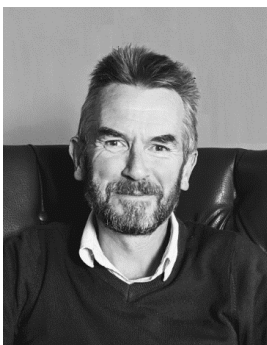


## What's the point in the end-point?

### A determination of the true sublimation end point by Through-Vial Impedance Spectroscopy

Prof. Geoff Smith

School of Pharmacy, De Montfort University, Leicester, UK



DMU LyoGroup

Leicester School of Pharmacy  
De Montfort University, The Gateway, Leicester, LE1 9BH, UK  
[gsmith02@dmu.ac.uk](mailto:gsmith02@dmu.ac.uk)



In collaboration with



# Overview

- Process analytical technologies for freeze-drying (single vial and batch techniques)
- Introduction to through-via impedance spectroscopy (TVIS)
- Case study : Primary drying end point
  - Separation between sublimation (primary drying) and diffusive desorption (secondary drying)
  - The impact of phase states (crystalline vs amorphous) on the end point profile
- Conclusion that:
  - Existing, vapour and temperature sensing PATs cannot differentiate between source of water vapour (ice or adsorbed water)
  - TVIS provides identification of true sublimation (primary drying) end point

# Process Analytical Technology (PAT)

PAT, as defined by the ICH, is “a system for **designing, analysing and controlling** the manufacturing through timely measurement (during the process) of critical quality and performance attributes of raw and in-process materials and the process with the goal of ensuring final product quality”

ICH, 2009. International Conference on Harmonisation of Technical Requirements for Registration of Pharmaceuticals for Human Use  
Topic Q8(R2): Pharmaceutical Development.

## Single vial (new) techniques

- Through vial impedance spectroscopy

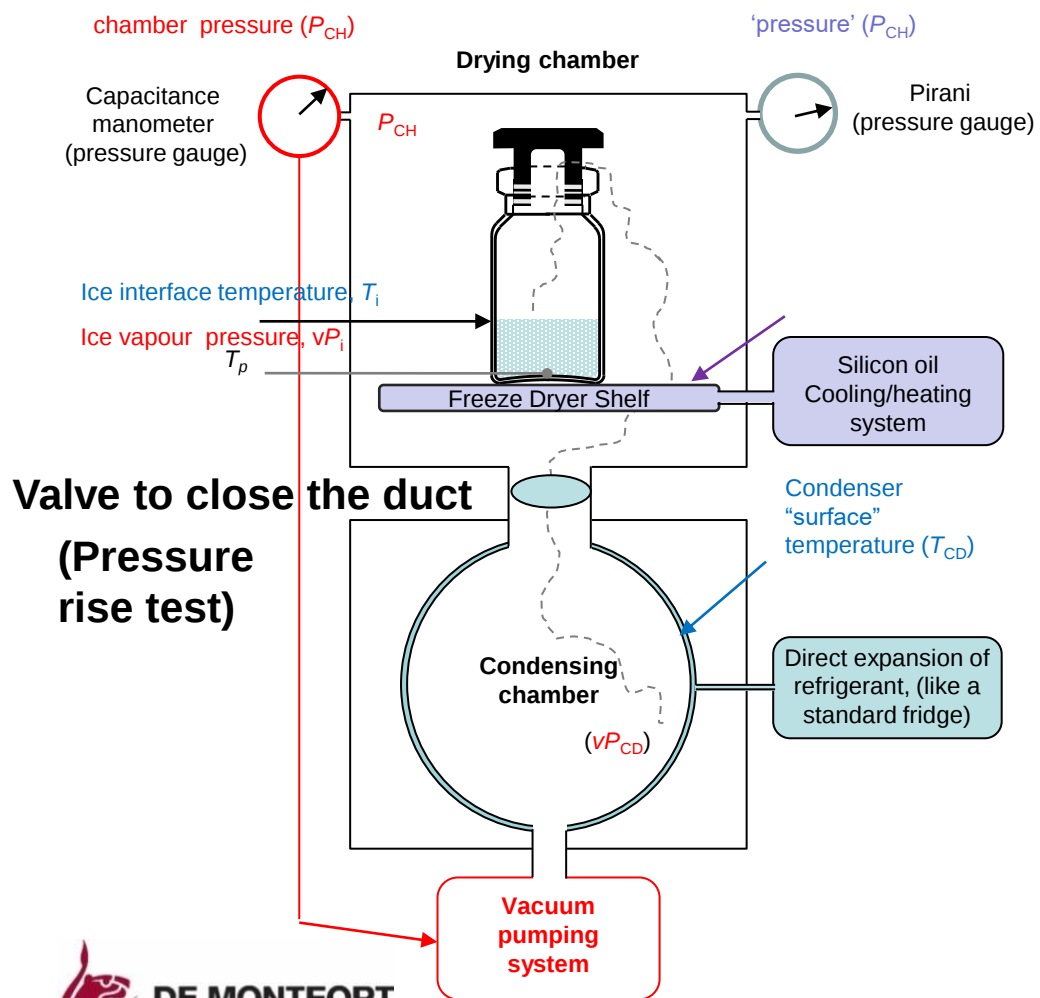
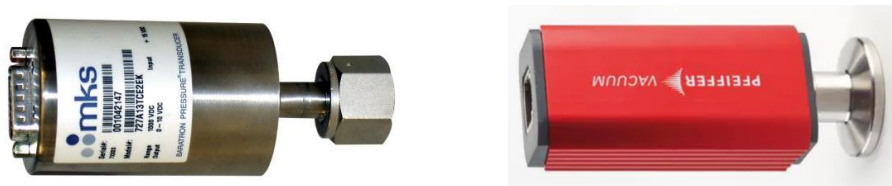
## Single vial (existing) techniques

- Temperature probes
- Heat flux transducers
- Microbalance

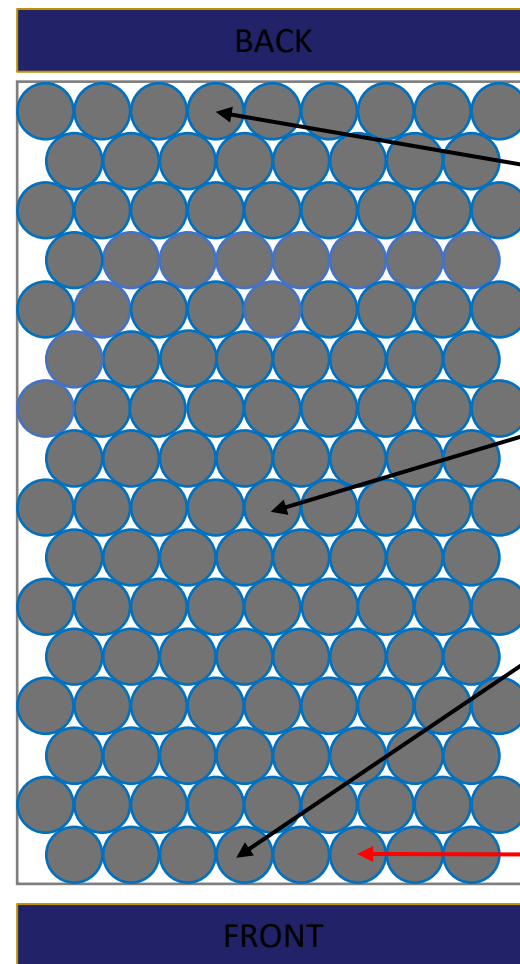
## Batch techniques

- Pressure rise test (PRT)
- Manometric temperature measurement (MTM)
- Comparative pressure measurement (CPM) – Pirani vs capacitance manometer
- Time domain laser absorption spectroscopy (TDLAS)

