example V.

26 SAC-2

27 Examples of processing of SAC-2 are shown in
28 Example VII and elsewhere.

29 SAC-3

30 In two experiments (Runs 109 and 111), 434 pounds
31 of caramel color feedstock [Type SAC-3; solids, 62.4%
32 by weight; absorbance, 0.259 at 560 nm (0.1% w/v
33 dilution); N = 2.1%, S = 3.5%] was diluted with
34 650 pounds of soft dechlorinated water to a volume of
35 about 130 gallons. This solution was warmed to 60°C
36 and ultrafiltered to remove 800 pounds of permeate
37 (approx. 90 gallons). Forty gallons of water was
38 then added and ultrafiltration was continued

1 until 343 pounds of additional permeate (approx.
2 40 gallons) was collected. The previous stage was
3 repeated two more times. The retentate then was
4 concentrated by ultrafiltration in the absence of any
5 further water addition. In this manner, 154 pounds
6 (19 gallons) of additional permeate were collected.
7 In theory, 98.0% of the low molecular weight
8 materials would have been removed.

9 The process pressures were about 149 psig inlet
10 and 65 psig outlet, with the outlet pressure dropping
11 by about 4 psig toward the end of the run. The flow
12 rate through the stack was about 220 gpm for most of
13 Run 109 and dropped to 43 gpm in the final concentra-
14 tion phase. For Run 111, the flow through the stack
15 varied in each stage from 200 gpm at the start of a
16 stage to 160-170 gpm at the end, with a further drop
17 (but only to 150 gph) at the end of the process. A
18 flow of 45 gpm was maintained as a return to the feed
19 tank from the recirculating retentate for Run 109 and
20 55-60 gpm for Run 111. The flux started at 67 gph,
21 dropped to 32 gph at the end of the first concentra-
22 tion phase, gradually rose to 111 gph during ultra-
23 filtration and then dropped to 1.3 gph in the final
24 concentration phase for Run 109. The flux was about
25 one-half these values in Run 111 and therefore, the
26 total membrane process time was 3.7 hours for Run 109
27 and 6.1 hours for Run 111. For SAC-3 about 25% of
28 the solids, 97% of the color and 43% of the ultra-
29 violet absorbance was recovered in the retentate.

30 The freeze-dried retentate (color concentrate)
31 had satisfactory properties when compared to the
32 caramel color from which it was derived.

33 SAC-4

34 Examples of successful processing of SAC-4
35 caramel color are described in many previous Examples.

36 -----

37 -----

38 -----

1 After completion of this series of experiments,
2 the freeze-dried color concentrates were analyzed for
3 N and S content and color intensity in order to
4 determine whether these data might indicate that
5 color concentrates might be satisfactorily classified
6 by these analyses, as is done for the four proposed
7 Classes and 10 proposed Types of caramel color. The
8 data in Table XX show that a classification by
9 Classes using N and S may be possible, although more
10 data would be needed to define the ranges of analyses
11 for each class and to evaluate whether Types of color
12 concentrate can be distinguished. A summary of the
13 recoveries of the color, solids and ultraviolet
14 absorbance in this series of experiments is provided
15 in Table XXI.

TABLE XX
ANALYSES OF COLOR CONCENTRATES

<u>Parent Type</u>	<u>%N</u>	<u>%S</u>	<u>Absorbance (lg/liter) at 610nm</u>
CP-1	0.07	0.12	0.27
CP-2	0.0	0.16	0.30
CCS	0.0	0.26	0.35
AC-1	3.6	0.4	0.47
AC-2	5.6	0.2	0.67
AC-3	7.6	0.2	0.63
SAC-1	3.2	5.0	0.61
SAC-2	3.6	4.0	1.18
SAC-3	3.4	4.3	1.00
SAC-4	6.3	6.5	1.4

TABLE XXISUMMARY OF RECOVERIES IN COLOR CONCENTRATES

<u>Caramel Color Type</u>	<u>% Recovery</u>		
	<u>Color A₅₆₀</u>	<u>Solids</u>	<u>U.V. (A₂₈₀)</u>
CP-1	80	20	33
CP-2	76	20	40
CCS	88	22	38
AC-1	87	28	50
AC-2	83	35	52
AC-3	83	34	36
SAC-1	74	15	27
SAC-2	91	14	39
SAC-3	97	25	43
SAC-4	90	27	53

1 In view of the foregoing data, it will be seen
2 that only three relatively minor problems were
3 observed in processing all ten Types of caramel
4 colors; they have been discussed under the
5 appropriate Types and are summarized here.

