



UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

***MANAGING 3-MONOCHLOROPROPANE-1,2-DIOL
(3-MCPD) ESTERS DURING PALM OIL REFINING***

MUSFIRAH ZULKURNAIN

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DURING PALM OIL REFINING**

By

MUSFIRAH ZULKURNAIN

**Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia,
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Chair: Professor Tan Chin Ping, PhD

Faculty: Faculty of Food Science and Technology

Contamination with 3-monochloropropane-1,2-diol esters (3-MCPD) in a palm oil physical refining process was studied, and their analytical, chemical and processing factors were determined for mitigation purposes. For monitoring purposes, two disputable indirect methods, acid transesterification and alkaline transesterification method were compared, and the best method for the determination of 3-MCPD esters in oil samples using gas chromatography-tandem mass spectrometry (GC-MS/MS) was validated in-house. The acid transesterification method showed better analytical relevance over the alkaline transesterification method, with a method detection limit (MDL) of 0.006 mg/kg, a method quantification limit (MQL) of 0.019 mg/kg and excellent recovery (93-105%) and precision (%RSD) (1.3-4.2%). Palm oil was found to contain the highest levels of 3-MCPD esters (2.36 ± 0.12 mg/kg) compared with other types of refined vegetable oil. The quantification of industrial palm oil samples at different stages of the refining process confirmed major formation of 3-MCPD esters during the deodorization stage and the formation of a small amount (11.2%) during the pre-treatment stage.

Subsequently, factors that contribute to formation of 3-MCPD esters in the palm oil refining process were assessed, including the effect of different crude palm oil (CPO) quality and refining parameters at all stages of the refining process. Poor quality CPO with a high phosphorus content (8.8 ppm) and a low deterioration of bleachability index (DOBI) value (2.4) gave a remarkably high formation of 3-MCPD esters. Utilizing D-optimal design, the effects of the degumming methods (water degumming and acid degumming) and different bleaching adsorbents (n=4) were studied relative to the minor components of palm oil that are likely to be the precursors of the 3-MCPD esters. Water degumming and bleaching with synthetic magnesium silicate significantly ($p < 0.05$) reduced the level of 3-MCPD esters compared with other bleaching adsorbents, possibly due to the removal of precursors of 3-MCPD ester prior to deodorization step. Only phosphorus content exhibited a significant correlation ($p < 0.05$) with the level of 3-MCPD ester ($R^2 = 0.686$), suggesting that phospholipids might be one of the precursor. The formation of 3-MCPD esters in the refining process also showed dependence on the temperature of the deodorization step.

The physical refining process was modified with the incorporation of a water degumming and washing step in addition to acid degumming. The synergistic effects of the combination of the adsorbents magnesium silicate and activated clay were utilized for the bleaching step. The modified process was then optimized using response surface methodology (RSM), with five processing parameters: water dosage (0-5%), acid degumming dosage (0-1%), degumming temperature (40-80 °C), bleaching earth dosage (0-1%) and deodorization temperature (220-280 °C), to obtain the greatest reduction in the formation of 3-MCPD esters with an acceptable

final refined bleached and deodorized (RBD) palm oil quality. Large reduction in 3-MCPD ester formation was observed with increasing water degumming percentage above 3%, reducing degumming temperature and increasing bleaching clay dosage. The color removal was significantly ($p < 0.05$) influenced by increasing in all of the processing factors except bleaching clay dosage. The oil stability index (OSI) was significantly ($p < 0.05$) contributed by increasing in acid dosage and degumming temperature, and decreasing in clay dosage and deodorization temperature. Incorporation of water degumming not affected the OSI value. The optimized conditions were 3.5% water dosage, 0.1% acid dosage, a degumming temperature of 60 °C, 0.3% bleaching earth dosage and a deodorization temperature of 260 °C. These conditions resulted in 87.2% reduction in 3-MCPD esters, from 2.948 mg/kg in RBD palm oil refined conventionally to 0.374 mg/kg, with color and OSI values of 2.4 R and 14.3 hrs, respectively. Model verification using one sample t-test at $p < 0.05$ demonstrated the suitability of the established models in explaining the responses as function of the processing parameters.

