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Standard Terminology of Cellulose and Cellulose Derivatives¹

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1. Scope

1.1 This terminology standard contains terms, definition of terms, descriptions of terms, nomenclature, and explanations of acronyms and symbols specifically associated with standards under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee D01 on Paint and Related Coatings, Materials, and Applications; Subcommittee D01.36 on Cellulose and Cellulose Derivatives.

1.2 This terminology is divided into three classes as follows:

	Section
Cellulosic Materials and Constituents	3.1
Chemical Modifications and Derivatives of Cellulose	3.2
Properties of Cellulose and Associated Concepts that are applicable to both Sections 3.1 and 3.2	3.3

2. Referenced Documents

2.1 The numerous ASTM Standards to which this standard applies are found in the *Annual Book of ASTM Standards*, Vol 06.03.

2.2 *TAPPI Standards*:²

TAPPI Method T 203 om-93 Alpha-, Beta- and Gamma-Cellulose in Pulp

3. Terminology

3.1 Cellulosic Materials and Constituents

acetylation pulps—pulps used in the manufacture of cellulose acetate or other esters, and subject to various specifications by the manufacturers, including those of purity, moisture content, sheet properties, and viscosity.

alpha-cellulose—(1) Historically, a term used to indicate the pure, relative undegraded cellulose found in pulps. (2) Alpha-cellulose content is often measured by TAPPI Method T 203 om-93 where alpha-cellulose is that portion of the pulp which does not dissolve under the test conditions.

¹ This terminology is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee D01 on Paint and Related Coatings, Materials, and Applications and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee D01.36 on Cellulose and Cellulose Derivatives.

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² Available from Technical Association of the Pulp and Paper Industry (TAPPI), 15 Technology Parkway South, Norcross, GA 30092, <http://www.tappi.org>.

alpha pulps—see **chemical cellulose**.

araban—a pentosan yielding essentially only arabinose on hydrolysis.

arabinogalactan—a polysaccharide consisting of arabinose and galactose units, like the water-soluble polysaccharide of larch.

arabinose—a pentose that occurs as one of the sugar units in some hemicelluloses.

arabinomethylglucuronoxylan—a hemicellulose containing arabinose, 4-O-methylglucuronic acid, and xylose groups in its structure.

beta-cellulose—(1) Historically, a term used to indicate impurities of moderate chain lengths found in pulps, predominantly degraded cellulose. (2) Beta-cellulose content, as measured by TAPPI Method T 203 om-93, is the pulp fraction soluble in caustic, which precipitates upon acidification.

carbohydrates not cellulose—the noncellulosic carbohydrates of a cellulosic material.

cellophane pulps—pulps used in the manufacture of cellophane, and subject to various specifications by the manufacturers, including those of purity, moisture content, sheet properties, and viscosity.

cellulose—(1) the main solid constituent of woody plants; it occurs widely elsewhere in the vegetable kingdom, and to a small extent in the animal kingdom. (2) chemically, cellulose is β -1-4 glucan of high degree of polymerization. It is desirable to apply “cellulose” to this material only and to designate the predominantly cellulosic residue obtained by subjecting woody tissues to various pulping processes as “cellulosic residues,” “cellulosic pulps,” or the like.

cellulose I—the crystalline modification of cellulose that normally occurs in nature.

cellulose II—the crystalline modification of cellulose that is found in mercerized cellulose, in regenerated cellulose, and in cellulose produced by the hydrolysis of various cellulose derivatives.

cellulose III—a crystalline modification of cellulose produced by treatment, under certain conditions, with ammonia or

sometimes by amines. The method of removing the reagent determines the modification produced.

cellulose IV—a crystalline modification of cellulose produced by heat treatment of cellulose II.

cellulose X—a crystalline modification of cellulose produced by treatment of cellulose with strong hydrochloric acid or phosphoric acid.

cellulose, purified cotton—see **cotton cellulose, purified**.

cellulose, purified wood—see **wood cellulose, purified**.

chemical cellulose—a chemically purified cellulosic material that is intended for chemical treatment to produce derivatives.

chemical cotton—chemical cellulose prepared from cotton; generally, but not necessarily, cotton linters.

chemical pulps—in the paper industry, pulps produced by chemical processes, as contrasted to those produced by mechanical processes. (see also **chemical wood pulp**)

chemical wood pulp—a term used in the paper industry for pulps obtained by digestion of wood with solutions of various chemicals.