6 1. When switching between Classes of caramel
7 colors it is extremely important to thoroughly clean
8 all residue of caramel color from the membranes.
9 This was noted when switching from an SAC-4 to an
10 AC-3 and back to SAC-4. After incorporation of
11 extended clean-up, within the limits allowed by the
12 membrane manufacturer, the problem was not again
13 encountered.

14 2. For some caramel colors, modifications to the
15 process are necessary in order to retain the proper
16 final properties of the color concentrate. For in-
17 stance, SAC-2 caramel color is more readily degraded
18 by extended processing times than is SAC-4; therefore
19 it would be beneficial to adjust the relative batch
20 size to membrane area for SAC-2 to reduce somewhat
21 the total processing time.

22 Another example of a process modification is
23 that CP-1 and CP-2 caramel colors were impractically
24 slow to process. Raising the pH of the caramel color
25 solution to about 7 greatly increased the permeate
26 flux, and reduced the processing time. Furthermore,
27 product from CP-2 was found to give an especially
28 hazy appearance in solution; leaving the final
29 product at about pH 7 at the end of processing
30 alleviated the problem.

31 3. The primary value of caramel colors is their
32 effect on the appearance and attractiveness of pro-
33 ducts, that is, the acceptability of products.
34 Evaluation of color concentrates indicates they ful-
35 fill the roles played by caramel colors in terms of
36 coloring of products. However, at a given color
37 intensity, only about 1/2 as much ultraviolet
38 absorbance is present. This has not been found to

1 interfere with beverage stability (e.g., resistance
2 to photo-oxidation). Some caramels contribute a
3 useful foaming property to beverages such as Root
4 Beer soft drink. This foaming capability only
5 partially survives the ultrafiltration process, and,
6 therefore, requires additional study of the value of
7 pH or ionic strength adjustment and of modifications
8 to the original process for manufacturing the foaming
9 SAC-1 Caramel Color.

10 -----

11 Although the process for the present invention
12 has been described in large part with reference to
13 particular operating conditions, equipment and the
14 like, it should be apparent that these specific
15 features are merely illustrative of the wide range of
16 variables within which the present process may be
17 performed. Moreover, obvious modifications of the
18 process of this invention are considered ascertain-
19 able by those skilled in the art without departing
20 from the scope and spirit of the invention, as
21 defined in the appended claims.

WHAT ~~THE~~ CLAIM IS:-

~~WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:~~

- 1 1. A process for treating Type CP-1 or CP-2
- 2 caramel color to prepare a caramel color concentrate
- 3 therefrom, comprising:
- 4 (a) subjecting a mixture of said caramel color
- 5 and water to ultrafiltration through a semi-permeable
- 6 membrane to yield a permeated fraction which passes
- 7 through the membrane and a retained fraction which
- 8 does not pass through the membrane, said retained
- 9 fraction comprising high molecular weight color
- 10 bodies and water in an amount reduced from that
- 11 present in the original mixture of caramel color and
- 12 water;
- 13 (b) adding water to the retained fraction and
- 14 subjecting the resultant mixture to ultrafiltration
- 15 through a semi-permeable membrane to yield a per-
- 16 meated fraction which passes through the membrane and
- 17 a retained fraction which does not pass through the
- 18 membrane, said retained fraction comprising high
- 19 molecular weight color bodies and water in an amount
- 20 reduced from that present in the resultant mixture;
- 21 and
- 22 (c) subjecting the retained fraction of
- 23 step (b), without any significant addition of water
- 24 thereto, to ultrafiltration through a semi-permeable
- 25 membrane to yield a permeated fraction which passes
- 26 through the membrane and a retained concentrated
- 27 product fraction, which does not pass through the
- 28 membrane, said retained concentrated product fraction
- 29 comprising high molecular weight color bodies and

1 water in an amount reduced from that present in the
2 retained fraction of step (b), wherein the pH of said
3 mixture of caramel color and water, said resultant
4 mixture and said retained fraction is maintained
5 above 6.5 during said ultrafiltration.