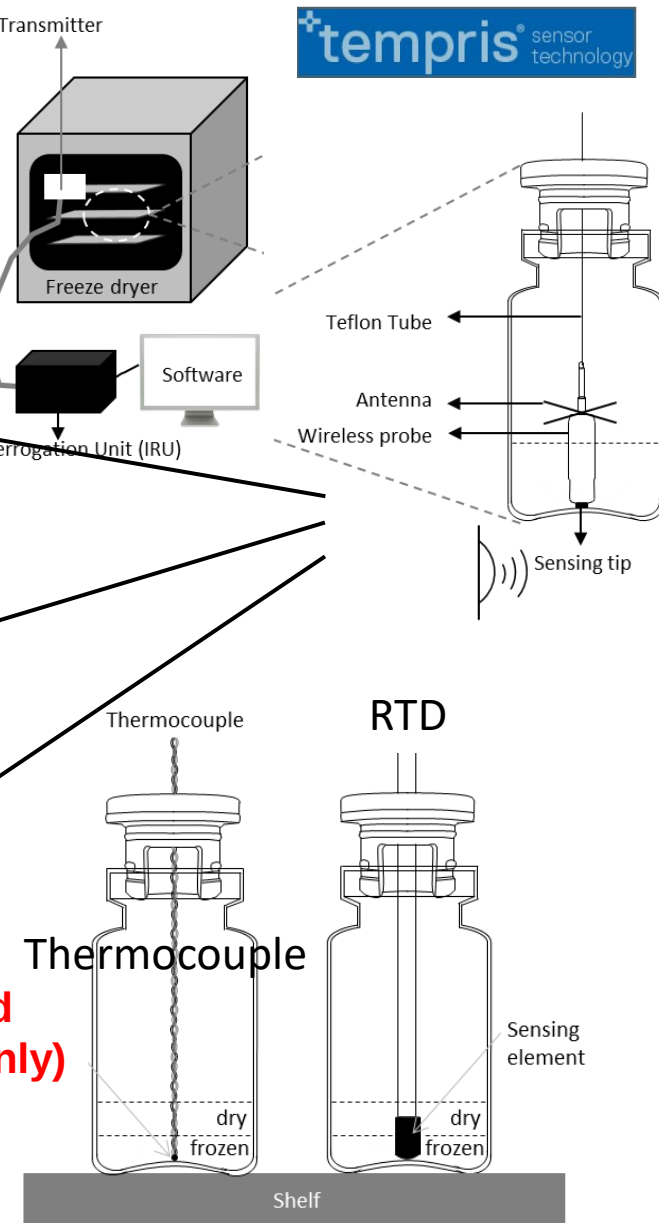
## Comparative pressure measurement



## Wireless (any location)

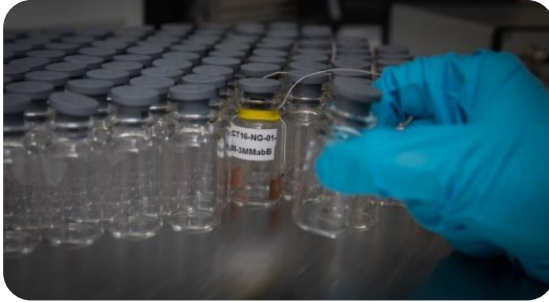


## Wired (front only)



# Through Vial Impedance Spectroscopy

Non- perturbing to  
packing of vials



- Temperature calibration
- using nearest neighbour vial(s)

Low thermal mass of  
electrodes

- no interference with heat  
transfer & drying rates

Single Vial PAT

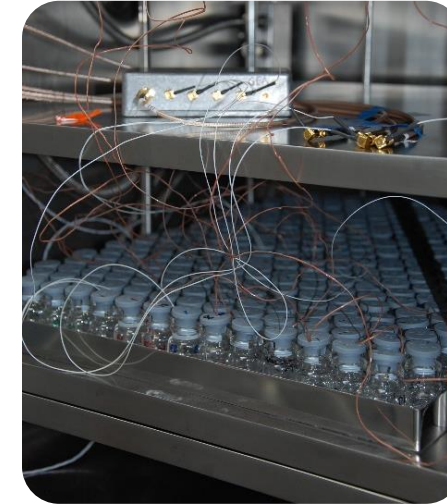


Plain vial

TVIS vial

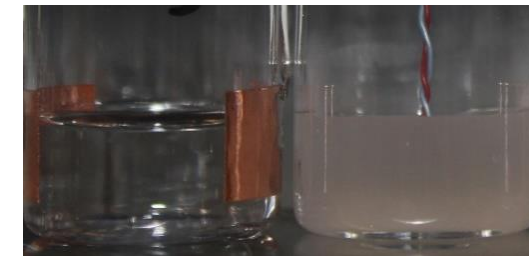
TC vial

Multichannel



Thin flexible cables  
(0.5 - 2 m)

- Stoppering  
unaffected



Non-sample invasive  
no impact on ice nucleation

## **CASE STUDY**

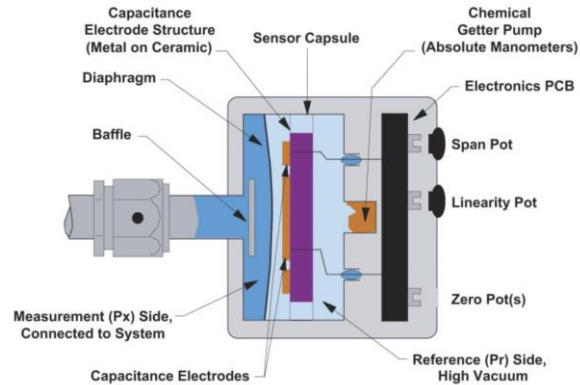
### **Primary drying end point**

**Separation between sublimation (primary drying)  
and diffusive desorption (secondary drying)**

**The impact of phase states (crystalline vs  
amorphous) on the end point profile**

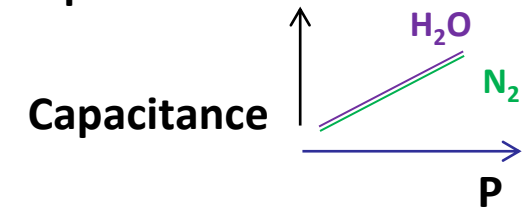
# Comparative pressure measurement (CPM)

## Capacitance manometer

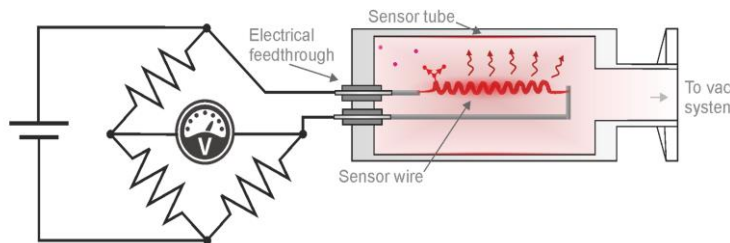


Pressure changes position of a diaphragm which alters the electrical capacitance of the system

**Sensitive to total pressure**

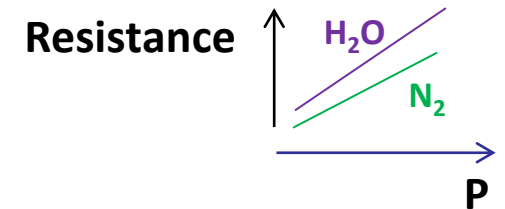


## Pirani gauge



Gas molecules collide with the element and removes heat changing the resistance

**Sensitive to type of gas,  
e.g., N<sub>2</sub>, H<sub>2</sub>O**



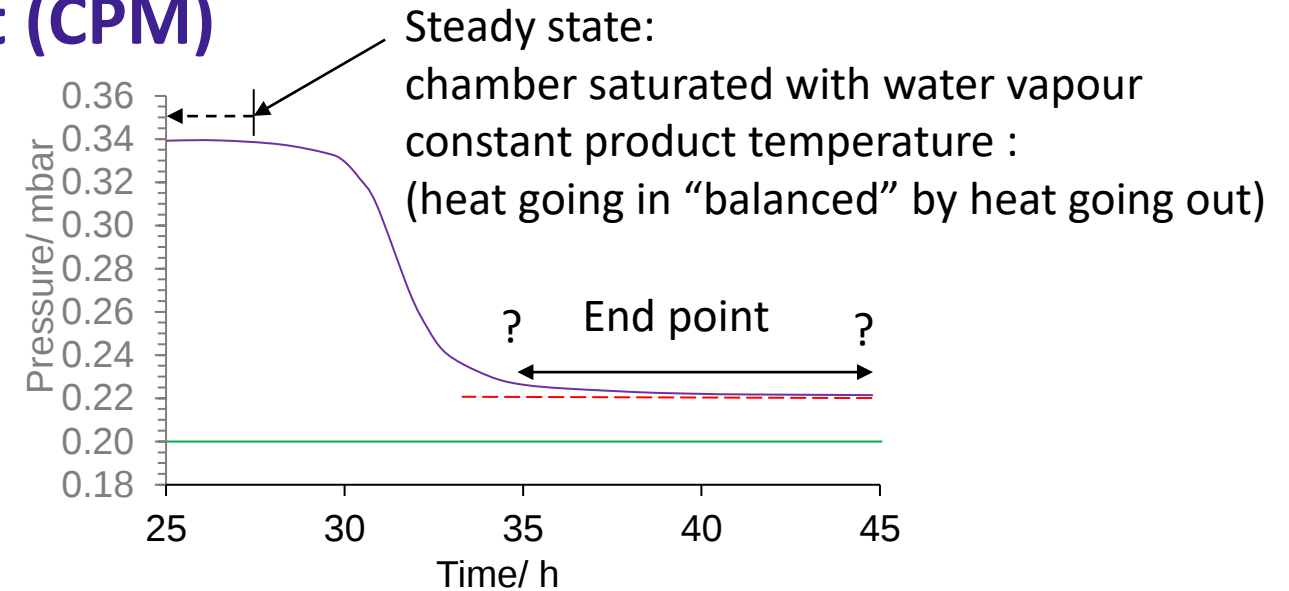
# Comparative pressure measurement (CPM)



