

Calcium salt (E327)

Culinary data

Calcium salt (calcium lactate) is a gelling activator which enables:

- to form beads (caviar looking) in the presence of sodium alginate,
- to avoid the bitter taste of calcium chloride.



Technological data

Dissolution

Calcium salt is soluble in water at the concentration necessary to observe the “spherification” (< 5%, 50g/L). Its solubility in water at 25°C is of 90g/L. It's little soluble in alcohol. The amount usually used is 1g for 10cL of “spherification” bath.

Gel setting

The calcium ions interact very quickly with sodium alginate to form a gel, providing the food preparation is not too acidic (pH > 3). The amount of calcium ions and sodium alginate determine the gel's firmness. The formed gel doesn't melt upon heating.

Sensory properties

Calcium salt has a neutral taste and doesn't taste bitter.

Preservation

Calcium alginate gels lose water. It is therefore advised to avoid storing them or to store them into the liquid they are made of.

Storage

Store in a closed hermetic packaging, in a cool and dry place.

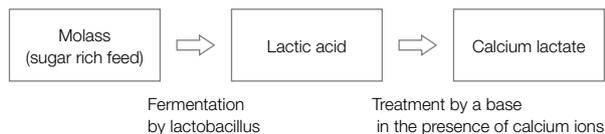
Toxicological data

- As calcium salt is not coming from dairy products, it can be eaten by people suffering from milk allergies.
- Calcium salt has no acceptable daily intake level.
- The used quantity shouldn't exceed the concentrations used to obtain the desired effect
- To be taken in moderation for children.

Scientific data

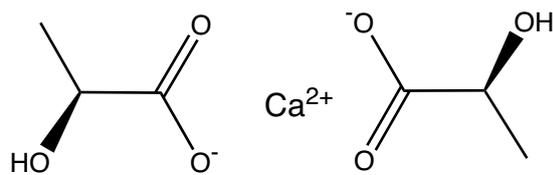
Origin

Lactic acid is produced by numerous organisms, in the mitochondria of the muscles, as in the case of humans, when the oxygen available is not sufficient. It is the case during an intense effort. For its industrial production, lactic acid is obtained by fermentation with bacteria of type *Lactobacillus delbruckii*, *Lactobacillus bulgaricus* or *Lactobacillus leichmannii*. Calcium lactate is derived from it.



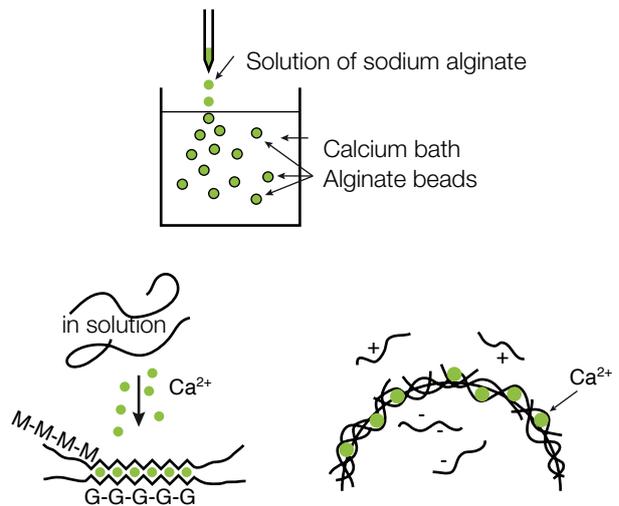
Chemical composition

Calcium lactate is the salt obtained treating the L-lactic acid with a base in the presence of calcium ions. It needs two lactates for each calcium ions to ensure the charge neutrality.



Structure of the calcium lactate.

In the formation of a gel starting from sodium alginate, only the calcium ions set in solution by the dissolution of the salts are involved. They form, with alginate chains an helical structure which organize them into a network, as can be seen in the following scheme. This leads to the formation of a gel (see as well the sodium alginate data sheet).



Mechanism of gel formation through the interaction between calcium ions and sodium alginate.

As a drop of the preparation containing the sodium alginate enters the calcium bath, the calcium ions diffuse quickly into the alginate drop to form a gel.

Informations from Beltz H.-D., Grosch W., Schieberle P., *Food Chemistry*, 3rd Edition, Springer 2004, 259, 453