### MICROENCAPSULATION OF ANTHOCYANINS BY SPRAY DRYING.

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*Aronia melanocarpa* berries, very rich in polyphenolic compounds, are usually processed to juice. Preliminary studies showed that the anthocyanins contained in the juice present a first order degradation kinetic, with a half-life of 65 days at a storage temperature of 22 °C.

Aiming at an enhanced stabilisation of the anthocyanins, spray drying was used for the microencapsulation of the Aronia berries juice solids (AS).

Maltodextrines (DE 9 – 20) and gum arabic were used as carriers. The feeding solutions (AS≤0.5 g/g<sub>db</sub>) were dried with a Mini-Spray dryer B290 (Büchi, Switzerland) using nitrogen as atomisation and drying gas and inlet gas temperatures of 140, 180 and 220 °C. The viscosity of all feeding solutions exhibited a Newtonian behaviour, with values ranging from 4.4 mPa s to 56.0 mPa s.

The dried products were amorphous powders, presenting spherical geometry (SEM) with a mean diameter ranging from 6 to 12  $\mu$ m (SLS). The particle density (gas pycnometer) showed values ranging from 0.9 to

1.4 g cm and the specific surface area (BET) from 0.9 to 1.8 m g . Both parameters exhibit a clear dependency with the drying temperature. No degradation of the anthocyanins was detected during the spray drying, independent of the drying temperature. The microcapsules showed no significant anthocyanin degradation during storage at 22°C even after 17 weeks.

Microencapsulation using spray drying was shown to be a successful process for the stabilisation of the anthocyanins contained in the juice of Aronia berries. The anthocyanins rich microcapsules are intended as food ingredients.

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