Pirani



Capacitance manometer

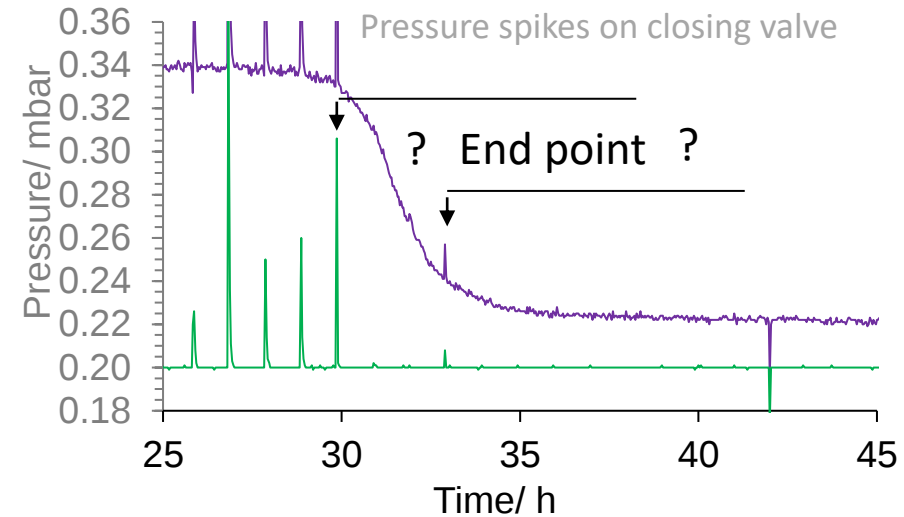
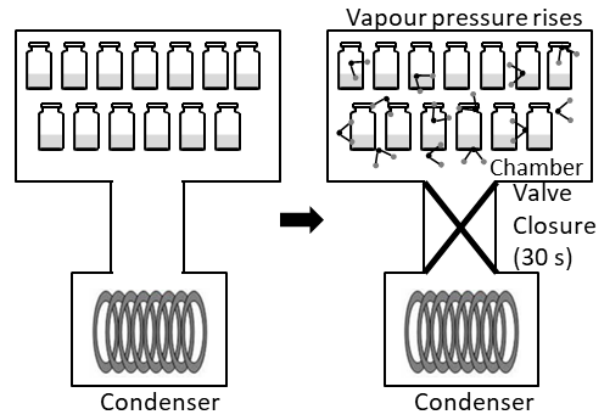


- Comparative pressure measurement (CPM):
  - Capacitance manometer responds to absolute gas pressure
  - Pirani response to water vapour is  $\sim 1.6 \times$  that of the capacitance manometer
  - Therefore, Pirani output is higher than the CM while water vapour is being generated
- When drying is complete the Pirani converges on the capacitance manometer

**But when has an asymptote been reached?**

**And does the end of sublimation coincide with the asymptote?**

# Pressure Rise Test (PRT)



- Pressure rise testing (PRT)
  - Brief (up to 30 s) isolation of the valve between drying chamber and condenser
  - Results in spikes (pressure rises) in both Pirani and capacitance manometer readings
  - Reason :
    - water vapour is released from the product during the drying stages
    - Vapour can not vent to the condenser when the valve is closed
    - Pressure rise occurs until the valve is opened again

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*Research Article*

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## Determination of End Point of Primary Drying in Freeze-Drying Process Control

Sajal M. Patel,<sup>1</sup> Takayuki Doen,<sup>1,2</sup> and Michael J. Pikal<sup>1,3</sup>

*Received 9 June 2009; accepted 9 December 2009; published online 8 January 2010*

**Abstract.** Freeze-drying is a relatively expensive process requiring long processing time, and hence one of the key objectives during freeze-drying process development is to minimize the primary drying time, which is the longest of the three steps in freeze-drying. However, increasing the shelf temperature into secondary drying before all of the ice is removed from the product will likely cause collapse or eutectic melt. Thus, from product quality as well as process economics standpoint, it is very critical to detect the end of primary drying. Experiments were conducted with 5% mannitol and 5% sucrose as model systems. The apparent end point of primary drying was determined by comparative pressure measurement (i.e., Pirani vs. MKS Baratron), dew point, Lyotrack (gas plasma spectroscopy), water concentration from tunable diode laser absorption spectroscopy, condenser pressure, pressure rise test (manometric temperature measurement or variations of this method), and product thermocouples. Vials were pulled out from the drying chamber using a sample thief during late primary and early secondary drying to determine percent residual moisture either gravimetrically or by Karl Fischer, and the cake structure was determined visually for melt-back, collapse, and retention of cake structure at the apparent end point of primary drying (i.e., onset, midpoint, and offset). By far, the Pirani is the best choice of the methods tested for evaluation of the end point of primary drying. Also, it is a batch technique, which is cheap, steam sterilizable, and easy to install without requiring any modification to the existing dryer.

**KEY WORDS:** end point; freeze-drying; PAT; primary drying; residual water.

**Freeze-dryer:** Lyostar II (SP Industries)

**Shelves :** 3 (total area 0.5 m<sup>2</sup>)

**Chamber door :** sampling thief

**Solutions :** 5% w/v sucrose; 5% w/v mannitol

**Filtered:** 0.22- $\mu$ m membrane

**Vials :** 240 vials

**Fill volume :** 3 mL

**FD load:** center shelf.

**Product temperature:**

28-gauge copper-constantan (type T) TC

**Resolution :**  $\pm 0.1^{\circ}\text{C}$ .

**TC Position:**

Bottom center of edge and center vials.

**Sampling:** across shelf

---

*Research Article*

---

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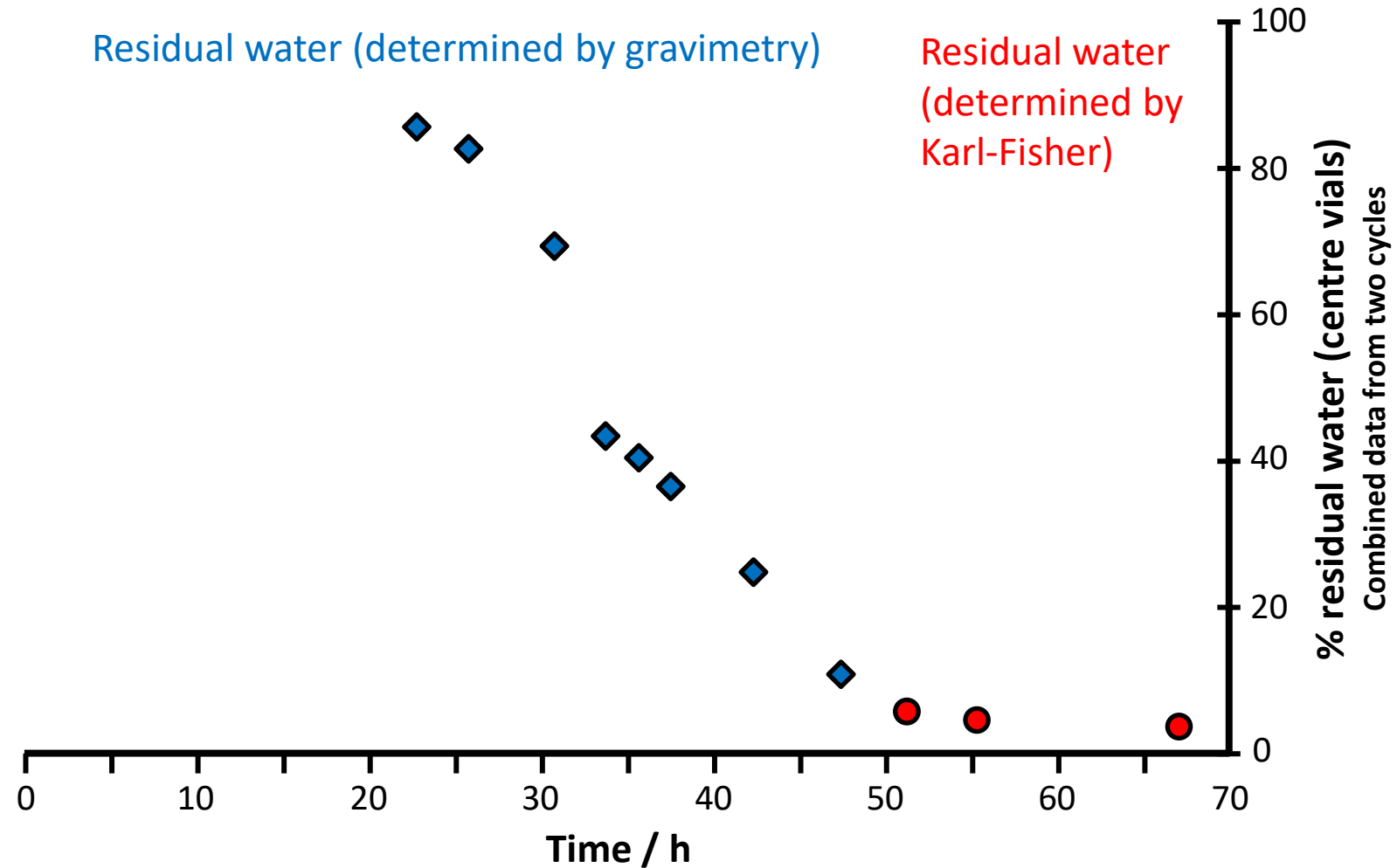
Bottom center of edge and center vials.

