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Jointly elaborated by: Université D'Aix Marseille



Superheated water – a powerful tool for biomass valorization

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Agri-food Waste Management for Sustainable bio-economy through Higher Education curricula and upskilling

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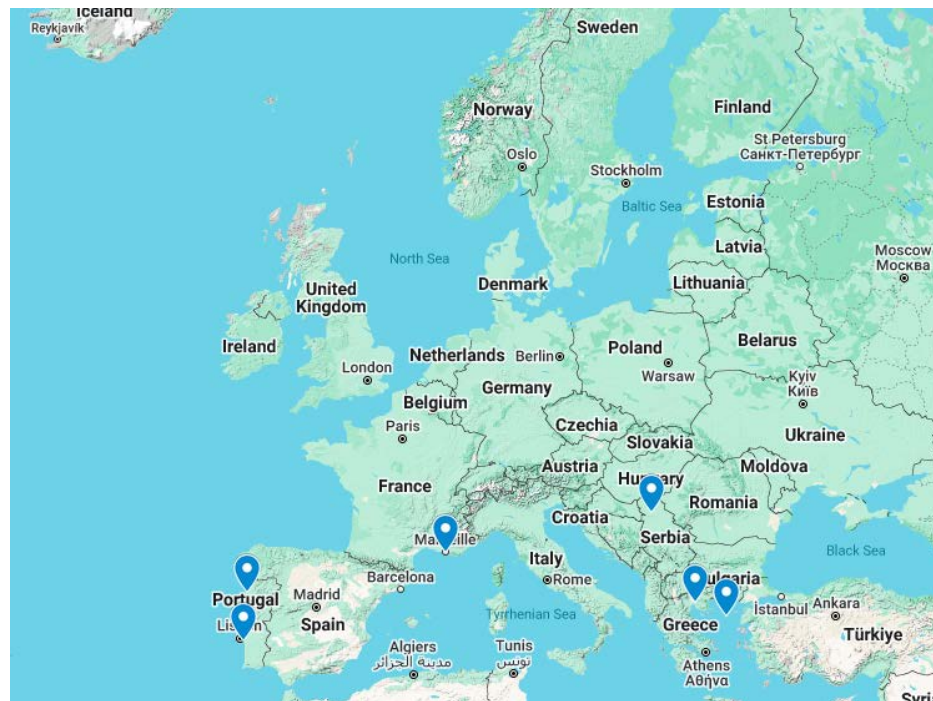
Goals

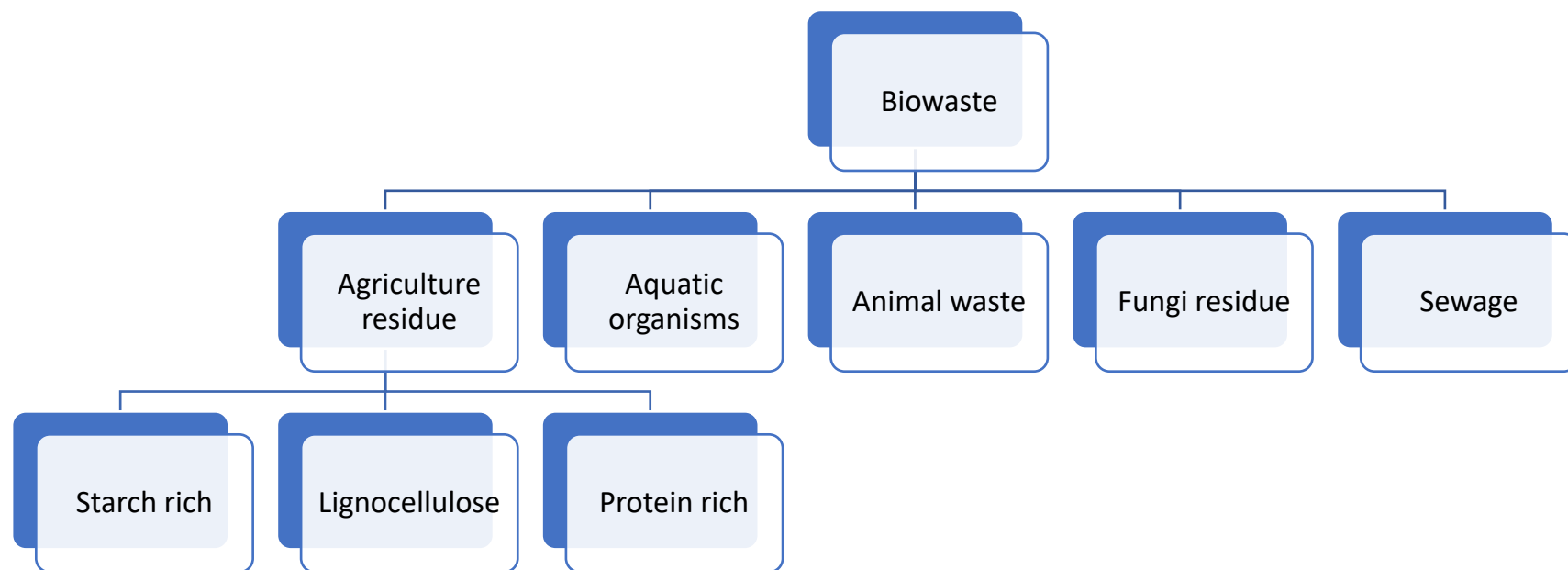
AGRIMA aims to foster universities' **capacity building** for the **green transition** through **innovative practices** and **higher education curricula updating** in **agri-food waste management** for the **circular bioeconomy**.