1 2. A process for treating caramel color to
2 prepare a caramel color concentrate therefrom,
3 comprising:

4 (a) subjecting a mixture of caramel color and
5 water to ultrafiltration through a semi-permeable
6 membrane to yield a permeated fraction which passes
7 through the membrane and a retained fraction which
8 does not pass through the membrane, said retained
9 fraction comprising high molecular weight color
10 bodies; and

11 (b) subjecting said retained fraction of
12 step (a), without any significant addition of water
13 thereto, to ultrafiltration through a semi-permeable
14 membrane to yield a permeated fraction which passes
15 through the membrane and a retained concentrated
16 product fraction which does not pass through the
17 membrane, said retained concentrated product fraction
18 comprising high molecular weight color bodies and
19 water in an amount reduced from that present in said
20 retained fraction of step (a), the ultrafiltration of
21 step (b) being conducted in the presence of added
22 materials sufficient to increase the ionic strength
23 of the retained fraction being subjected to
24 ultrafiltration therein.

1 3. A process according to claim 2 wherein
2 said added materials are such that the pH of the
3 retained fraction being subjected to ultrafiltration
4 in step (b) remains substantially unchanged from its
5 value prior to addition of said materials.



1 4. A process according to claim 2 wherein
2 said added materials are such that the pH of the
3 retained fraction being subjected to ultrafiltration
4 is altered from the value it possessed prior to
5 addition of said materials.

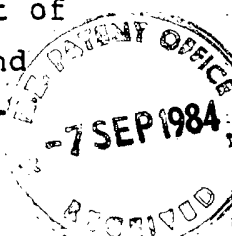
1 5. A process for treating caramel color to
2 prepare a caramel color concentrate therefrom,
3 comprising:

4 (a) subjecting a mixture of caramel color
5 and water to ultrafiltration through a semi-permeable
6 membrane to yield a permeated fraction which passes
7 through the membrane and a retained fraction which
8 does not pass through the membrane, said retained
9 fraction comprising high molecular weight color
10 bodies and water in an amount reduced from that
11 present in the original mixture of caramel color
12 and water;

13 (b) adding water to the retained fraction
14 and subjecting the resultant mixture to ultrafiltra-
15 tion through a semi-permeable membrane to yield a
16 permeated fraction which passes through the membrane
17 and a retained fraction which does not pass through
18 the membrane, said retained fraction comprising high
19 molecular weight color bodies and water in an amount
20 reduced from that present in the resultant mixture;

21 (c) substantially maintaining the amount of
22 water in said retained fraction produced in (b) and
23 adding to said retained fraction one or more mate-
24 rials sufficient to increase the ionic strength
25 thereof; and

26 (d) subjecting the resultant retained frac-
27 tion of step (c) to ultrafiltration through a semi-
28 permeable membrane to yield a permeated fraction
29 which passes through the membrane and a retained
30 concentrated product fraction which does not pass
31 through the membrane, said retained concentrated
32 product fraction comprising high molecular weight



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1 color bodies and water in an amount reduced from
2 that present in the resultant retained fraction of
3 step (c).

1 6. A process for treating caramel color to
2 prepare a caramel color concentrate therefrom,
3 comprising preparing a mixture of caramel color and
4 water, said mixture having a solids concentration of
5 at least 15% by weight; and subjecting said
6 mixture to ultrafiltration through a semi-permeable
7 membrane/and a retained fraction which does not pass
8 through the membrane, said retained fraction com-
9 prising high molecular weight color bodies and water
10 in an amount reduced from that present in said mix-
11 ture of caramel color and water, wherein the pH
12 and/or ionic strength of said mixture of caramel
13 color and water subjected to ultrafiltration is
14 regulated so as to obtain desirable processing and
15 product attributes.

1 7. A process for treating caramel color to
2 prepare a caramel color concentrate therefrom having
3 reduced quantities of low molecular weight materials,
4 comprising preparing a mixture of caramel color and
5 water and adding thereto materials effective to
6 increase the ionic strength of said mixture without
7 substantially affecting its pH, and subjecting the
8 resulting mixture to ultrafiltration through a semi-
9 permeable membrane to yield a permeated fraction
10 which passes through the membrane and a retained
11 fraction with does not pass through the membrane,
12 said retained fraction comprising high molecular
13 weight color bodies and water in an amount reduced
14 from that present in the mixture of caramel color and
15 water.