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Vials

## 5% sucrose (3 mL in 5 mL tubing vials)



Adapted from ...

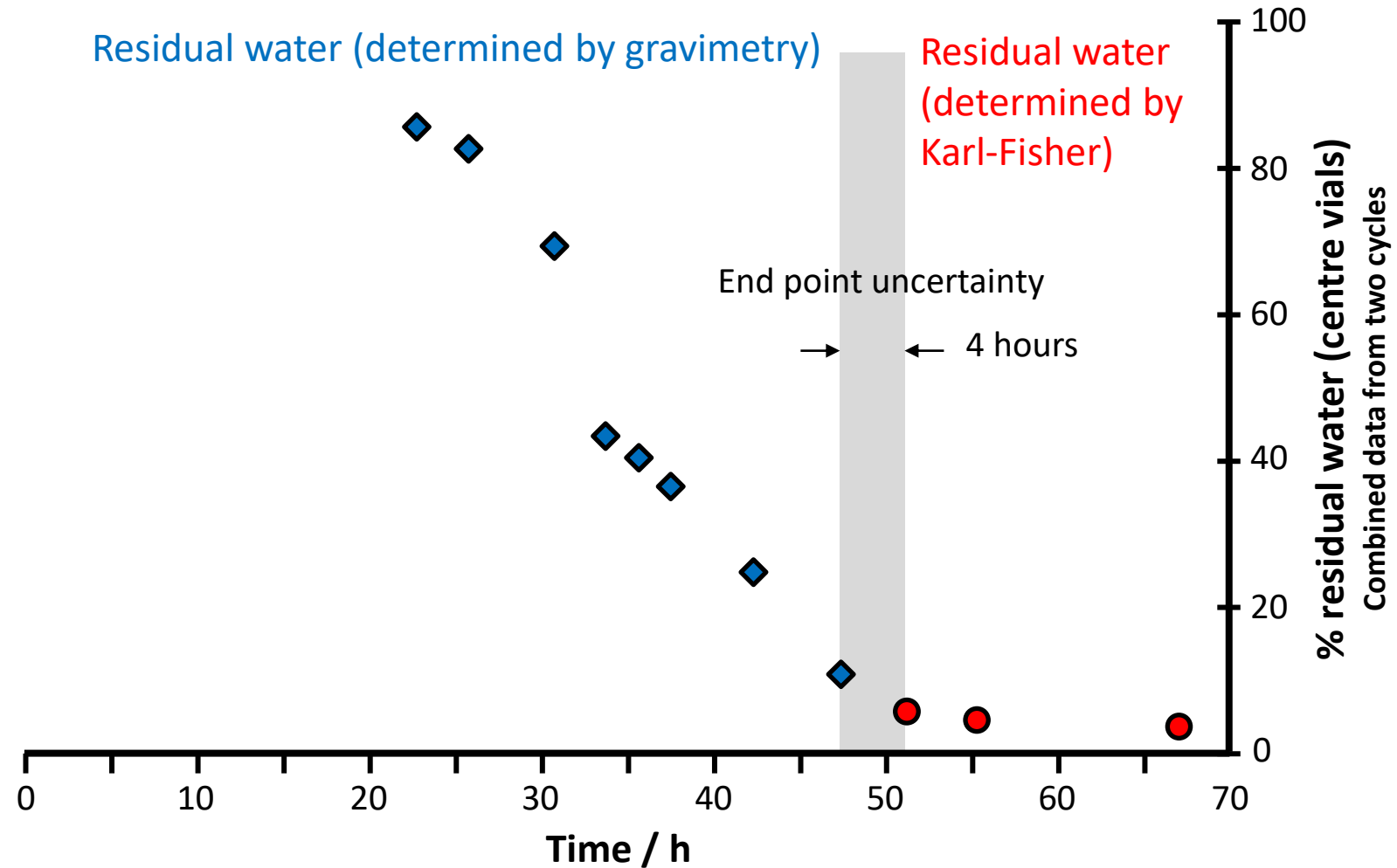
**Determination of End Point of Primary Drying in Freeze-Drying Process Control**

<https://doi.org/10.1208/s12249-009-9362-7>

Sajal M. Patel,<sup>1</sup> Takayuki Doen,<sup>1,2</sup> and Michael J. Pikal<sup>1,3</sup>

