

1.2: Thickening Agents

Learning Objectives

- Identify and describe thickening agents used in the food service industry
- Describe the production and properties of thickening agents Describe the function of thickening agents in baking

Two types of thickening agents are recognized: starches and gums. Most thickening agents are of vegetable origin; the only exception is gelatin. All the starches are products of the land; some of the gums are of marine origin.

Bakers use thickening agents primarily to:

- Make fillings easier to handle and bake
- Firm up products to enable them to be served easily
- Provide a glossy “skin” to improve finish and reduce drying

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