1 8. A process for treating caramel color to
2 prepare a caramel color concentrate therefrom having



1 reduced quantities of low molecular weight materials,
2 comprising:

3 (a) preparing a mixture of caramel color
4 and water and adding to said mixture materials effec-
5 tive to increase the ionic strength thereof without
6 substantially affecting its pH;

7 (b) subjecting the mixture of (a) to ultra-
8 filtration through a semi-permeable membrane to yield
9 a permeated fraction which passes through the mem-
10 brane and a retained fraction which does not pass
11 through the membrane, said retained fraction com-
12 prising high molecular weight color bodies and water
13 in an amount reduced from that present in the mixture
14 of (a);

15 (c) adding water to the retained fraction
16 and subjecting the resultant mixture to ultrafiltra-
17 tion through a semi-permeable membrane to yield a
18 permeated fraction which passes through the membrane
19 and a retained fraction which does not pass through
20 the membrane, said retained fraction comprising high
21 molecular weight color bodies and water in an amount
22 reduced from that present in the resultant mixture;
23 and

24 (d) subjecting the retained fraction of
25 step (c), without any significant additon of water
26 thereto, to ultrafiltration through a semi-permeable
27 membrane to yield a permeated fraction which passes
28 through the membrane and a retained concentrated
29 product fraction which does not pass through the
30 membrane, said retained concentrated product fraction
31 comprising high molecular weight color bodies and
32 water in an amount reduced from that present in the
33 retained fraction of step (c).

9. A process for the treatment of caramel color substantially as described herein with reference to any one of the embodiments shown in Figures 1 to 5 of the accompanying drawings.

10. Caramel color concentrate prepared by a method substantially as specifically described herein in any one of the Examples.

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Fig. 1.

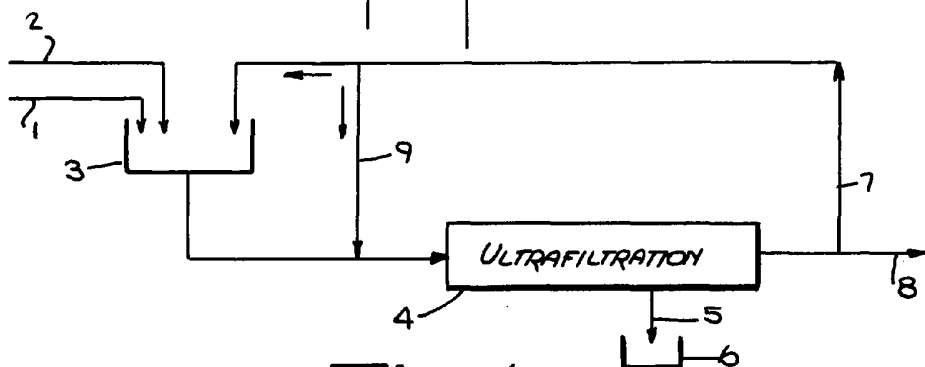


Fig. 4.