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Master Sains

**MENGURUSKAN 3-MONOCHLOROPROPANE-1,2-DIOL (3-MCPD)
ESTER DALAM PROSES PENULENAN FIZIKAL MINYAK KELAPA
SAWIT**

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Mei 2012

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Pecemaran karsinogen 3-monochloropropane-1,2 diol (3-MCPD) dalam proses penulenan fizikal minyak kelapa sawit telah dikaji dan kajian analitikal 3-MCPD ester, faktor kimia dan faktor pemrosesannya telah ditentukan untuk mencari penyelesaian permasalahan ini. Untuk tujuan pemantauan, dua kaedah yang dipertikaikan, kaedah transesterifikasi asid dan kaedah transesterifikasi alkali dibandingkan secara analitikal dan kaedah yang terbaik untuk kuantifikasi 3-MCPD ester di dalam sampel minyak telah ditentukan dengan menggunakan gas kromatografi tandem mass spektrometer (GC-MS/MS). Kaedah transesterifikasi asid menunjukkan relevansi analitikal lebih baik mengatasi kaedah transesterifikasi alkali dengan had kaedah pengesanan (MDL) pada 0.006 mg/kg, had kaedah kuantifikasi pada 0.019 mg/kg dan perolehan (93-105%) dan kepersisan (1.3-4.2%) yang cemerlang. Minyak kelapa sawit ditemui mengandungi amaun 3-MCPD ester tertinggi (2.36 ± 0.12 mg/kg) berbanding minyak masak tersaring lain. Kuantifikasi sampel minyak sawit daripada industri pada semua peringkat penulenan mengesahkan

pembentukan major 3-MCPD ester adalah pada peringkat nyahbau dan hanya sedikit (11.2%) penghasilan terdapat pada peringkat pra-rawatan.

Kemudian, faktor-faktor yang menyumbang kepada pembentukan 3-MCPD ester dalam proses penulenan minyak kelapa sawit telah dikaji, termasuk kesan pelbagai kualiti minyak kelapa sawit mentah (CPO) dan parameter penulenan pada setiap peringkat proses penulenan minyak. Kualiti CPO yang rendah dengan kandungan fosforus yang tinggi (8.8 ppm) dan niali DOBI (2.4) yang rendah menghasilkan amaun 3-MCPD ester yang luar biasa tinggi. Dengan menggunakan reka bentuk D-optimal, kesan kaedah nyahgum (nyahgum air dan nyahgum asid) dan pelbagai penjerap peluntur ($n=4$) telah diselidik relatif kepada komponen minor dalam minyak sawit yang berpotensi menjadi prekursor 3-MCPD ester. Nyahgum air and meluntur dengan megnesium silikat sintetik telah menurunkan amaun 3-MCPD ester dengan signifikan ($p<0.05$) berbanding penjerap peluntur lain barangkali kerana penyingkiran prekursor 3-MCPD ester sebelum peringkat nyahbau. Hanya kandungan fosforus menunjukkan hubungkait ($R^2=0.686$) yang signifikan ($p<0.05$) dengan amaun 3-MCPD ester, mencadangkan bahawa fosfolipid mungkin merupakan prekursor tersebut. Penghasilan 3-MCPD ester dalam proses penulenan juga menunjukkan pergantungan terhadap suhu peringkat nyahbau.

Proses penulenan fizikal telah diubahsuai dengan menambahkan peringkat nyahgum air dan pembasuhan pada peringkat nyahgum asid. Kesan sinergi penggabungan penjerap peluntur megnesium silikat dan penjerap bumi asid telah digunakan untuk peringkat pelunturan. Proses yang telah diubahsuai kemudian dioptimumkan menggunakan kaedah permukaan responsi (RSM), dengan lima parameter proses:

dosis air (0-5%), dosis asid (0-0.1%), suhu peringkat nyahgum (40-80 °C), dosis penjerap bumi asid (0-1%) dan suhu peringkat nyahbau (220-280 °C), untuk mendapatkan pengurangan penghasilan 3-MCPD ester yang terbanyak dengan kualiti minyak kelapa sawit tertapis, terluntur dan ternyahbau (RBD) yang diterimapakai. Pengurangan 3-MCPD ester dengan jelas diperhatikan dengan peningkatan dosis air melebihi 3%, pengurangan suhu peringkat nyahgum dan peningkatan dosis penjerap bumi asid. Perlunturan warna dipengaruhi dengan signifikan ($p < 0.05$) oleh peningkatan semua faktor pemprosesan yang dikaji. Nilai OSI disumbangkan secara signifikan ($p < 0.05$) oleh peningkatan dosis asid dan suhu peringkat nyahgum, dan pengurangan dosis penjerap bumi asid dan suhu peringkat nyahbau. Penambahan peringkat nyahgum air tidak mempengaruhi nilai OSI. Kondusi optimum proses tersebut adalah 3.5% dosis air, 0.1% dosis asid, pada suhu peringkat nyahgum 60 °C, 0.3% dosis penjerap bumi asid dan pada suhu peringkat nyahbau 260 °C. Ini telah menghasilkan 87.2% pengurangan penghasilan 3-MCPD ester, daripada 2.948 mg/kg dalam minyak sawit RBD yang diproses secara konvensional kepada 0.374 mg/kg, dengan warna pada 2.4 R dan nilai OSI sebanyak 14.3 jam. Verifikasi model menggunakan ujian-t satu sampel menunjukkan nilai ujikaji tersebut bersetuju pada signifikansi $p < 0.05$ yang menunjukkan kesesuaian model tersebut untuk menghuraikan responnya sebagai fungsi parameter proses.