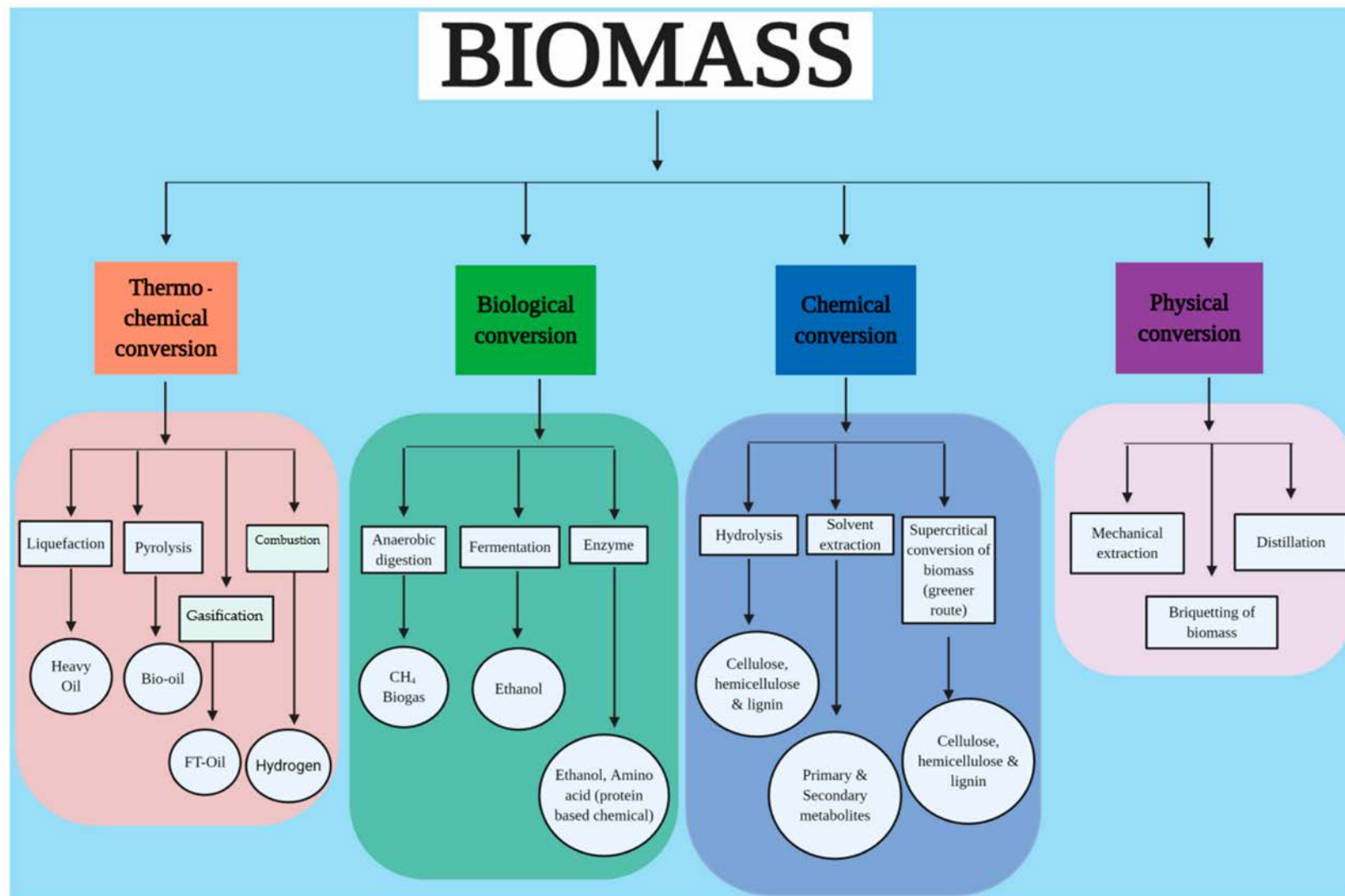
AGRIMA addresses:

- 1. Advancing pedagogical methods** for industrial agri-food waste valorisation **based on business-academia synergies**.
- 2. Integrating citizen science** in bio-economy-enhanced waste valorisation as a means of **civic engagement and environmental advocacy**.