DISCUSSION—This term, which refers to pulp produced and purified by chemical processes, should not be confused with chemical cellulose which refers to pulp that is to be used in chemical processes.

cotton cellulose, purified—chemical cellulose from cotton fiber or linters. (see also **chemical cotton**)

cotton linters—see **linters**.

dissolving pulps—see **pulps, dissolving**.

extractives—compounds occurring in plant materials, but not forming part of the structural elements, that are removed with neutral solvents such as ether, alcohol, and water.

galactan—a polysaccharide composed essentially of galactose units. (see also **arabinogalactan**)

galactoglucomannan—one of the hemicelluloses of softwoods, containing three types of sugar units—galactose, glucose, and mannose.

galactomannan—a polysaccharide containing galactose and mannose units. Galactomannans usually have a long chain of mannose units with galactose side chains and are found in seed gums (guar, locust bean).

gamma-cellulose—(1) Historically, a term used to indicate impurities of short chain lengths found in pulps, predominately hemicelluloses. (2) Gama-cellulose content, as measured by TAPPI Method T 203 om-93, is the pulp fraction soluble in caustic, which remains in solution upon acidification.

glucan—a macromolecular substance that can be hydrolyzed to give almost exclusively glucose.

glucomannan—a hemicellulose consisting essentially of glucose and mannose.

glucuronoxylan—a common designation for the xylose-containing hardwood hemicelluloses. (see also **methylglucuronoxylan**)

hemicellulose—any of a number of cell-wall polysaccharides that are removable by extraction with aqueous alkali and that may be hydrolyzed by boiling with dilute acids to give constituent monosaccharide units; any of the noncellulosic cell-wall polysaccharides.

hexosan—frequently used in contradistinction to pentosan, for a polysaccharide consisting mainly of hexose units.

holocellulose—the total polysaccharide fraction of extractive-free wood. The method of isolation or of determination should always be given.

kraft pulp—pulp cooked by the alkaline liquor consisting essentially of a mixture of caustic soda and sodium sulfide. The make-up chemical is traditionally sodium sulfate, which is reduced to the sulfide in the chemical recovery process; hence the alternative designation, sulfate pulp.

lignin—that part of plant material which is not saccharified by the action of 72 % sulfuric acid or 42 % hydrochloric acid, after the resins, waxes, and tannins have been removed.

linters—the short fibrous material adhering to cotton seed after the ginning operation. After removal from the seed it is used to a limited extent as a fibrous raw material for special papers. The principal use, however, is for chemical cellulose, that is, as the raw material for the manufacture of cellulose derivatives.

mannan—strictly, a polysaccharide composed entirely of mannose units, but used conventionally to distinguish the hexosan wood hemicelluloses from the pentosans (xylan). (see also **galactoglucomannan** and **glucomannan**)

mannogalactan—see **galactomannan**.

methylglucuronoxylan—the main hemicellulose of hardwood pulps; a polysaccharide containing xylose and 4-O-methylglucuronic acid groups. In the wood it is partially acetylated.

nitration pulps—pulps used for the manufacture of cellulose nitrate and subject to various specifications by the manufacturers, including those of alpha-cellulose content and viscosity.

oligosaccharides—polymeric carbohydrates containing relatively few (compared to the polysaccharides) sugar units connected by glycosidal linkages. Two to nine units has been suggested as a suitable range. For longer chains the polymers cannot be readily separated into individual molecular species.

pectic substrates—complex polysaccharides containing a large proportion of galacturonic acid units.

pectins—colorless, amorphous, water-soluble polysaccharides occurring in plant tissues that yield pectic acid and methanol on hydrolysis.

pentosans—one of the groups of amorphous carbohydrates included under the general term “hemicellulose.” Pentosans yield principally pentoses on acid hydrolysis. The principal pentosan in wood is xylan.

polyuronides—polysaccharides containing uronic acid groups.

pulps, dissolving—chemical cellulose from wood pulp.

pulps for chemical conversion—chemical cellulose from wood pulp.

pulps for manufacture of cellulose derivatives—chemical cellulose from wood pulp.

purified cotton cellulose—see **cotton cellulose, purified**.

purified wood cellulose—see **wood cellulose, purified**.

R₁₀—the portion of a cellulose pulp that is insoluble in 10 % sodium hydroxide using Test Method D1696³ or its equivalent.