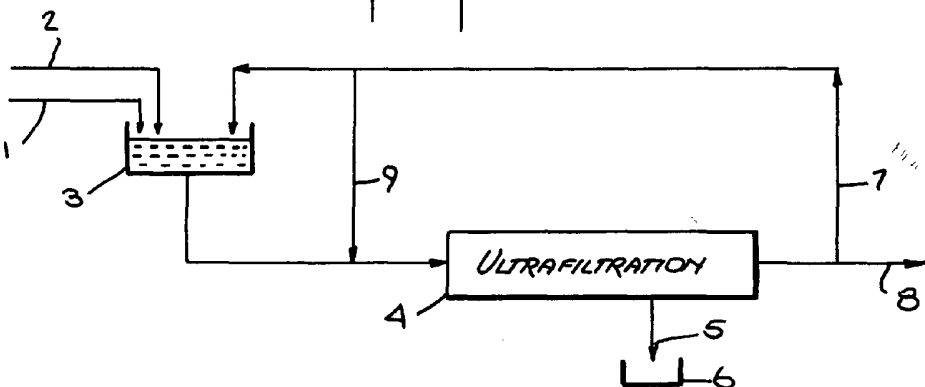
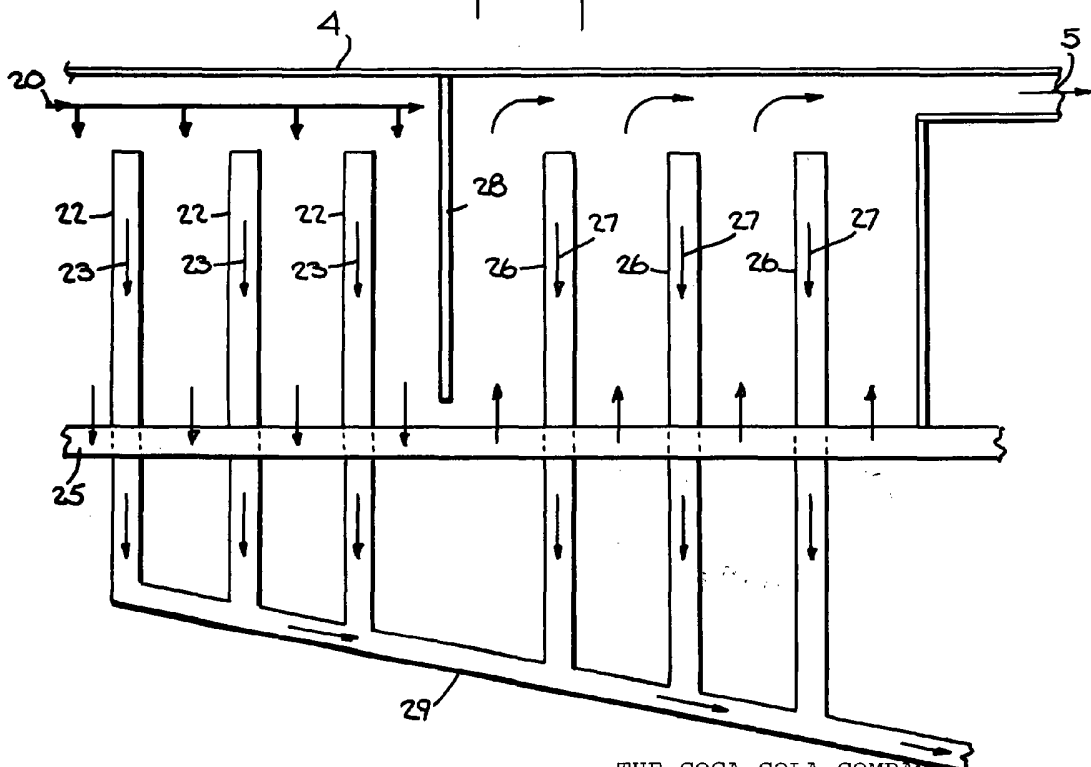


