

HYPOTHESIS: SYNTHESIS OF A HIGH-PERFORMANCE HEMPSEED OIL VITRIMER

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Project: Hempoxies v.17.2 | Date: April 29, 2026

AI Disclosure: Model Gemini 1.5 Pro | Verification State: Document-Verified (Hempoxies.pdf)

1. Observation & Anomaly

Current bio-derived thermosets suffer from a "performance ceiling" where high bio-content correlates with low mechanical strength (< 50 MPa). This anomaly stems from the plasticizing effect of long-chain fatty acids in vegetable oils and inefficient cross-linking density in standard 1:1 stoichiometric models.

2. Intelligence Requirement

Determine a deterministic pathway to transform Epoxidized Hemp Seed Oil (EHSO) into a structural-grade Covalent Adaptable Network (CAN) with tensile strength exceeding 180 MPa while maintaining full recyclability.

3. The Hypothesis (The Formula)

A specific fixed-datum stoichiometry of 1:0.8 (Epoxy:Carboxyl) utilizing a tri-functional organic acid and a furan-based reactive diluent will rigidify the hemp matrix, creating a vitrimer that transitions from a permanent thermoset to a processable state via associative transesterification.

$$M_{total} = [1.0 \text{ EHSO} : 0.8 \text{ Citric Acid}] + 1.0\% \text{ Zn(OAc)}_2 + 8.9\% \text{ FGE}$$

4. Design Experiment (Methodology)

Step 1: Epoxidation. Convert raw hemp seed oil to EHSO, targeting an Iodine Value $IV > 150$.

Step 2: Dilution. Integrate 8.9 wt% Furfuryl Glycidyl Ether (FGE) to achieve viscosity $\eta < 500 \text{ cP}$ at 40°C .

Step 3: Catalysis. Dissolve 1.0 wt% Zinc Acetate into the EHSO/FGE mixture at 80°C .

Step 4: Cross-linking. Introduce Citric Acid at the 0.8 stoichiometric ratio. The epoxy-rich environment ensures the availability of free hydroxyl groups for later exchange.

Step 5: Thermal Cure. Progressive ramp to 160°C to reach the Topology Freezing Temperature (T_v).

5. Analysis: Why It Works

Associative Transesterification

The Zinc Acetate acts as a Lewis Acid catalyst, facilitating bond exchange without network breakage. The relaxation kinetics follow the Arrhenius law: $\tau(T) = \tau_0 \exp(E_a / RT)$. This allows the hemp seed oil chains to "slide" past one another under heat/pressure for repair, yet remain locked in a rigid state during service.

Rigidification via FGE & Citric Acid

The furan ring in FGE and the compact tri-functional bridge of Citric Acid counteract the flexibility of hemp fatty acids. This synergy moves the material from a "rubbery" bio-plastic to a "glassy" structural composite.

6. Conclusion (Projected Targets)

Metric	Target Value	Scientific Basis
Tensile Strength	> 180 MPa	Furan-ring rigidification
Elastic Modulus	> 3.5 GPa	Fixed-datum cross-link density
Recyclability	100% (Solid State)	Associative Transesterification

Keywords: Hempoxies, Vitrimer, EHSO, Transesterification, Covalent Adaptable Networks, Bio-Nanocomposites, Citric Acid.