*AAPS PharmSciTech*, Vol. 11, No. 1, March 2010

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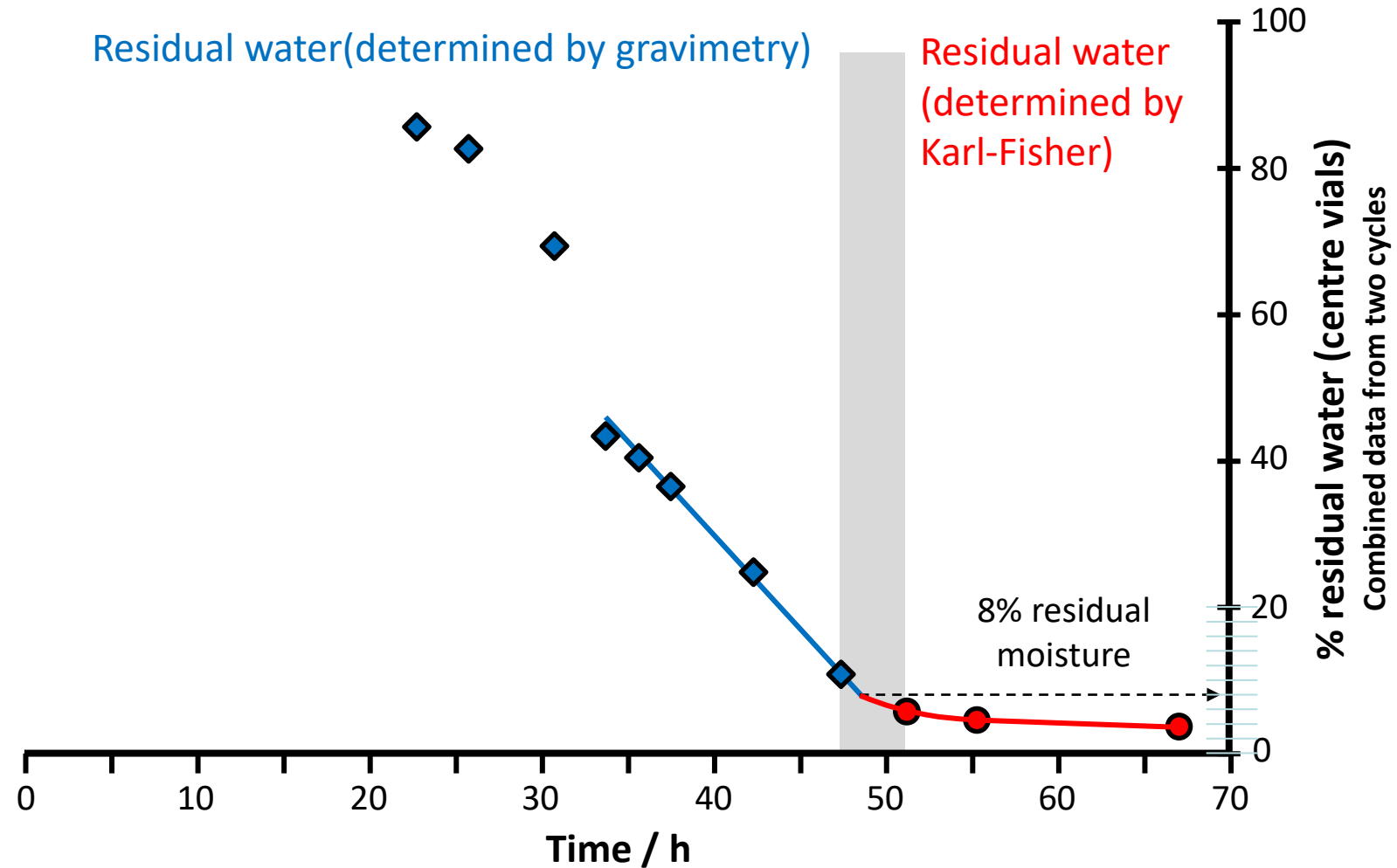
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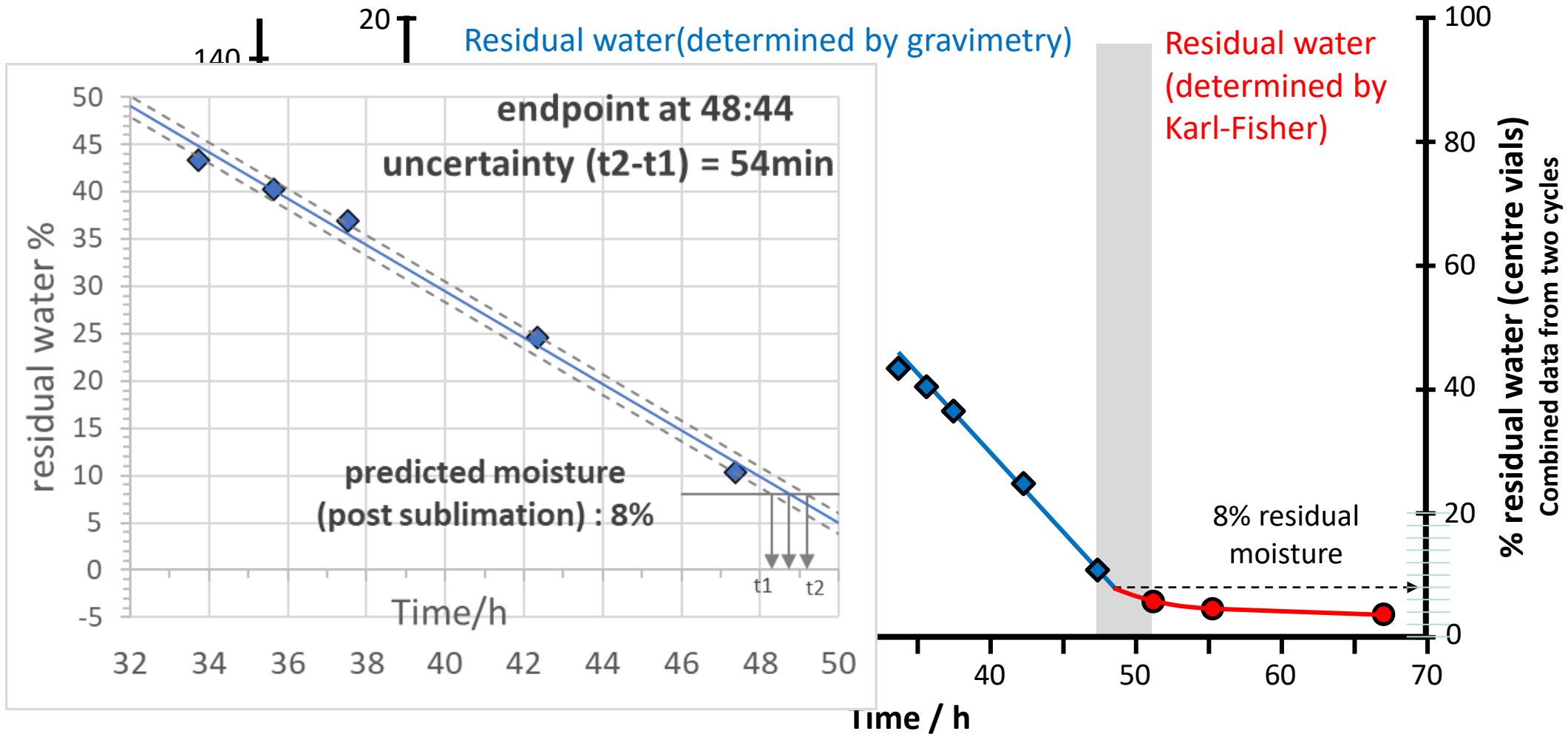
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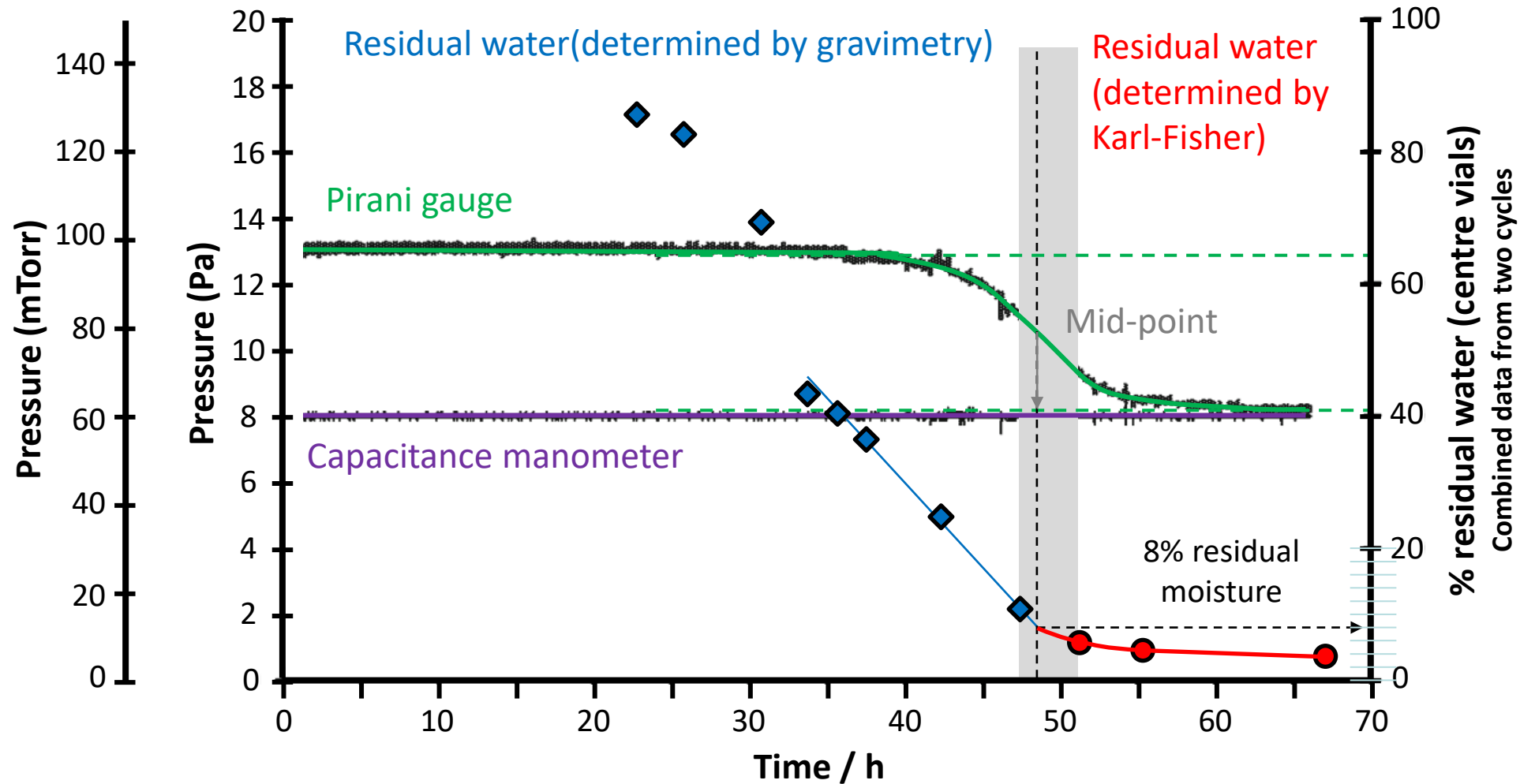
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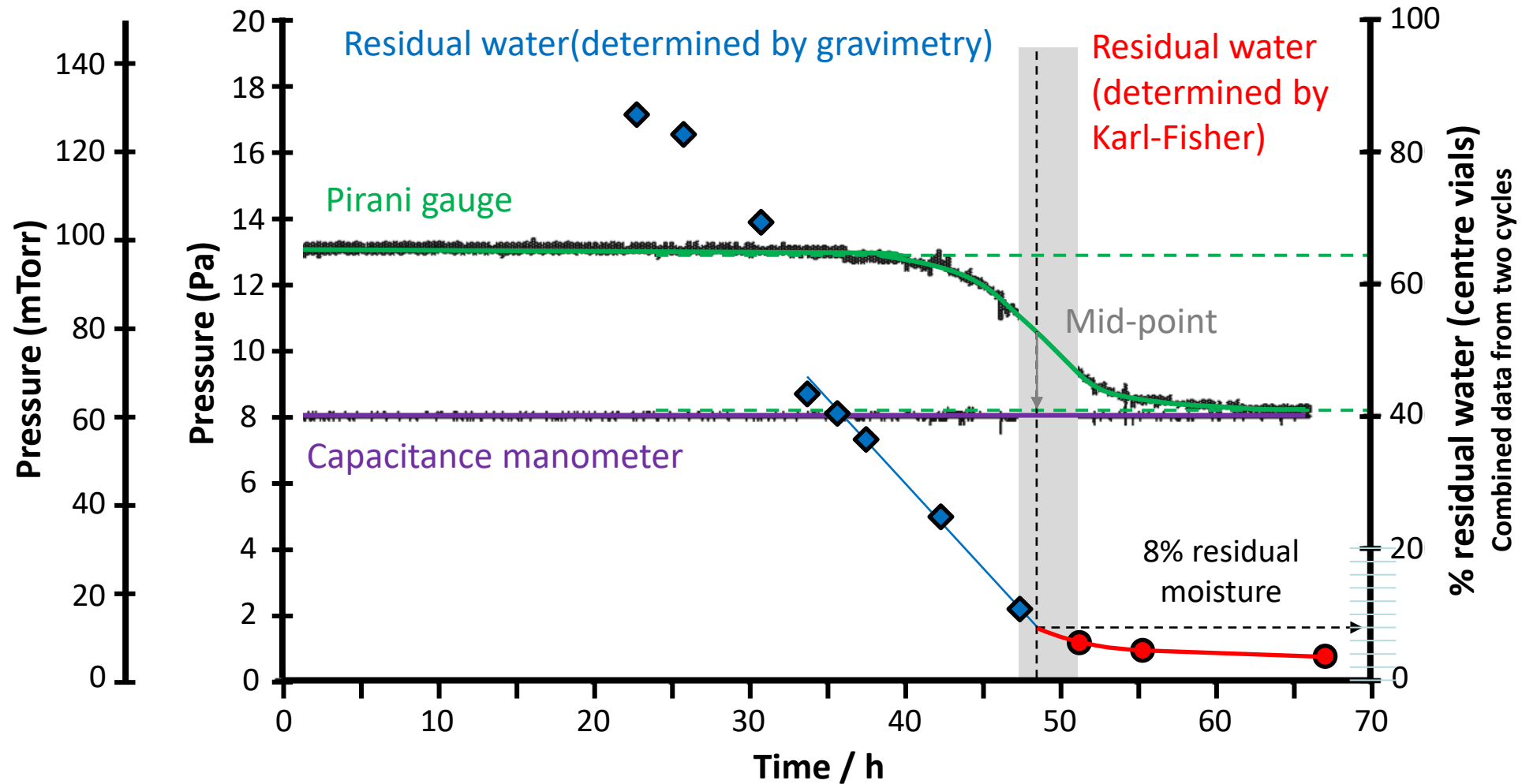
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Amorphous with  
a high water  
binding capacity