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I certify that a Thesis Examination Committee has met on **14th May 2012** to conduct the final examination of Musfirah Zulkurnain on her thesis entitled "**Managing 3-Monochloropropane-1,2-diol (3-MCPD) Esters during Palm Oil Refining**" in accordance with the Universities and University Colleges Act 1971 and the Constitution of the Universiti Putra Malaysia [P.U.(A) 106] 15 March 1998. The Committee recommends that the student be awarded the Master of Science degree.

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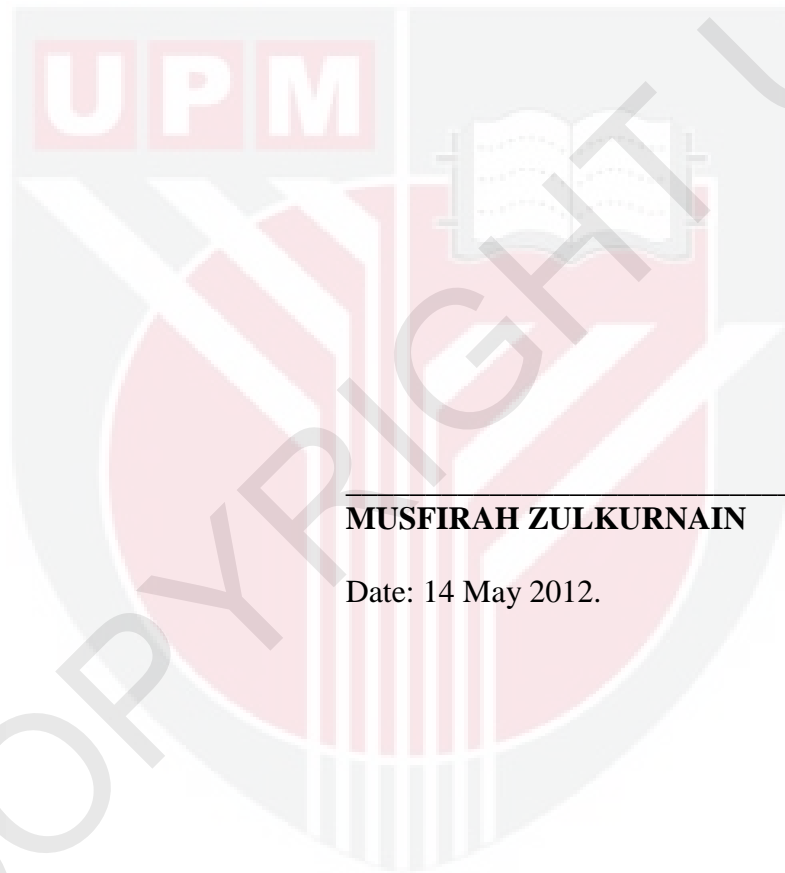
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DECLARATION

I declare that the thesis is my original work except for quotations and citations which have been duly acknowledged. I also declare that it has not been previously, and is not concurrently, submitted for any other degree at Universiti Putra Malaysia or at any other institution.



MUSFIRAH ZULKURNAIN

Date: 14 May 2012.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ABSTRACT	ii
ABSTRAK	v
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	viii
APPROVAL	ix
DECLARATION	xi
LIST OF TABLES	xvi
LIST OF FIGURES	xviii
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	xxii
 CHAPTER	
1	INTRODUCTION
1.1	Research background 1
1.2	Research objectives 4
2	LITERATURE REVIEW
2.1	3-Monochloropropan-1,2-diol esters 5
2.1.1	Occurrence in foods 5
2.1.2	Toxicology and bioavailability 8
2.1.3	Methods of 3-MCPD ester analysis 11
2.1.3.1	Acid transesterification method 15
2.1.3.2	Alkaline transesterification method 16
2.1.4	Mechanism of 3-MCPD esters formation 18
2.1.5	Factors affecting 3-MCPD esters formation and reduction in oil refining process 23
2.2	Palm oil refining 26
2.2.1	Palm oil refining in Malaysia 26
2.2.2	Crude palm oil 27
2.2.3	Physical refining of palm oil and its influence on RBD palm oil quality 30
2.2.3.1	Degumming 31
2.2.3.2	Bleaching 33
2.2.3.3	Deodorization 35
2.2.4	RBD palm oil quality 36
3	DETERMINATION OF 3-MCPD ESTERS IN VEGETABLE OIL SAMPLES
3.1	Introduction 38
3.2	Materials and Methods 40
3.2.1	Reagents and materials 40
3.2.2	Standard and internal standard preparation 41
3.2.3	Calibration standard preparation 42
3.2.4	3-MCPD esters determination 42
3.2.4.1	Acid transesterification method 42
3.2.4.2	Alkaline transesterification method 43