DISCUSSION—R₁₀ indicates the pure, relatively undegraded cellulose content of pulps, and as such may be compared to alpha-cellulose, although they are determined by different test procedures.

rayon pulps—pulps used in the manufacture of rayon, and subject to various specifications by the manufacturers, including those of purity, moisture content, sheet properties, and viscosity.

S₁₀—the portion of a cellulose pulp that is soluble in 10 % sodium hydroxide using Test Method D1696, or its equivalent.

DISCUSSION—S₁₀ is considered to contain both hemicellulose and degraded, short chain length cellulose (see R₁₀).

S₁₈—the portion of a cellulose pulp that is soluble in 18 % sodium hydroxide using Test Method D1696, or its equivalent.

DISCUSSION—S₁₈ is considered to be mainly hemicelluloses, and may be compared to gamma-cellulose, although they are determined by different test procedures.

S₁₀–S₁₈—an estimate of the portion of degraded cellulose in a pulp obtained by subtracting S₁₈ from S₁₀.

DISCUSSION—Some workers use S₁₀ to S₁₈ as an estimate of the hemicellulose content of pulps, and may be compared to gamma-cellulose, although they are determined by different test procedures.

sulfate pulp—see **kraft pulp**.

sulfite pulp—wood pulp produced by cooking with a sulfite liquor made by dissolving sulfur dioxide in an aqueous base.

wood cellulose, purified—chemical cellulose from wood.

xylan—a pentosan giving almost exclusively xylose on hydrolysis.

3.2 Chemical Modifications and Derivatives of Cellulose

carboxymethylcellulose, CMC—the common name for a cellulose ether of glycolic acid. It is usually marketed as a water-soluble sodium salt, more properly called sodium carboxymethylcellulose. In the early literature, it is sometimes called cellulose glycolate or cellulose glycolic acid.

cellulose acetate—in the broad sense, any of several esters of cellulose and acetic acid. (see also **cellulose triacetate**)

cellulose acetate butyrate—a mixed ester of cellulose containing both acetate and butyrate groups.

cellulose acetate phthalate—a mixed ester of cellulose containing both acetate and phthalate groups.

cellulose acetate propionate—a mixed ester of cellulose containing both acetate and propionate groups.

cellulose derivative—a substance derived from cellulose by substitution of one or more of the hydroxyl groups with some other radical. Most derivatives are ethers or esters.

cellulose esters—derivatives of cellulose in which one or more of the hydroxyl hydrogens have been replaced acyl groups.

cellulose ethers—derivatives of cellulose in which one or more of the hydroxyl hydrogens have been replaced by alkyl groups.

cellulose lacquer—a liquid coating composition containing as the basic film-forming ingredient a cellulose ester or ether and plasticizers with or without resins or pigments.

cellulose mixed ester—a cellulose ester containing more than one type of acyl group.

cellulose nitrate—any of various nitrate esters of cellulose.

DISCUSSION—Cellulose nitrate is often and erroneously called “nitro-cellulose.”

cellulose plastics—plastics based on cellulose compounds, such as esters (cellulose acetate) and ethers (ethylcellulose).

cellulose propionate—any ester of cellulose with propionic acid.

cellulose sodium glycolate—see **carboxymethyl cellulose**.

cellulose triacetate—that form of cellulose acetate in which the degree of substitution approaches 3 sufficiently that the product is not soluble in acetone.

cellulose xanthates—the salts of cellulose xanthic acid. Commonly, cellulose xanthate refers to sodium cellulose xanthate, the essential constituent of the viscose solution, from which viscose rayon is spun.

dope—a composition, usually a cellulose lacquer, for application on textiles and leathers. Also a very viscous crude reaction product, as acetylation dope.

ethylcellulose—any of several ethyl ethers of cellulose. The one most generally used in industry has sufficient substitution to be soluble in organic solvents.

hydrocelluloses—water-insoluble products of the hydrolysis of cellulose with acids. They are molecularly heterogeneous in the sense that they are composed of molecules varying in degree of polymerization. The average degree of polymerization (DP) and the DP distribution depend on the nature of the acid treatment and of the original cellulose. The term may also be applied to any insoluble polysaccharide so formed and separated as a more or less homogeneous

³ Annual Book of ASTM Standards, Vol 06.03.

fraction from the mixture of products, but the singular form “hydrocellulose” should not be used without an article, to avoid the implication of a molecularly homogeneous species.

(2-hydroxyethyl)cellulose—any of several cellulose ethers in which some of the hydroxyl groups have been substituted with hydroxyethyl groups. Hydroxyethyl cellulose, except at very low degrees of substitution, is water-soluble.