**5% sucrose** (3 mL in 5 mL tubing vials)



Adapted from ...

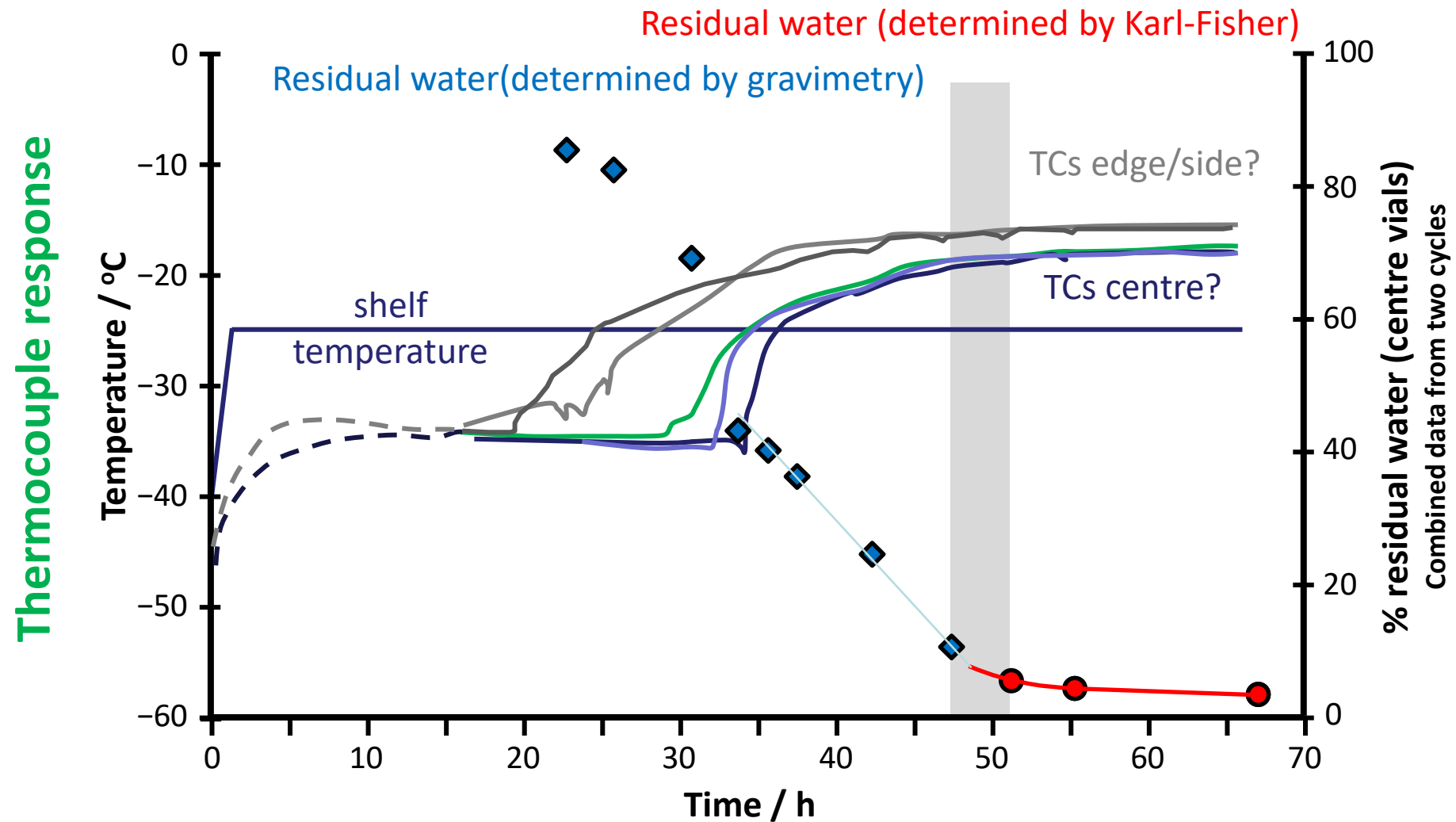
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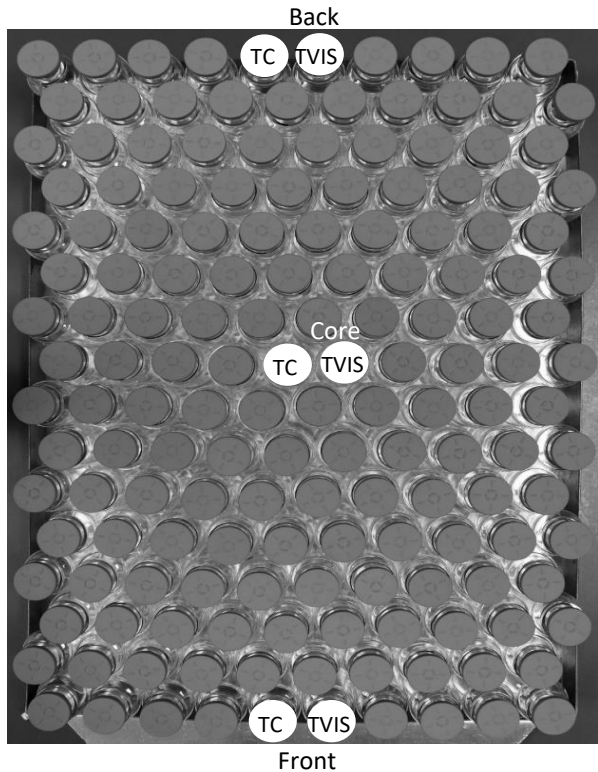
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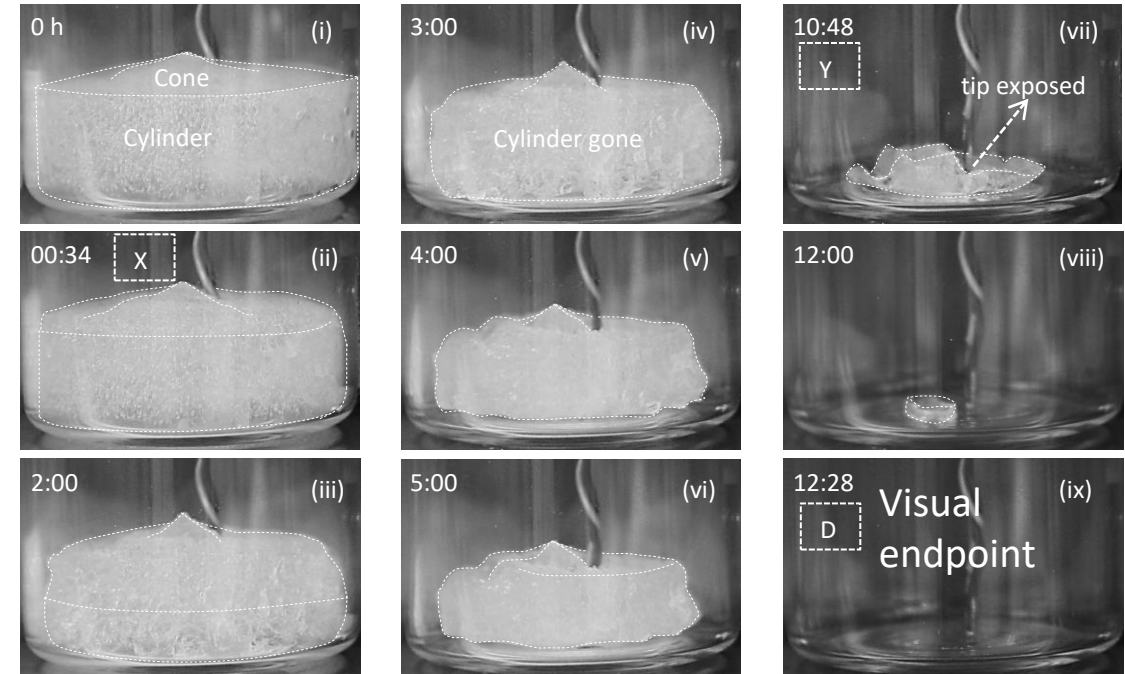
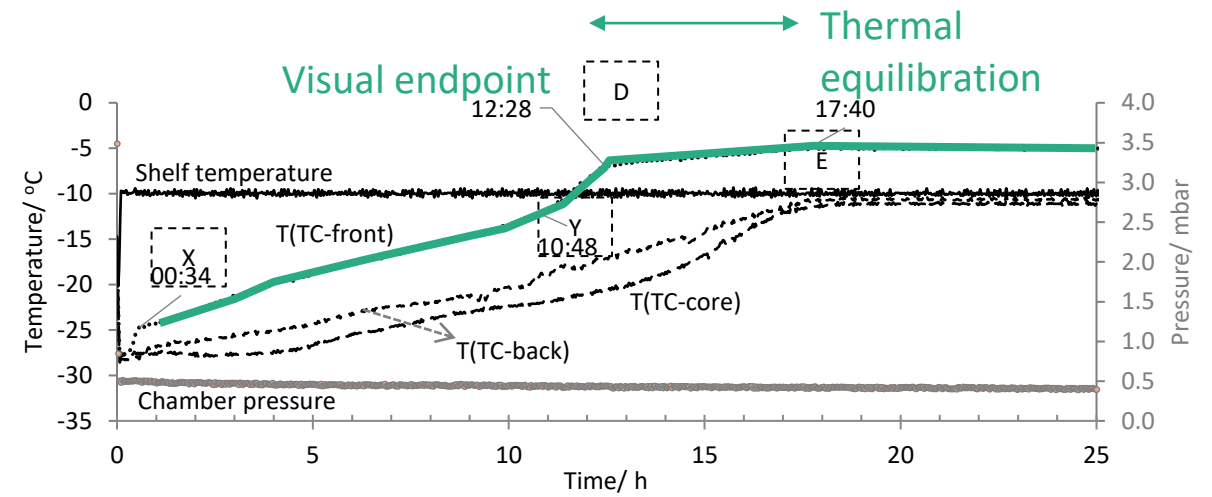
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# Thermocouple response



