CLAIMS

1. A method for obtaining a structured oil in the form of an oil-in-water (o/w) emulsion comprising the steps of:

(i) Contacting an oil with an emulsifier and at least one hydrocolloid, said emulsifier and said at least one hydrocolloid being provided in aqueous solution; and

(ii) Processing the mixture obtained in step (i) under conditions adequate for the dispersion of the oil in the aqueous solution to obtain the o/w emulsion;

wherein the emulsifier is denatured pea protein, wherein the at least one hydrocolloid is a gum, wherein the oil content in the mixture obtained in step (i) is of at least 20% (w/w), and wherein the emulsifier content in the mixture is of between 0.1 and 3% (w/w).

2. A structured oil system in the form of an o/w emulsion comprising a lipid phase (o) and a water phase (w), the lipid phase being dispersed inside the water phase wherein the oil phase is stabilized in the water phase by an emulsifier and at least a first hydrocolloid dissolved or dispersed in the water phase wherein the emulsifier is denatured pea protein, wherein the at least one hydrocolloid is a gum, wherein the lipid phase is of at least 20% (w/w), and wherein the emulsifier content is of between 0.1 and 3% (w/w).

3. The method according to claim 1 or the structured oil system according to claim 2, wherein the oil comprises a vegetable oil, an algal oil or a microbial oil.

4. The method according to claims 1 or 3 or the structured oil system according to any of claims 2 or 3, wherein the hydrocolloid content is of between 0.1 and 2% (w/w).

5. The method according to claim 4 or the structured oil system according to claim 4, wherein when the hydrocolloid content is between 0.6% and 1% (w/w) then, the structured oil is a soft structured oil characterized by a hardness higher between 0.6 and 0.8 Kg/cm^2.

6. The method according to claim 5 or the structured oil according to claim 5, wherein when the hydrocolloid content is between 0.8% and 1.8% (w/w) then, the structured oil is a hard structured oil characterized by a hardness higher that 0.8 Kg/cm^2.

7. The method according to any of claims 1, 3 to 6 or the structured oil system according to any of claims 2 to 6, wherein the emulsifier is also a hydrocolloid.

8. The method according to any one of claims 1, 3 to 7 or the structured oil system according to any of claims 2 to 7, wherein the gum is xanthan gum.

9. The method according to any one of claims 1, 3 to 8 wherein a first, a second and optionally a third hydrocolloid are used in step (i) or the structured oil system according to any of claims 2 to 8, wherein the structured oil system further comprises a second hydrocolloid dissolved or dispersed in the aqueous phase and, optionally a third hydrocolloid dissolved or dispersed in the aqueous phase.

10. The method according to any of claims 1, 3 to 9, or the structured oil system according to any of claims 2 to 9, wherein if a second hydrocolloid and/or a third hydrocolloid are used, then the second hydrocolloid and/or the third hydrocolloid are polysaccharides selected from xanthan gum, agar-agar and locust bean gum.

11. The method according to any of claims 1, 3 to 10, or the structured oil system according to any of claims 2 to 10, wherein the aqueous solution further comprises an anti-freezing agent and/or a cryoprotective agent.

12. The method according to any of claims 1, 3 to 11 or the structured oil system according to any of claims 2 to 11 wherein the lipid or the water phase contain one or more food additives selected from the group consisting of aroma or flavouring compounds, food dyes, sweeteners, preservatives, anti-freezing agents, cryoprotective agents, food dyes, salts, pH regulators and antioxidants.

13. The method according to claim 12 or the structured oil according to claim 12, wherein the cryoprotective agent is glycerol and wherein the glycerol content in the mixture is between 1% and 2% (w/w).

14. A foodstuff comprising a structured oil obtained by a method according to any of claims 1, 3 to 13 or the structured oil according to any of claims 2 to 13, said foodstuff comprising one or more edible ingredients.

15. A process for the manufacture of a foodstuff characterized in that it comprises a step of mixing a structured oil obtained by a method according to any of claims 1, 3 to 13 or the structured oil according to any of claims 2 to 13 with one or more edible ingredients.

16. A cosmetic composition comprising a structured oil obtained by a method according to any of claims 1, 3 to 13 or the structured oil according to any of claims 2 to 13 and one more cosmetically-acceptable carrier.