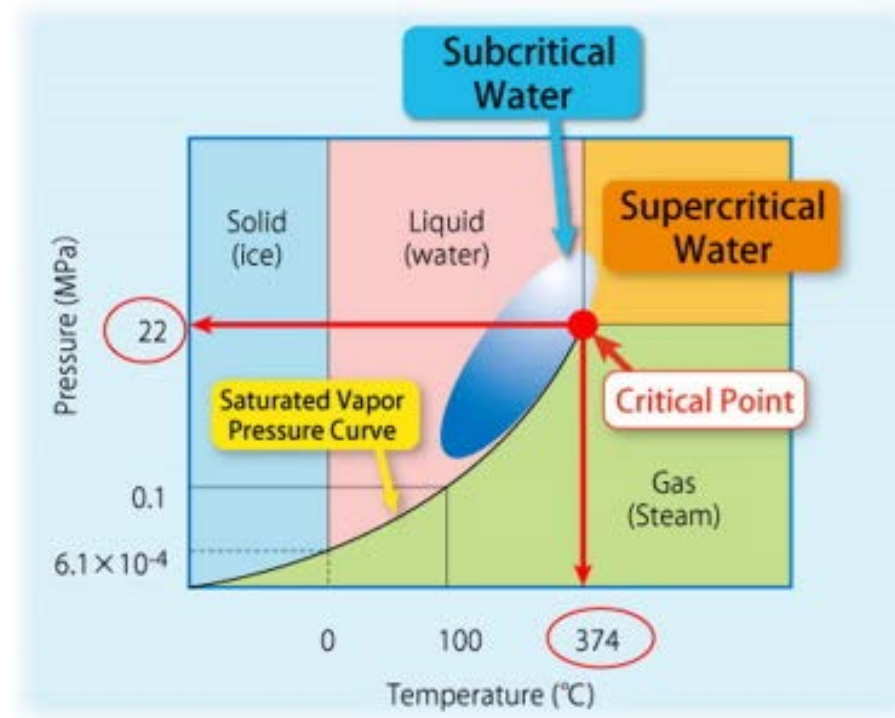
Partners

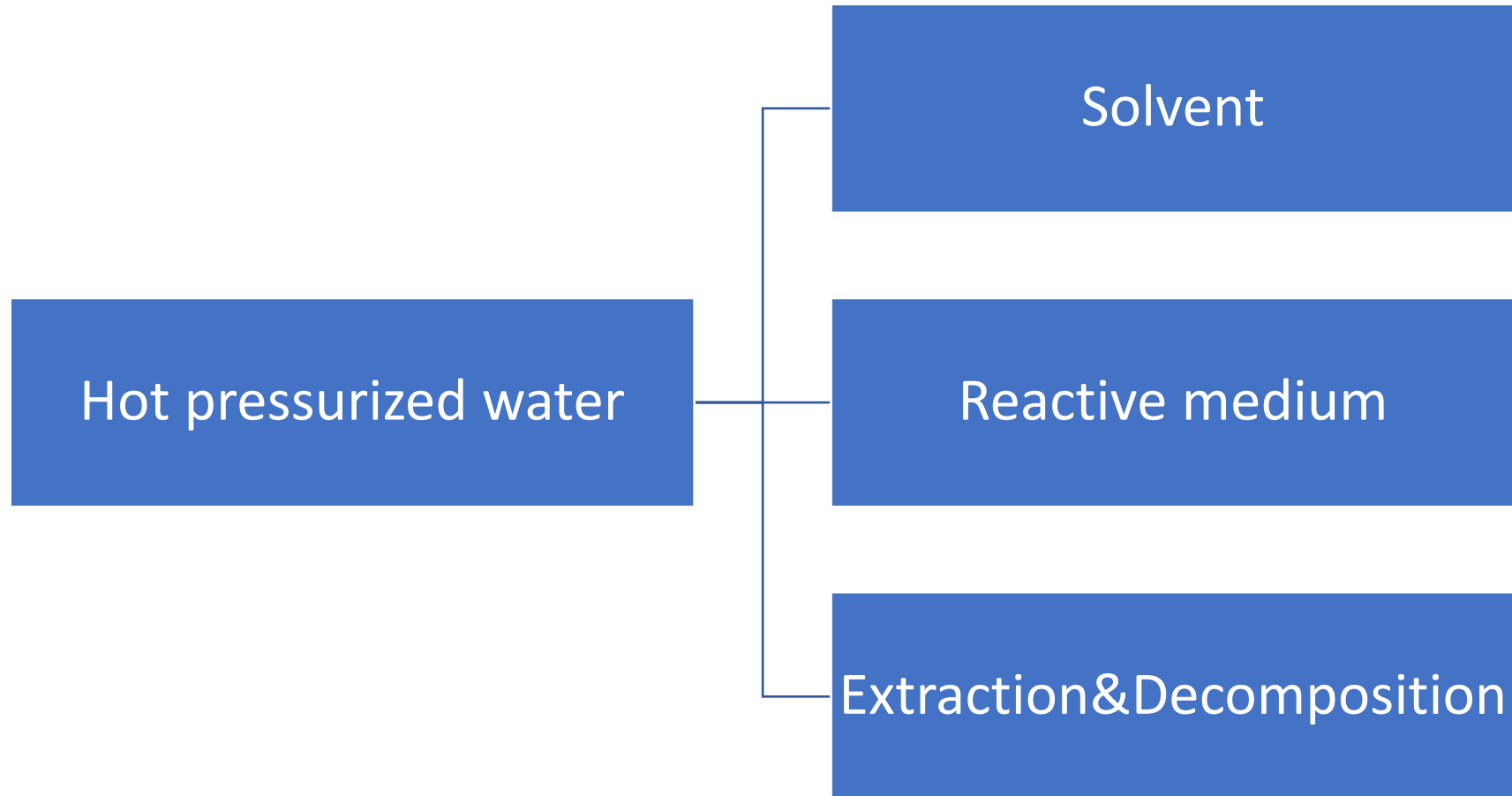






Sub- and supercritical water





Added-value compounds by sub-/supercritical water

- Organic acids: acetic, lactic, formic etc.
- Amino acids
- Pectin, oligosaccharides, sugars, erythrose
- Fatty acids
- Essential oils
- Compounds of pharmacological interest:
 - Chitin
 - Chitosan
 - Glucosamine
 - Caffeine
 - Saponins
 - Anti-oxidant, anti-inflammatory, anti-microbial, neuroprotective, antidiabetic compounds, etc.

Subcritical water as a solvent

- Water at room temperature - good solvent for polar compounds
- Polarity decreases drastically with heating
- Solubility of non-polar compounds increases for one order of magnitude with temperature increase of 50 °C
- At 350 °C solubility of benzo(e)pyrene increases 25 000 000 fold
- Solubility of nerol: 0.02 % (25°C); 0.5 % (200°C)

The reactivity of sub- and supercritical water

- Alkylation reaction (Friedel-Crafts reaction)
- Condensation reactions (Claisen-Schmidt condensation)
- Coupling reactions
- Cyclization reactions
- Decarboxylation reactions
- Diels-Alder reactions
- Disproportionation reactions
- Elimination reactions
- Ene reactions
- Isomerization reactions
- Hydrogenation/Dehydrogenation reactions
- Hydrolysis
- Oxidation
- Rearrangement reactions
- Transformation reactions
- Maillard reactions
- Caramelization reactions

Bioactivity of the chokeberry stems extracts obtained by subcritical water (130 °C, 20 min, 35 bars)

Antioxidant activity (IC ₅₀ values)	
DPPH assay (mg/mL)	0.10±0.02*
Reducing Power assay (mg/mL)	1.25±0.03
Enzyme-inhibitory activity	
α-Amylase inhibition (mmol ACAE/g) ^a	0.59±0.01
α-Glucosidase inhibition (mmol ACAE/g) ^a	7.50±0.32
Tyrosinase-inhibition (mg KAE/g) ^b	15.87±3.82
Elastase inhibition (mmol/ CAE g) ^c	3.12±0.39
AchE Inhibition (mg GALAE/g) ^d	0.71±0.03

*mean ± 2SD; ^aACAE - Acarbose equivalents; ^bKAE - kojic acid equivalents.; ^cCAE – Catechin equivalent; ^dGALAE – Galantamine equivalent



Cvetanović, A., Švarc-Gajić, J., Zeković Z., Mašković, P., Djurović, S., Zengin, G., Delerue-Matos, C., Lozano-Sanchez, J., Jakisić, A. (2017): Chemical and biological insights on aronia stems extracts obtained by different extraction techniques: From wastes to functional products. Journal of Supercritical Fluids, 128, 173–181.

Subcritical water as a reactive medium

- Pesticides (tembotrione, clomazone): 200 °C, 0.1% H₂O₂, 30 min
- Pharmaceuticals (ciprofloxacin, 17 α -ethinyl estradiol): 200 °C, 0.001 mol/l of KMnO₄, 30 min
- Mycotoxins (zearalenone, deoxynivalenol, fumonisin B1): 200 °C, 100 min

Švarc-Gajić, J.; Brezo-Borjan, T.; Jakšić, S.; Despotović, V.; Finčur, N.; Bognár, S.; Jovanović, D.; Šojić Merkulov, D. Decomposition of Organic Pollutants in Subcritical Water under Moderate Conditions. Processes 2024, 12, 1293. <https://doi.org/10.3390/pr12071293>