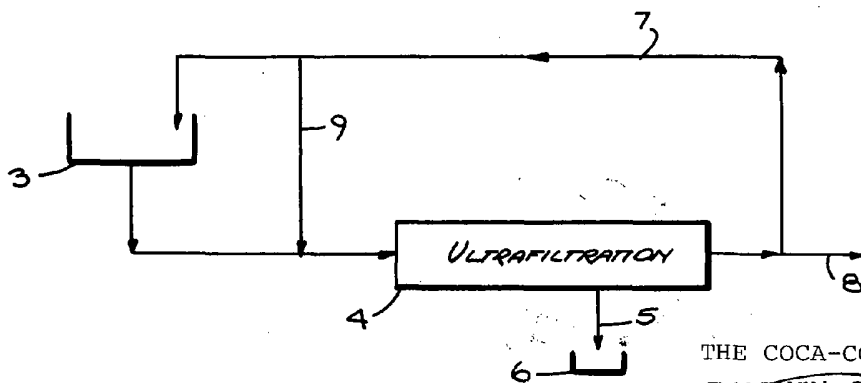
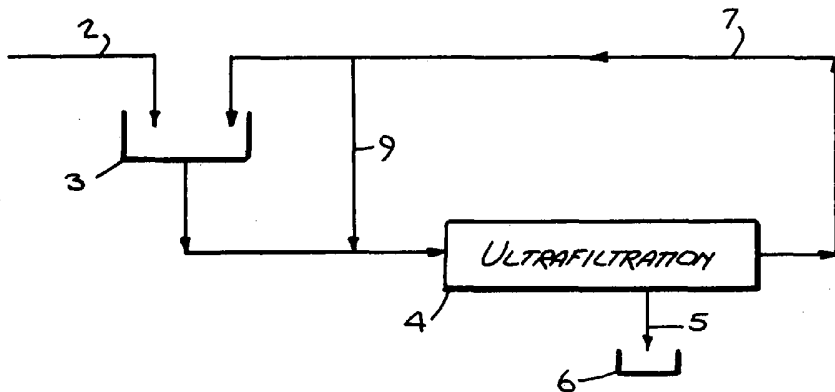
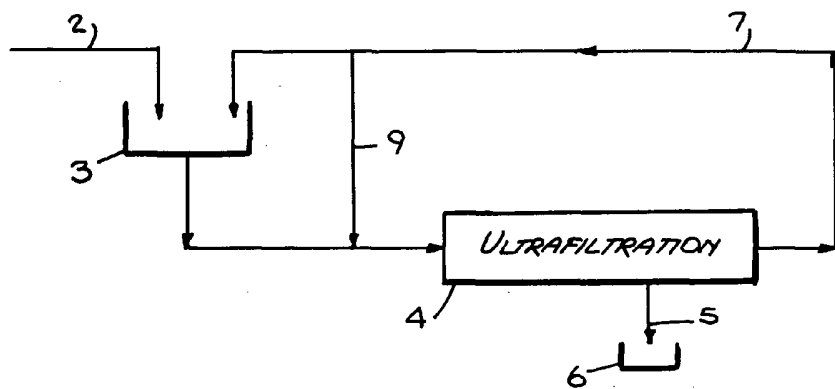
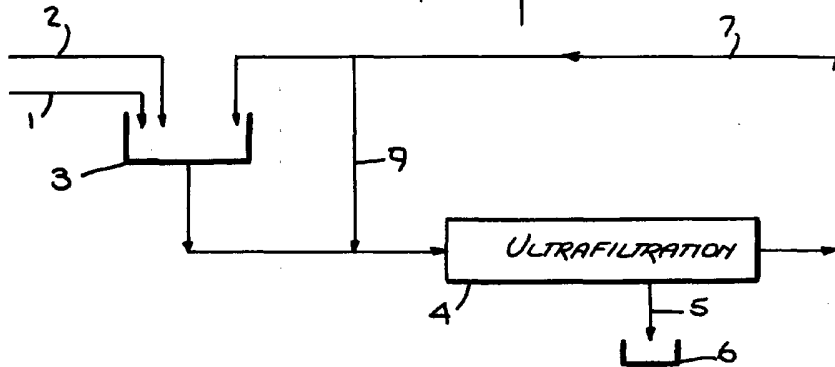
Fig. 5.