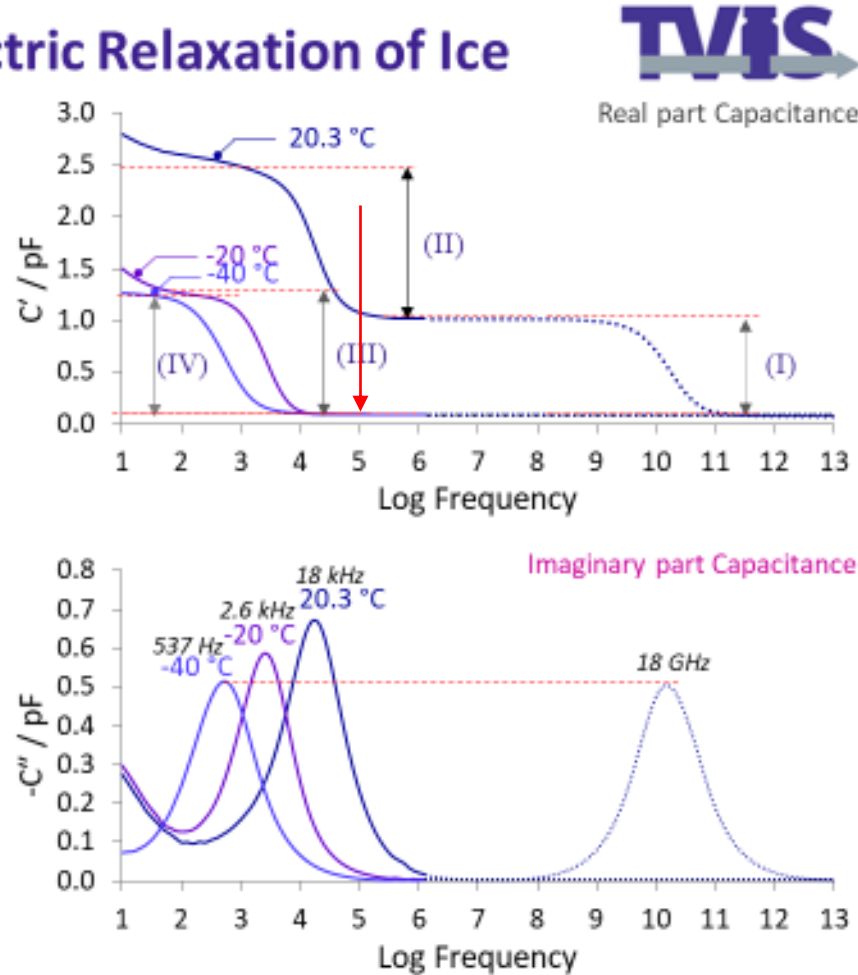
Dryer door



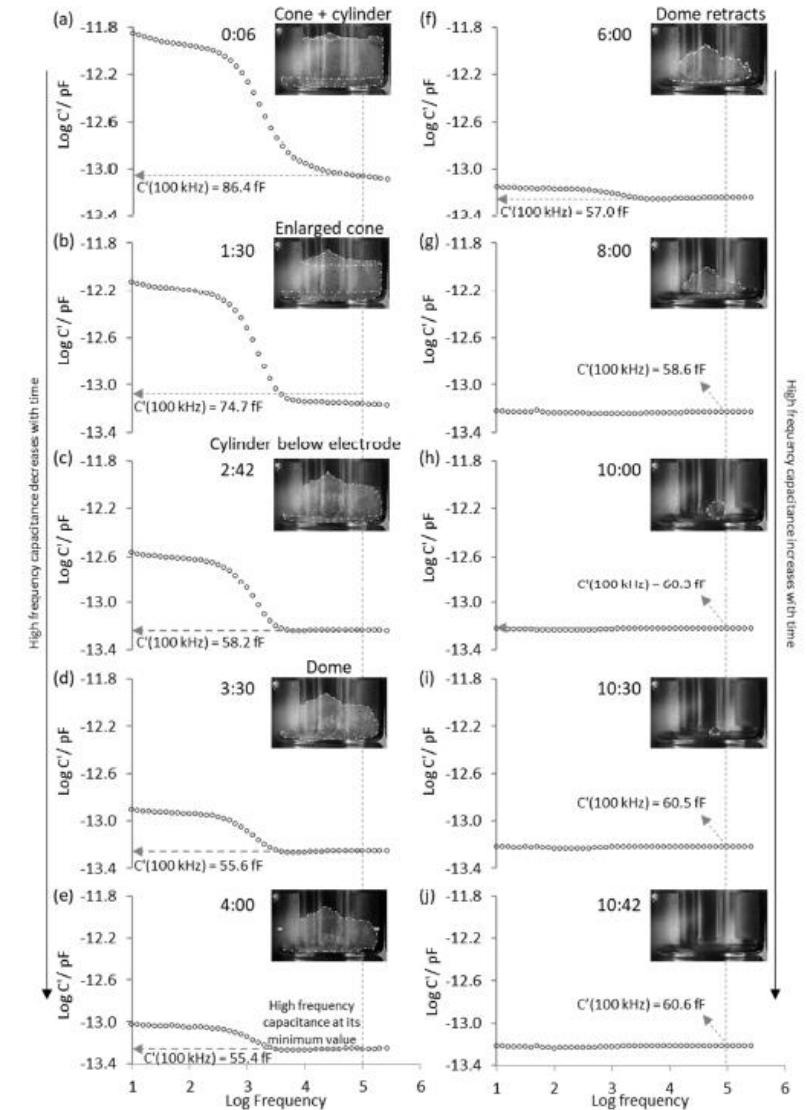
**Through Vial Impedance Spectroscopy**  
**(nanopure water)**  
**NO SOLIDS FRACTION**