Oil-seed cakes

- Pumpkin seed cake
- Flax seed cake
- Hemp seed cake



160°C
1 h
20 bars N₂, CO₂
water:sample = 1: 30
3 Hz



Amino-acids
Polyphenolics
Minerals

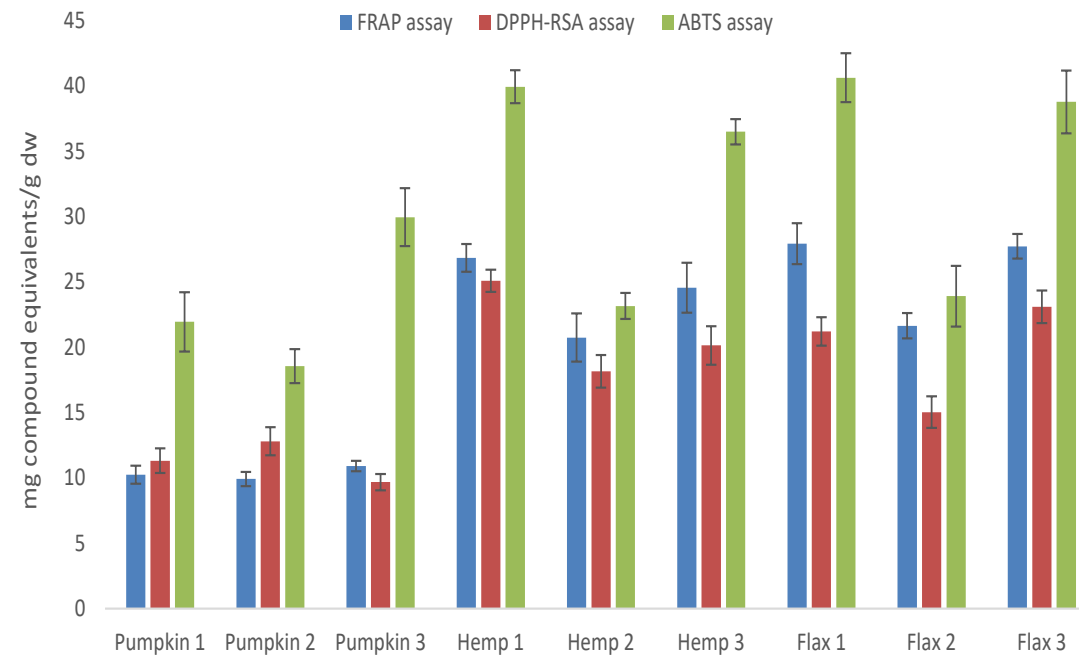
Švarc-Gajić, J., Morais, S., Delerue-Matos, C., Vieira, E., Spigno, G. Valorization potential of oilseed cakes by subcritical water extraction (2020): Applied Sciences, 10, 8815; doi:10.3390/app10248815

Sample	Atmosphere	EY [%]	Total lipid content [g/100 g dry extract]	Total protein content [g/100 g dry extract]
	N ₂	57.51±0.19	28.54±0.18	1.94±0.04
Pumpkin	N ₂ + 0.05 mol/l HCl	60.10±0.18	48.55±0.23	3.14±0.06
	CO ₂	57.13±0.19	38.87±0.22	4.87±0.08
	N ₂	42.07±0.18	10.10±0.21	4.83±0.06
Hemp	N ₂ + 0.05 mol/l HCl	40.45±0.18	50.75±0.21	6.59±0.09
	CO ₂	44.23±0.17	32.04±0.18	6.83±0.09
	N ₂	50.33±0.18	6.97±0.10	1.30±0.01
Flax	N ₂ + 0.05 mol/l HCl	53.02±0.15	32.87±0.18	2.52±0.02
	CO ₂	51.73±0.17	23.49±0.17	2.84±0.03

Sample	TPC [g GAE/100 g]	TFC [g RU/100 g]
Pumpkin 1	3.26±0.10	0.45±0.0001
Pumpkin 2	3.79±0.02	0.36±0.0023
Pumpkin 3	3.19±0.01	0.39±0.0129
Hemp 1	3.68±0.04	1.03±0.0038
Hemp 2	2.78±0.07	0.41±0.0023
Hemp 3	3.62±0.02	0.58±0.0099
Flax 1	3.56±0.08	0.93±0.0099
Flax 2	2.93±0.02	0.54±0.0008
Flax 3	3.98±0.04	0.70±0.0973

TPC – Total phenols content; TFC – Total flavonoids content

1-SWE: N₂, 1:30, 160°C, 20 bar, 1 h; 2-SWE: N₂, 0.05 mol/l HCl, 1:30, 160°C, 20 bar, 1 h; 3-CO₂, 1:30, 160°C, 20 bar, 1 h.



1-SWE: N₂, 1:30, 160°C, 20 bar, 1 h; 2-SWE: N₂, 0.05 mol/l HCl, 1:30, 160°C, 20 bar, 1 h; 3-CO₂, 1:30, 160°C, 20 bar, 1 h.

Sample	K [mg/100 g]	Na [mg/100 g]	Ca [mg/100 g]	P [mg/100 g]
Pumpkin 1	24.89±0.13	0.46±0.03	3.72±0.06	2.29±0.03
Pumpkin 2	24.59±0.13	0.65±0.03	5.26±0.03	2.45±0.02
Pumpkin 3	27.90±0.11	1.53±0.06	6.45±0.05	2.36±0.02
Average ± 2 SD	25.79±0.12	0.88±0.04	5.14±0.05	2.37±0.02
Hemp 1	49.01±0.11	2.14±0.09	6.03±0.04	4.05±0.02
Hemp 2	52.50±0.11	2.87±0.08	7.86±0.08	4.21±0.02
Hemp 3	48.73±0.12	3.35±0.04	7.97±0.09	4.53±0.03
Average ± 2 SD	50.08±0.11	2.78±0.07	7.29±0.07	4.27±0.02
Flax 1	49.01±0.10	6.16±0.05	5.05±0.07	1.81±0.01
Flax 2	57.09±0.10	3.72±0.08	10.19±0.11	1.99±0.01
Flax 3	38.05±0.12	4.71±0.07	8.81±0.09	2.05±0.02
Average ± 2 SD	48.05±0.11	4.86±0.07	8.02±0.09	1.95±0.01

1-SWE: N₂, 1:30, 160°C, 20 bar, 1 h; 2-SWE: N₂, 0.05 mol/l HCl, 1:30, 160°C, 20 bar, 1 h; 3-CO₂, 1:30, 160°C, 20 bar, 1 h.

