**Cover Letter**

Dear editor,

Enclosed is a manuscript detailing our recent work dealing with the microencapsulation of sunflower oil was performed using cactus mucilage, cactus mucilage/carboxymethylcellulose, and cactus mucilage/chitosan (CM/Chi) as coacervates. This manuscript has not been published before, nor at the same time, in whole or in part, submitted for publication elsewhere. Furthermore, all coauthors have read and contributed to the paper and are all aware of its content and approve its submission. Specifically, the focus of the current work was placed on the extraction of mucilage from *Opuntia ficus indica* by precipitation at different supernatant pH values (2, 4, and 12) and used as the wall material for the microencapsulation of sunflower oil*.* Cactus mucilage and the resulting microcapsules were characterised by different experimental techniques. The microcapsules crosslinked with Chi and different cactus extracts had sufficient stabilities needed to maintain their structures, with entrapment efficiency ringing from 87 to 95%. The sunflower oil was successfully encapsulated by complex coacervation using cactus extract as the carrier material.

The manuscript entitled **«** **The use of mucilage extracted from *Opuntia ficus indica* as microencapsulating shell »** by Hanedi Elhleli, Faten Mannai, Ramzi Khiari and Younes Moussaoui, which we request you to consider for publication in **"*Journal of the Serbian Chemical Society*"**

We confirm that:

- The article has been written by the stated authors who are all aware of its content and approve its submission.

- The work described has not been published before.

- The article is not under consideration for publication elsewhere.

- No conflict of interest exists, or if such conflict exists, the exact nature must be declared.

- If accepted, the article will not be published elsewhere in the same form, in English or in any other language, without the written consent of the Publisher.

Suggested reviewers:

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We believe that the findings of this study are relevant to the scope of your journal and will be of interest to its readership.

We look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely yours.

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