(2-hydroxyethyl)ethylcellulose—a mixed ether of cellulose containing both hydroxyethyl and ethyl groups.

(2-hydroxyethyl)methylcellulose—a mixed ether of cellulose containing both hydroxyethyl and methyl groups.

(2-hydroxypropyl)methylcellulose—a mixed ether of cellulose containing both hydroxypropyl and methyl groups.

ionic cellulose ethers—those water-soluble cellulose ethers which contain ionizable groups, in more than trace amounts. Sodium carboxymethyl cellulose is an example.

lacquer—see **cellulose lacquer**.

methylcellulose—any of several methyl ethers of cellulose. Commercially, the water-soluble ether (degree of substitution approximately 1.5 to 2.0).

methylethylcellulose—a cellulose ether containing both methyl and ethyl groups.

microcrystalline cellulose—a commercial name for cellulose that has been hydrolyzed to the limiting DP and that consists essentially of microcrystals.

nitrocellulose—see **cellulose nitrate**.

nonionic cellulose ethers—that class of cellulose ethers which does not contain any ionizable groups.

oxycelluloses—water-insoluble substances formed by the action of oxidizing agents on cellulose. The chemical nature of oxycelluloses varies with the oxidant used, and the type is indicated by attaching the name of the oxidant adjectivally to “oxycelluloses” as in “hypochlorite oxycelluloses.” Any such mixture is “an oxycellulose” and the word should not be used in the singular without either the definite or indefinite article. In many respects, the phrases “oxidized cellulose” or “partially oxidized cellulose” are preferable.

propylene glycol ether of methylcellulose—see **(2-hydroxypropyl)methylcellulose**.

regenerated cellulose—cellulose regenerated from a solution of cellulose or from a cellulose derivative.

sodium carboxymethylcellulose—see **carboxymethylcellulose**.

viscose—a solution of sodium cellulose xanthate prepared by dissolving the reaction product formed by the interaction of carbon disulfide and alkali cellulose in an aqueous solution of sodium hydroxide. Viscose is used mainly in the manufacture of rayon or cellophane, where it is extruded through fine openings of the proper shape into a coagulating bath.

3.3 Properties of Cellulose and Associated Concepts

accessibility—the fraction of total cellulose present that is accessible to certain reagents under certain specified conditions. The conditions of determination should always be indicated.

acetylation—substitution of an acetyl radical for an active hydrogen. Specifically, formation of cellulose acetate from cellulose.

acetyl groups—the characteristic groups of acetic acid; CH_3CO —.

acyl groups—radicals derived from carboxylic acids by removal of the hydroxyl group.

acid groups—functional groups having the properties of acids. In cellulose and its derivatives, these are usually carboxyl groups.

aging—in general, the change of properties with the passage of time. Specifically, the changes occurring in shredded alkali cellulose when allowed to stand exposed to air.

air-dry—a condition applied to paper or pulp whereby its moisture content is in equilibrium with the atmospheric conditions to which it is exposed. According to trade custom, pulps are generally understood to be air dry when they contain 10 % of moisture, for example, a pound of air-dry pulp contains 0.9 lb of oven-dry pulp and 0.1 lb of moisture (see *STP 60-B*).

alcohol-benzene solubility—solubility of a cellulosic pulp in a mixture of ethanol and benzene. The term is without precise meaning unless complete specification of an analytical procedure is attached explicitly or implicitly.

aldehyde groups—carbonyl groups to which a hydrogen atom is attached; the first oxidation stage of an alcohol;— CHO .

alkali resistance—for a cellulosic pulp, the fraction insoluble in alkali, usually sodium hydroxide, of a fixed concentration under specified conditions. The term is without precise meaning unless complete specification of an analytical procedure is attached explicitly or implicitly. (see also **alkali solubility**)

alkali solubility—for a cellulosic pulp, the fraction in alkali of a fixed concentration under specified conditions. This term is without precise meaning unless complete specification of an analytical procedure is attached explicitly or implicitly. Some related terms imply at least a partial specification, for example, “ten percent potassium hydroxide solubility” or “nondilution alkali solubility.”

alkali stability—for a cellulosic pulp, resistance to strength loss due to exposure to alkaline environments.

alkali staining—discoloration caused by the presence of an alkali.

alkyl groups—monovalent aliphatic radicals derived from aliphatic hydrocarbons by removal of a hydrogen.