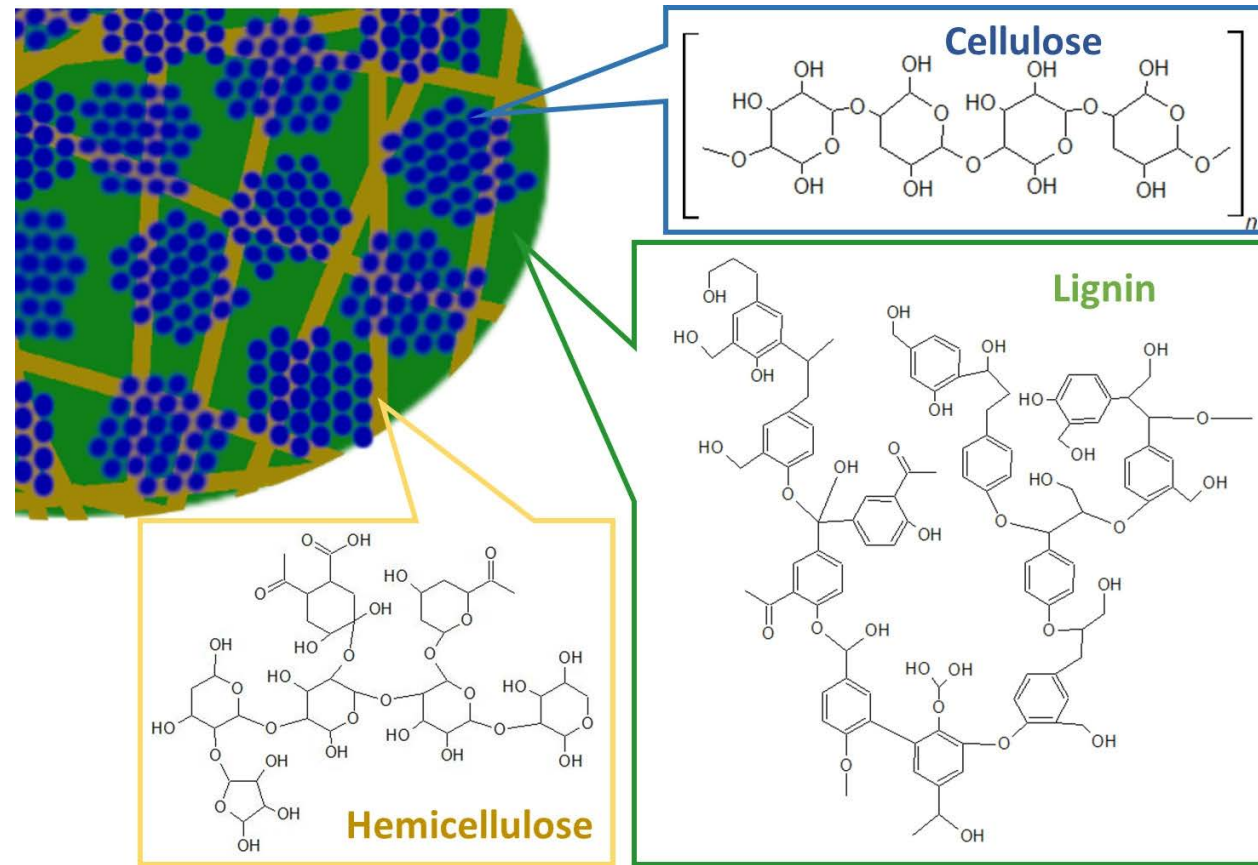
AA	Pumpkin 1 ¹	Pumpkin 2	Pumpkin 3	Hemp 1	Hemp 2	Hemp 3	Flax 1	Flax 2	Flax 3
Asp#	0.06 ± <0.01	0.53 ± 0.02	4.43 ± 0.12	49.17 ± 1.26	70.45 ± 0.87	72.67 ± 0.14	3.81 ± 0.27	6.12 ± 0.45	5.00 ± 0.34
Glu#	2.50 ± 0.14	5.40 ± 0.08	7.34 ± 0.15	44.58 ± 0.14	41.98 ± 0.05	77.86 ± 0.19	3.03 ± 0.08	6.53 ± 0.14	5.88 ± 0.15
Ser	0.10 ± <0.01	0.19 ± <0.01	0.63 ± <0.01	15.84 ± 0.46	19.70 ± 0.02	26.50 ± 0.02	0.96 ± 0.03	2.14 ± 0.10	3.83 ± 0.05
Thr•	1.01 ± 0.03	1.54 ± 0.05	5.11 ± 0.01	8.94 ± 0.02	28.34 ± 0.01	34.70 ± 0.12	1.18 ± 0.06	2.32 ± 0.05	4.09 ± 0.08
His•	0.81 ± 0.02	1.44 ± 0.06	5.55 ± 0.03	6.09 ± 0.08	13.38 ± 0.01	20.94 ± 0.01	0.77 ± 0.04	1.79 ± 0.02	2.63 ± 0.05
Gly#	0.50 ± <0.01	1.00 ± 0.02	4.82 ± 0.02	0.02 ± <0.01	0.07 ± <0.01	0.20 ± <0.01	0.73 ± 0.02	4.71 ± 0.06	6.08 ± 0.05
Gln	0.74 ± 0.01	1.19 ± 0.01	5.31 ± 0.04	0.05 ± <0.01	0.99 ± <0.01	2.60 ± 0.01	0.70 ± 0.01	1.69 ± 0.01	2.87 ± 0.01
Asn	0.01 ± <0.01	0.03 ± <0.01	0.15 ± <0.01	1.35 ± <0.01	0.53 ± <0.01	0.55 ± <0.01	0.01 ± <0.01	0.08 ± <0.01	0.71 ± 0.01
Arg•	0.99 ± 0.03	1.73 ± 0.03	3.69 ± 0.04	39.27 ± 0.26	85.14 ± 1.03	89.01 ± 0.05	0.92 ± 0.08	3.58 ± 0.11	5.17 ± 0.07
Ala#	0.31 ± 0.03	0.97 ± 0.02	2.09 ± 0.01	10.77 ± 0.08	15.82 ± 0.03	17.83 ± 0.01	0.20 ± 0.02	0.76 ± 0.02	1.28 ± 0.02
Tyr	0.81 ± 0.04	1.38 ± 0.02	3.18 ± 0.01	1.50 ± 0.01	1.05 ± <0.01	2.73 ± 0.01	0.82 ± 0.03	1.92 ± 0.01	4.86 ± 0.01
Lys•	4.81 ± 0.04	7.66 ± 0.05	12.37 ± 0.10	10.68 ± 0.14	15.88 ± 0.04	16.46 ± 0.01	0.94 ± 0.02	2.12 ± 0.04	2.78 ± 0.03
Val•	1.80 ± 0.01	0.47 ± 0.01	1.54 ± 0.02	2.85 ± 0.04	5.54 ± 0.02	4.10 ± 0.01	0.26 ± 0.01	0.35 ± <0.01	1.79 ± 0.02
Met•	0.76 ± 0.01	0.32 ± 0.02	1.87 ± <0.01	1.35 ± 0.05	0.99 ± 0.01	0.20 ± <0.01	0.74 ± 0.05	1.76 ± 0.02	3.52 ± 0.01
Trp•	0.17 ± <0.01	0.41 ± <0.01	1.02 ± <0.01	0.29 ± <0.01	0.46 ± <0.01	0.48 ± <0.01	0.23 ± <0.01	0.86 ± <0.01	1.25 ± 0.03
Phe•	1.20 ± 0.01	2.14 ± 0.03	3.01 ± 0.01	1.93 ± 0.01	1.85 ± 0.01	3.35 ± 0.01	1.21 ± 0.01	2.49 ± 0.03	2.95 ± 0.01
Ile•	0.64 ± 0.04	1.07 ± 0.04	2.78 ± 0.05	4.30 ± <0.01	6.66 ± 0.02	7.31 ± 0.02	0.85 ± 0.04	1.97 ± 0.01	2.19 ± 0.02
Leu•	0.74 ± 0.05	1.26 ± 0.08	5.41 ± 0.06	13.19 ± 0.08	9.62 ± 0.05	24.18 ± 0.03	1.18 ± 0.03	2.87 ± 0.05	5.31 ± 0.07
Hyp	0.37 ± 0.02	0.94 ± 0.01	2.82 ± 0.03	0.63 ± <0.01	0.46 ± <0.01	1.37 ± 0.02	0.20 ± 0.01	0.73 ± 0.02	1.48 ± 0.01
Pro	2.07 ± 0.02	1.89 ± 0.02	1.96 ± 0.05	6.71 ± 0.01	3.10 ± <0.01	6.49 ± 0.05	0.10 ± <0.01	1.26 ± 0.03	1.56 ± 0.02
Σ AA	20.40 ± 0.58	32.56 ± 0.77	75.09 ± 2.91	219.50 ± 1.55	321.99 ± 1.05	409.51 ± 1.12	18.84 ± 0.59	46.04 ± 1.01	65.23 ± 0.65
% EAA•	58.58 ± 0.45	53.13 ± 1.02	51.49 ± 0.47	22.60 ± 0.58	25.69 ± 0.89	27.28 ± 0.54	39.06 ± 0.20	35.91 ± 0.79	40.66 ± 0.74
% FAA#	16.56 ± 0.75	24.30 ± 0.52	24.88 ± 0.42	47.63 ± 0.50	39.85 ± 0.89	41.16 ± 0.74	41.20 ± 0.38	39.35 ± 0.40	27.95 ± 0.52

