CLAIMS

1. A method of preparing a flavour composition comprising the steps of:

(a) providing a bran slurry comprising, or consisting of, bran and water, wherein the bran slurry comprises from 1% to 40% by weight of bran and has a water content of at least 20%, preferably at least 25%, by weight, based upon the weight of the bran slurry;

(b) subjecting the bran slurry provided in step (a) to a heat treatment at a temperature of from 155°C to 200°C for a holding time of 5 to 180 min; and

(c) obtaining the heat-treated bran slurry produced in step (b) as the flavour composition

(d) filtering the heat-treated bran slurry to obtain a filtrate and residual solids, optionally drying the filtrate and/or the residual solids, optionally comminuting the dried filtrate and/or the dried residual solids; or

(e) drying the heat-treated bran slurry to obtain a dried heat-treated bran, and optionally comminuting the dried heat-treated bran,

wherein the heat treatment is performed by microwave treatment, autoclaving, direct steam injection, treatment in a tubular heat exchanger, or treatment in a scrape surface heat exchanger.

2. The method according to any one of claims 1, wherein the bran is provided in the form of ground bran.

3. The method according to any one of claims 1 or 2, wherein the bran is bran from cereals selected from the group of barley, corn, millet, oat, rice, rye, sorghum, spelt or wheat, or from pseudo-cereals selected from the group of buckwheat or quinoa.

4. A flavour composition comprising heat-treated bran obtained by a method according to any one of claims 1 to 3, the flavour composition having properties delaying the development of rancid off-notes in a food product susceptible to rancidification.

5. The flavour composition according to claim 4, comprising an increased amount of a flavour compound selected from the group consisting of 2,3-butanedione, 2-acetylthiazole, guaiacol, 4-vinylguaiacol, vanillin, furfural, 4-hydroxy-2,5-dimethyl-3(*2H*)-furanone, 2-acetyl-1-pyrroline, 2,3,5-trimethylpyrazine and 2-furylmethanethiol, 2-methyl-3-furanthiol, as compared to a composition comprising non-heat-treated bran.

6. The flavour composition according to claim 4 or 5, the flavour composition exhibiting a flavour note selected from the group consisting of caramel, toasty, biscuity, vanilla-like, smoky, meaty, savoury, and spicy.

7. Use of a flavour composition according to any one of claims 4 to 6 as a flavour ingredient in a food product.

8. Use of a flavour composition according to any one of claims 4 to 6 as an ingredient for delaying the development of rancid off-notes in a food product susceptible to rancidification.

9. A method of flavouring and/or of delaying the development of rancid off-flavours in a food product, said method comprising using a flavour composition according to any one of claims 4 to 6.

10. A food product comprising a flavour composition according to any one of claims 4 to 6.

11. The food product according to claim 10, where said food product comprises at least 25% dry weight of plant-based material.

12. The food product according to any one of claims 10 or 11, wherein the plant-based material is selected from cereals, pseudo-cereals, legumes, pulses and mixes thereof.

13. The food product according to any one of claims 10 to 12, wherein said food product is selected from culinary aids, cereal products, bakery products, dairy products, dairy-like products, snacks, confectionery products, or sauces.