

## EFFECT OF TANNIN ADDITION ON THE RHEOLOGICAL PROPERTIES OF STARCH-BASED ADHESIVES

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### ABSTRACT:

Starch-based adhesives play a relevant role in paperboard production and are becoming more and more interesting, for different uses, because they are based on renewable biopolymers. Starch modifications or additive addition are becoming frequent to obtain the macroscopic properties desired for specific uses. In this paper the effects of the addition of four different tannins on a typical adhesive, adopted for corrugated paperboard production, were investigated by using fundamental rheological techniques, both in dynamic and steady conditions. It was found that tannins increase the onset of starch gelatinisation, estimated as the knee point of the storage modulus in a dynamic temperature ramp test, and decrease the steady shear viscosity. This is due to the interactions between tannin and starch that affect the gelatinisation and retrogradation reactions weakening the starch network. Even though a partial reinforcement effect was also observed, owing to the polymeric nature of tannin components, a lower consistency, with respect to the neat adhesive, was found for all modified samples. Tannin has shown itself able to modify technological properties such as gelatinization temperature and viscosity, since the specific results are determined by the nature and amount of tannin; therefore it could be used to adapt adhesive characteristics to specific applications, potentially improving starch-based adhesive competitiveness with respect to different adhesives.

### KEY WORDS:

tannin, starch adhesive, paperboard, rheology, gelatinisation temperature

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Biopolymer-based adhesives have become more and more interesting in recent years because they are based on renewable polymers and offer a wide variety of functional characteristics, according to the specific adopted component (e.g. carbohydrates, protein, cellulose, lignin, etc.) [1]. Starch is probably one of the most important industrial biopolymers in the adhesive field with a number of uses in the paper industry (paper bags, corrugated board), pharmaceutical preparations, furniture and plywood [1–5]. A relevant role is played mainly in corrugated paperboard production where the adhesive has a direct effect on both the quality of the finished board and the process efficiency (such as line speed or waste production), as a consequence the optimisation of starch adhesive in this area is receiving more attention, with the aim of producing high quality boards with lower costs [6, 7].

Starch consists in a mixture of two different polysaccharides, amylose and amylopectin, based on glucose

molecules and present in a different ratio mainly according to the starch source (potato, tapioca, wheat, etc.). Amylose is usually present in a lower amount (typically between 20 and 30%(w/w)) and is characterised by a linear structure, whereas amylopectin, more abundant, has a branched structure [1, 8–10]. When heated in water, starch granules adsorb water, start to swell and break, amylose leaches out and with the granular residues gives a viscoelastic paste; upon cooling, the rearrangement and the interaction of the different components, i.e. retrogradation phenomena, yield the system gelation [8, 9, 11]. This gelatinising ability is probably the most important characteristic for industrial uses of starch and it is often controlled by the physical or chemical modification of starch or by adopting proper additives able to affect the gelation characteristics.

The most common adhesive adopted for corrugated board is based on a two-phase system (according to the so-called “Stein-Hall process”): a first liquid phase, named “carrier”, made by starch and sodium hydroxide

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teristics to specific uses without changing the weight fraction of all the components or the nature of the starch adopted and this could improve the starch-based adhesive competitiveness with respect to different adhesives.

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