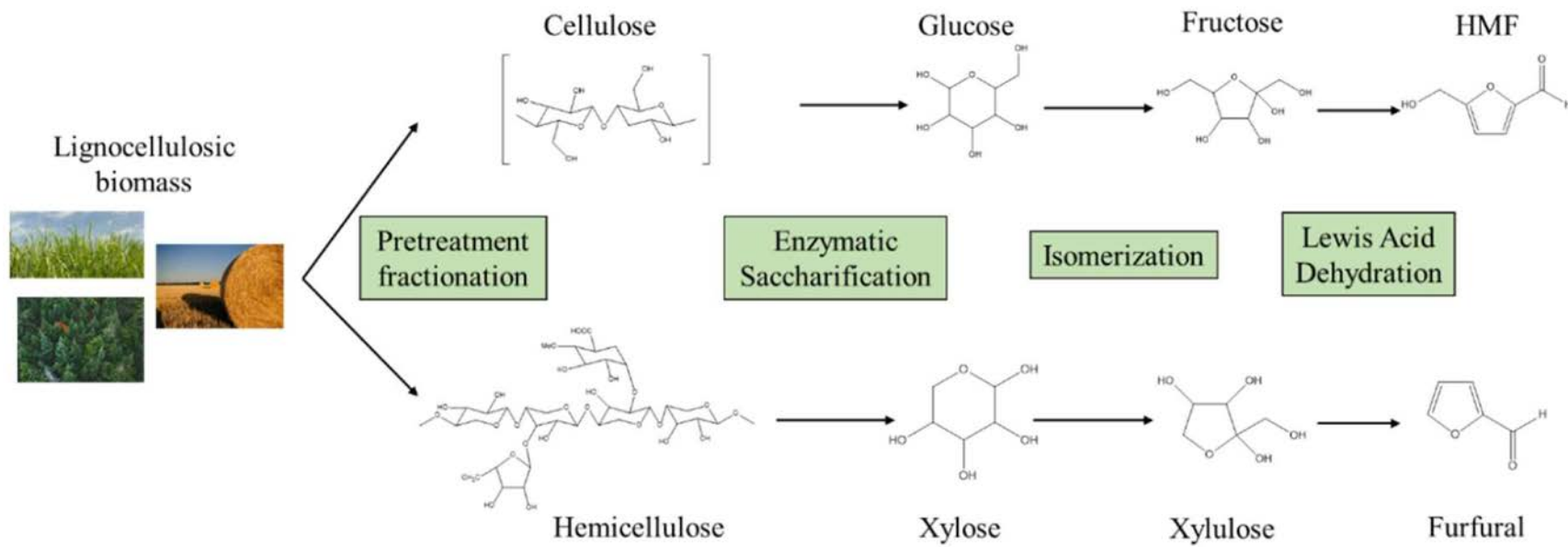
¹1-SWE: N₂, 1:30, 160°C, 20 bar, 1 h; 2-SWE: N₂, 0.05 mol/l HCl, 1:30, 160°C, 20 bar, 1 h; 3-CO₂, 1:30, 160°C, 20 bar, 1 h.

Values are mean ± SD (n = 4)