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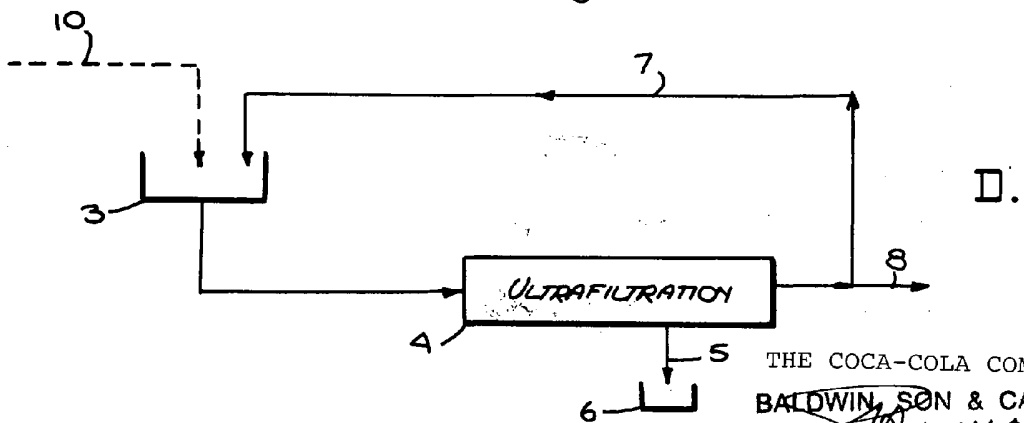
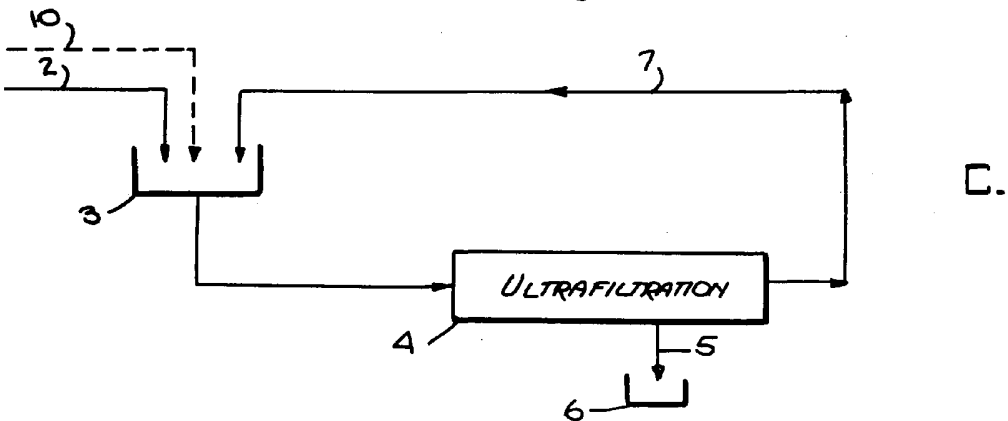
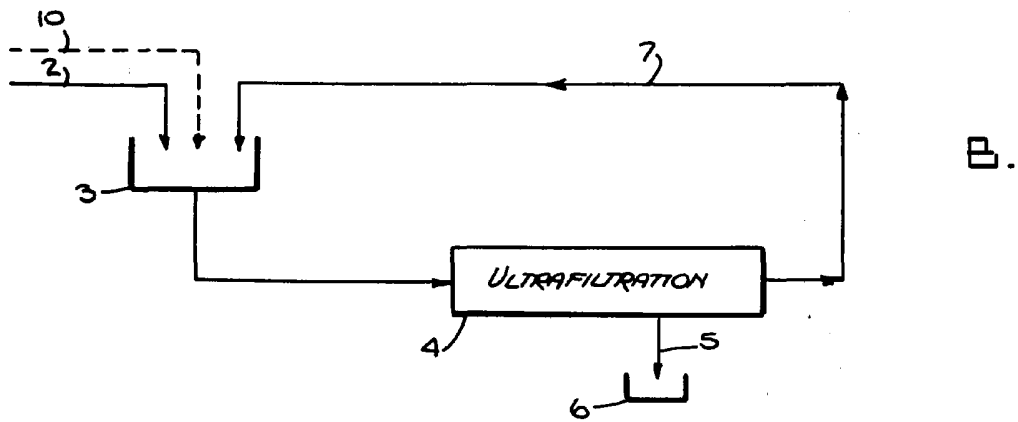
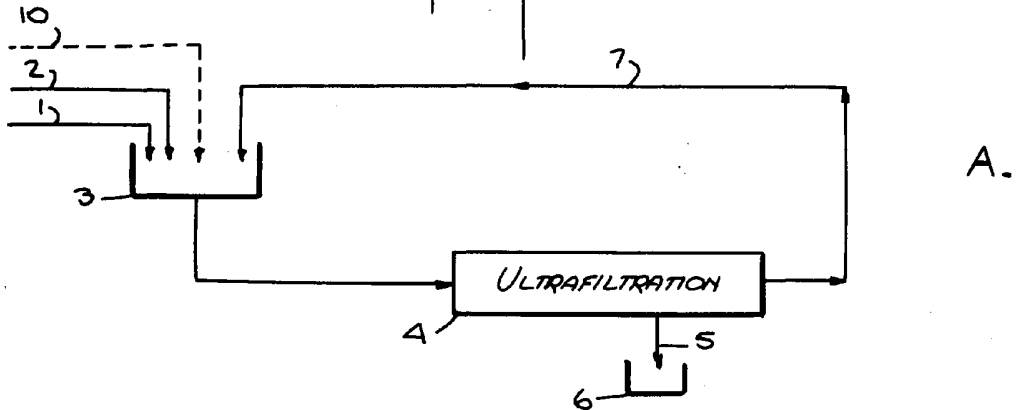
Fig. 2.



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Fig. 3.



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