3.2.5	3-MCPD ester quantification using GC-MS for method comparison study	44
3.2.6	Effect of glycidol intervention	45
3.2.7	3-MCPD esters quantification using GC-MS/MS for sample analysis	45
3.2.8	Method validation	48
3.2.9	Sample determination of 3-MCPD esters using validated method	49
3.2.10	Statistical analysis	50
3.3	Results and Discussion	51
3.3.1	Indirect determination of 3-MCPD esters	51
3.3.2	Methods comparisons using GC-MS	53
3.3.3	Method validation using GCMS/MS	56
3.3.4	Sample determination using GC-MS/MS	62
3.3.4.1	Palm oil refining stages / industry samples	62
3.3.4.2	Commercial vegetable oils	64
3.4	Conclusions	65
4	FACTORS THAT AFFECT FORMATION OF 3-MCPD ESTERS IN THE PHYSICAL REFINING OF PALM OIL	
4.1	Introduction	66
4.2	Materials and Methods	68
4.2.1	Materials	68
4.2.2	Lab scale physical refining	69
4.2.3	Experimental design	70
4.2.3.1	The influence of the variation in CPO quality	70
4.2.3.2	The effects of deodorization temperature on formation of 3-MCPD esters	71
4.2.3.3	The effects of different degumming and bleaching treatments and the levels of minor components palm oil on the formation of 3-MCPD esters	71
4.2.4	The determination of 3-MCPD ester levels using GC-MS/MS	73
4.2.5	The determination of the levels of minor components in BPO	73
4.2.5.1	Triglyceride composition analysis using HPLC-ELSD	73
4.2.5.2	Carotene content	74
4.2.5.3	Phosphorus content	74
4.2.6	Palm oil quality analysis	75
4.2.6.1	The deterioration of bleachability index (DOBI)	75
4.2.6.2	Free fatty acid (FFA) content	75
4.2.6.3	Peroxide value (PV)	76

	4.2.6.4	Color measurement	76
	4.2.7	pH measurement of the bleaching adsorbent	77
	4.2.8	Statistical analysis	77
4.3		Results and Discussion	78
	4.3.1	The effects of CPO quality on 3-MCPD ester formation	78
	4.3.2	The effects of deodorization temperature on the formation of 3-MCPD esters	79
	4.3.3	The effects of degumming and bleaching on the formation of 3-MCPD esters	81
	4.3.3.1	Model fitting	81
	4.3.3.2	Formation of 3-MCPD	83
	4.3.4	The influences of the minor components of palm oil on 3-MCPD ester formation	86
	4.3.5	The effects of the refining parameters on the quality characteristics of RBD PO	91
	4.4	Conclusions	93
5		THE OPTIMIZATION OF 3-MCPD ESTER REDUCTION IN THE PHYSICAL REFINING OF PALM OIL	
	5.1	Introduction	94
	5.2	Materials and Methods	96
	5.2.1	Materials	96
	5.2.2	Experimental design	97
	5.2.2.1	Bleaching method study	97
	5.2.2.2	The optimization of the palm oil refining process to reduce 3-MCPD ester levels with the maintenance of acceptable RBD palm oil quality	98
	5.2.2.3	Model verification	100
	5.2.3	Determination of 3-MCPD ester levels using GC-MS/MS	101
	5.2.4	Palm oil quality analysis	101
	5.2.4.1	Oil Stability Index (OSI)	101
	5.2.5	Statistical analysis	102
	5.3	Results and Discussion	103
	5.3.1	Bleaching method study	103
	5.3.2	The optimization of 3-MCPD ester reduction in RBD palm oil with maintenance of acceptable oil quality using RSM	104
	5.3.2.1	Model fitting	105
	5.3.2.2	The effects of the processing parameters on the formation of 3-MCPD esters	109
	5.3.2.3	The effects of the processing parameters on RBD palm oil color	114

5.3.2.4	The effects of the processing parameters on the oil stability index (OSI)	117
5.3.2.5	Numerical optimization	121
5.3.2.6	Model verification	123
5.4	Conclusions	125
6	SUMMARY, GENERAL CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH	
6.1	Summary and general conclusions	127
6.2	Recommendations for future research	129
	REFERENCES	131
	APPENDICES	147
	BIODATA OF STUDENT	153
	LIST OF PUBLICATIONS	154