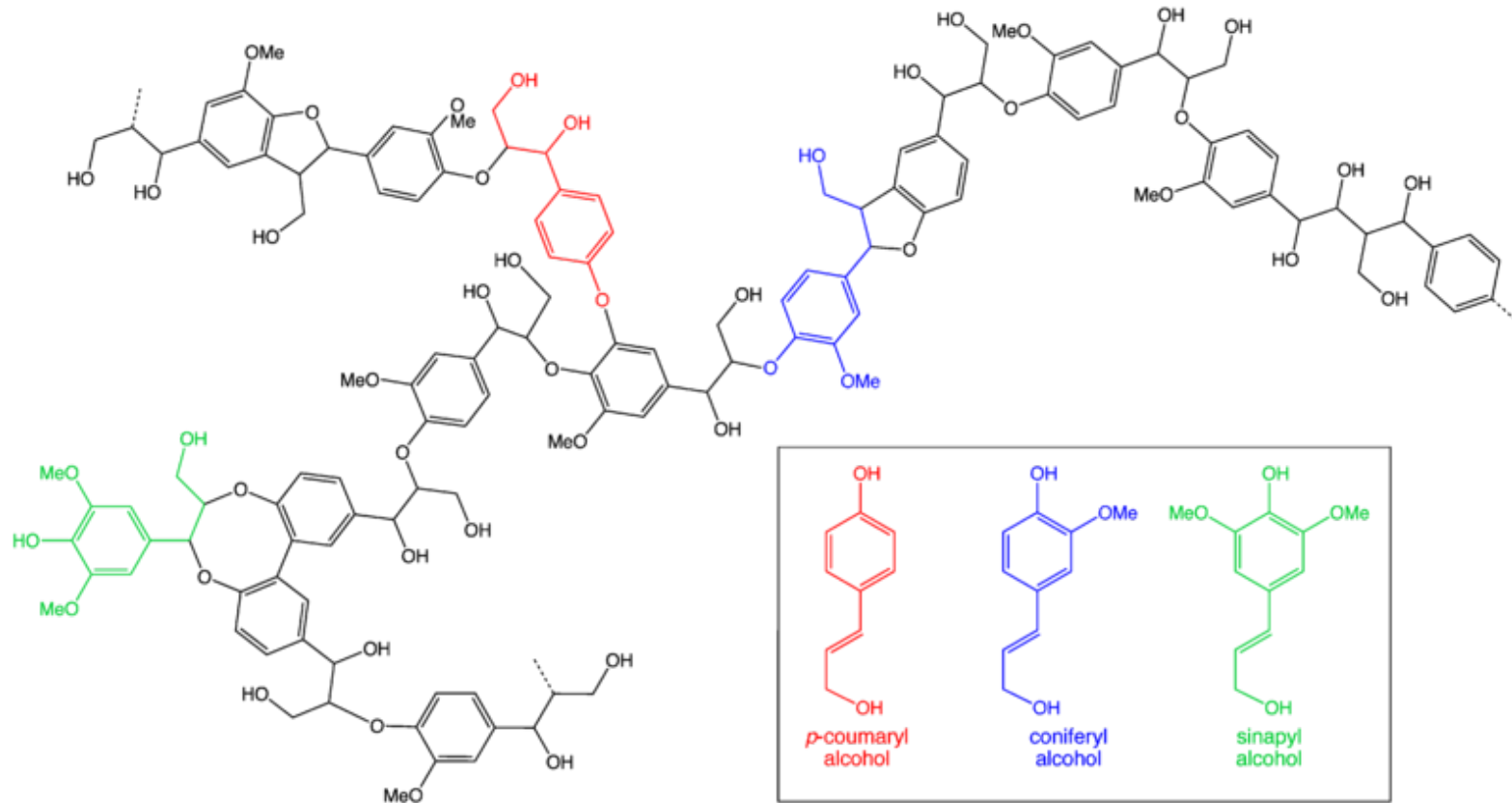
EAA •, essential amino acids; FAA #, flavor amino acids; ΣAA, sum of amino acids.

Lignocellulose Biomass





Lignin structure



Lignin uses

- Binder in laminated and composite wood products
- Asphalt binder
- Oil
- Thermoplastics

Lignin for platform molecules

- Hydrothermal liquefaction
- Enzymatic conversion
- Pyrolysis
- Gasification
- Solvolysis
- Catalytic oxidative depolymerisation
- Hydrocracking (catalytic reduction)

Lignin conversion by supercritical water

- Mechanism:
 1. Hydrolysis
 2. Dealkylation
 3. Cross-linking reactions
- Catalysts: zeolites, amorphous silica-alumina, KOH, NaOH
- Hydrogenation catalysts: cobalt, tungsten, palladium, nickel, molybdenum, Ni-W, carbon-supported Pd, Ru, $\text{Ru}(\text{PPh}_3)_3\text{Cl}_2$
- Oxidation catalysts: $\text{Pd}/\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3$, $\text{Cu-Ni}/\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3$, CuO , CuSO_4 , FeCl_3 , MnSO_4



Kraft Lignin

- 180°C
- 1h
- Lignin:water = 1:30
- 3 Hz

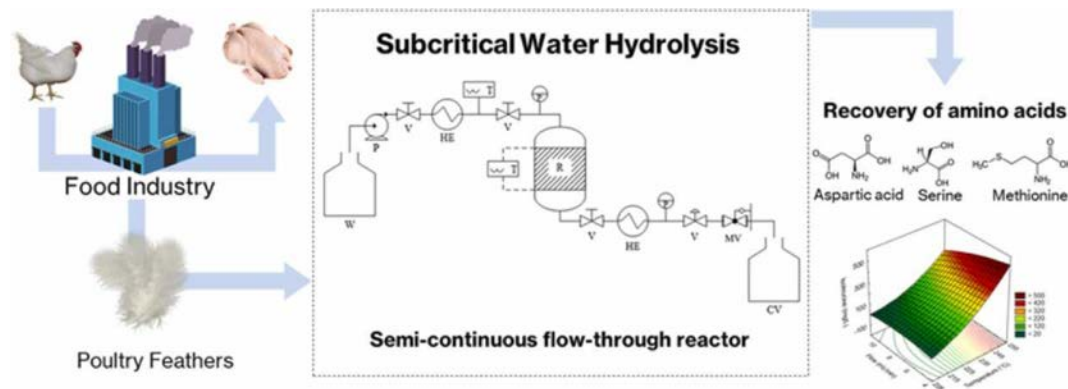
Total phenols (mg GAE/g $\pm$ SD)		
Catalyst	N ₂	CO ₂
Without catalyst	35.30 $\pm$ 0.31	42.25 $\pm$ 0.63
0.5% Phenol	153.09 $\pm$ 1.29	168.48 $\pm$ 0.34
1% HCl	112.85 $\pm$ 0.27	122.82 $\pm$ 0.28
1% NaOH	336.07 $\pm$ 1.05	240.81 $\pm$ 2.95
0.2% Zeolite	34.52 $\pm$ 0.03	35.30 $\pm$ 0.41
0.2% TiO ₂	35.55 $\pm$ 0.51	37.52 $\pm$ 0.69
0.2% ZrO ₂	34.72 $\pm$ 0.70	45.01 $\pm$ 0.73
0.2% CeO ₂	31.20 $\pm$ 0.25	35.44 $\pm$ 0.13
0.2% (20% ZrO ₂ + 80% CeO ₂)	33.59 $\pm$ 0.88	34.30 $\pm$ 0.30

Other Aromatics (mg RE/g $\pm$ SD)		
Catalyst	N ₂	CO ₂
Without catalyst	0.94 $\pm$ 0.01	5.11 $\pm$ 0.11
0.5% Phenol	1.26 $\pm$ 0.00	1.21 $\pm$ 0.12
1% HCl	3.71 $\pm$ 0.12	6.29 $\pm$ 0.12
1% NaOH	173.43 $\pm$ 0.80	103.06 $\pm$ 0.91
0.2% Zeolite	1.15 $\pm$ 0.01	0.97 $\pm$ 0.02
0.2% TiO ₂	1.96 $\pm$ 0.01	1.21 $\pm$ 0.03
0.2% ZrO ₂	1.16 $\pm$ 0.01	1.01 $\pm$ 0.02
0.2% CeO ₂	0.97 $\pm$ 0.01	0.92 $\pm$ 0.02
0.2%(20% ZrO ₂ + 80% CeO ₂)	1.24 $\pm$ 0.01	1.00 $\pm$ 0.01

T (°C)	Total Phenols (mg GAE/g)		Other Aromatics (mg RE/g)	
	N ₂	CO ₂	N ₂	CO ₂
120	341.88 ± 0.71	164.88 ± 1.40	114.29 ± 0.54	58.48 ± 1.15
150	426.01 ± 0.35	249.00 ± 0.61	209.43 ± 4.41	125.21 ± 0.32
180	336.07 ± 1.05	240.81 ± 2.95	173.43 ± 0.80	103.06 ± 0.91
200	387.70 ± 0.36	317.54 ± 1.31	160.41 ± 0.00	205.67 ± 3.03
220	399.95 ± 2.49	289.31 ± 3.06	160.06 ± 0.37	193.65 ± 2.18

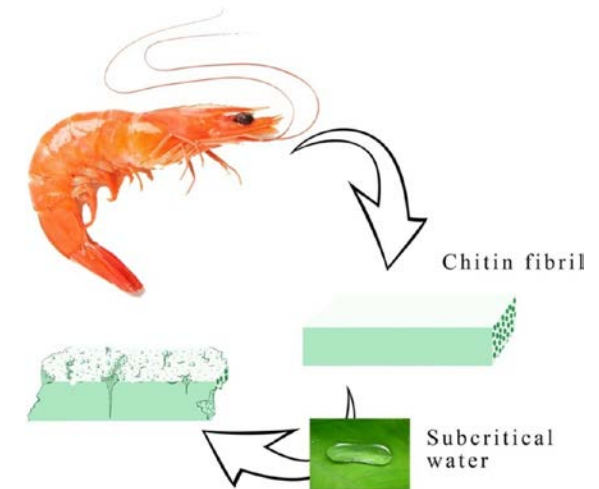
Feathers to amino-acids

- Chicken feathers: 210–250 °C, 150 bars, flow rates 5–15 ml/min
- The highest hydrolysis temperature resulted in the highest concentrations of valine, methionine, tryptophan, phenylalanine, isoleucine, leucine, and lysine
- Threonine, histidine, and arginine were obtained more effectively at lower temperatures



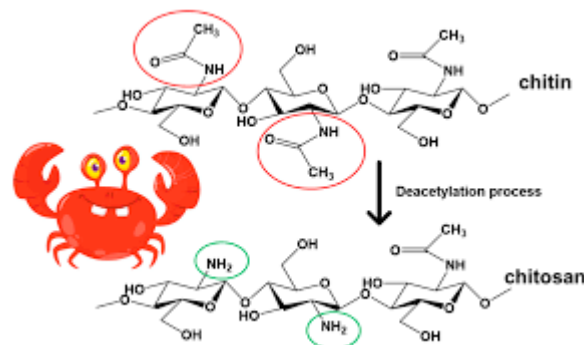
Chitin

- Component of cell walls in fungi
- Exoskeletons of arthropods (crustaceans and insects), molluscs
- Polysaccharide - polymer of N-acetylglucosamine
- Uses: fertilizer, edible films, coatings



Chitosan

- Chemical or enzymatic deacetylation of chitin
- Uses: biodegradable plastic, biopesticide, antimicrobial, antioxidant activities, drug delivery, biotechnology, bio-nanotechnology, food technology, regenerative medicine, cancer therapy, agriculture, environmental protection



Crab shells to useful resources

- Subcritical water at 260-320 °C:
 - Decomposition of proteins, pigments, extraction of lipids
 - CaCO_3 removal by 2 M HCl, 48h
 - Extracts high in organic and amino-acids
- 180 – 220 °C in acetic acid – one stage process for 95-100% chitin purity:
 - 320 – 350 °C : chitin decomposition to glucosamine and erythrose
 - Subcritical 10% NaOH at 220 °C for 60 min 74% deacetylation to chitosan



Chitin



Chitosan

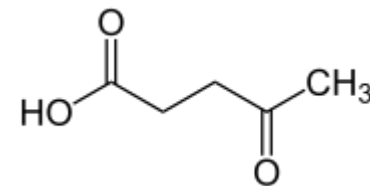
Chicken manure

- Humic acid and fulvic acid: highest (3647.2×10^{-6} g/kg) content at 250 °C, at a pressure of 50-60 bars
- Exhausted solid phase: high content of organic carbon, phosphorus, potassium, and microelements



Hazelnut shell

- Levulinic acid:
 - Cosmetics
 - Resins
 - Plasticizer
 - Textile
 - Feed
- Maximum cellulose conversion (82%) was achieved at 230°C and 180 min of reaction time in 25 mM of H₂SO₄



Biofuel production by hydrothermal liquefaction

Biomass sources:

- Wood and wood waste
- Aquatic plants
- Algae
- Weeds
- Agricultural by-products and waste
- Marine (fish, crab shell, bones, scallop viscera, squid entrails)
- Food processing waste (peel, stems, leaves, seed)

Biofuel production by superheated water

- Hydrothermal carbonization: 170-260 °C, 20–70 bars
- Hydrothermal liquefaction: 200–370 °C, 15–190 bars
- Hydrothermal gasification: production of hydrogen-rich syngas ($H_2 + CO$): >250 °C, 100–200 bars

Biocrude from algae

- Organic, liquid product produced from liquefaction
- Biocrude production is dependent on the organic fraction of the algae
- Low heating value, high viscosity, corrosive properties, high solid content, chemical instability



Catalysts increase the yield in biocrude production from algae:

- Na_2CO_3
- HCOOH
- CH_3COOH
- KOH
- $\text{Pt}/\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3$
- $\text{Co}/\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3$
- $\text{Ni}/\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3$

Biocrude from different algae

- *Dunaliella tertiolecta*: 360 °C
- *Chlorella pyrenoidosa* and planktonic algae: 260 °C - 280 °C
- *Spirulina platensis* (microalgae) and *Enteromorpha prolifera* (macroalgae): 340 °C
- *Nannochloropsis* sp.: biocrude yields at subcritical temperatures (300 °C) were higher compared to the yields at 400 °C

Combined processes with subcritical water



- Pretreatment of jabuticaba (*Myrciaria cauliflora*) biowaste (at 180 °C, 150 bars, flow rate of 10 ml/min, 45 minutes):
 - glucose (5.78 g/l), fructose (3.63 g/l), arabinose (1.82 g/l), cellobiose (1.28 g/l)
- Semi-continuous anaerobic digestion:
 - methane yield 239.04 l/kg vs. 42.31 l/kg
 - 543 kWh/t of electricity, 2,243.17 MJ/t of heat

Steam explosion and subcritical water treatment

- Brewer`s spent grains: steam explosion with CO₂ (150-250 bars, 120-180 °C)
- Subcritical water hydrolysis – 210 °C, 150 bars, 20 ml/min:
 - xylose, arabinose, glucose, cellobiose, HMF, furfural



Sugars