## Frozen Water and Dielectric Relaxation of Ice

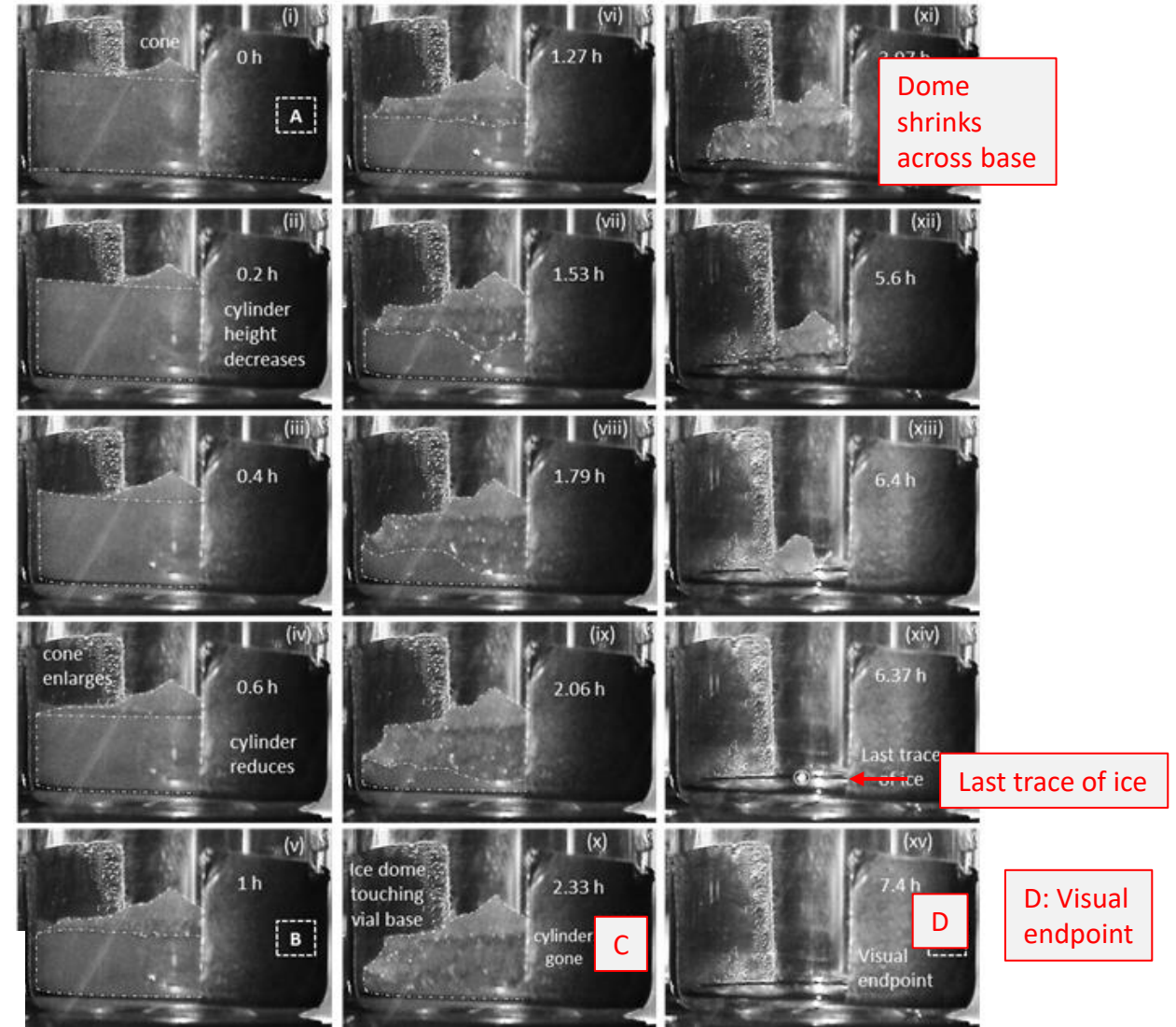
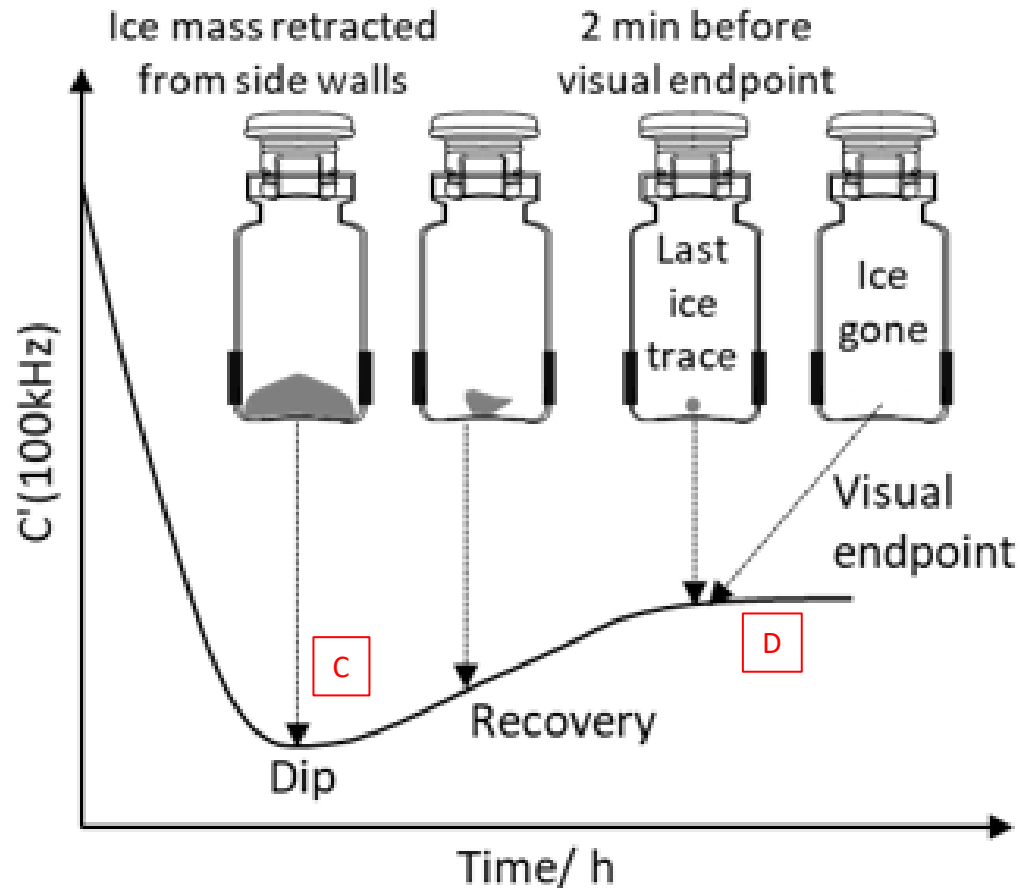
- I. : The polarization of the water dipole in liquid water at 20 °C, with a dielectric loss peak frequency of ~ 18 GHz
- II. : The Maxwell-Wagner (MW) polarization of the glass wall of the TVIS vial at 20 °C, with a dielectric loss peak frequency of 17.8 kHz
- III. : The dielectric polarization of ice at -20 °C, with a dielectric loss peak frequencies of 2.57 kHz
- IV. : The dielectric polarization of ice at -40 °C with a dielectric loss peak frequencies of 537 Hz.



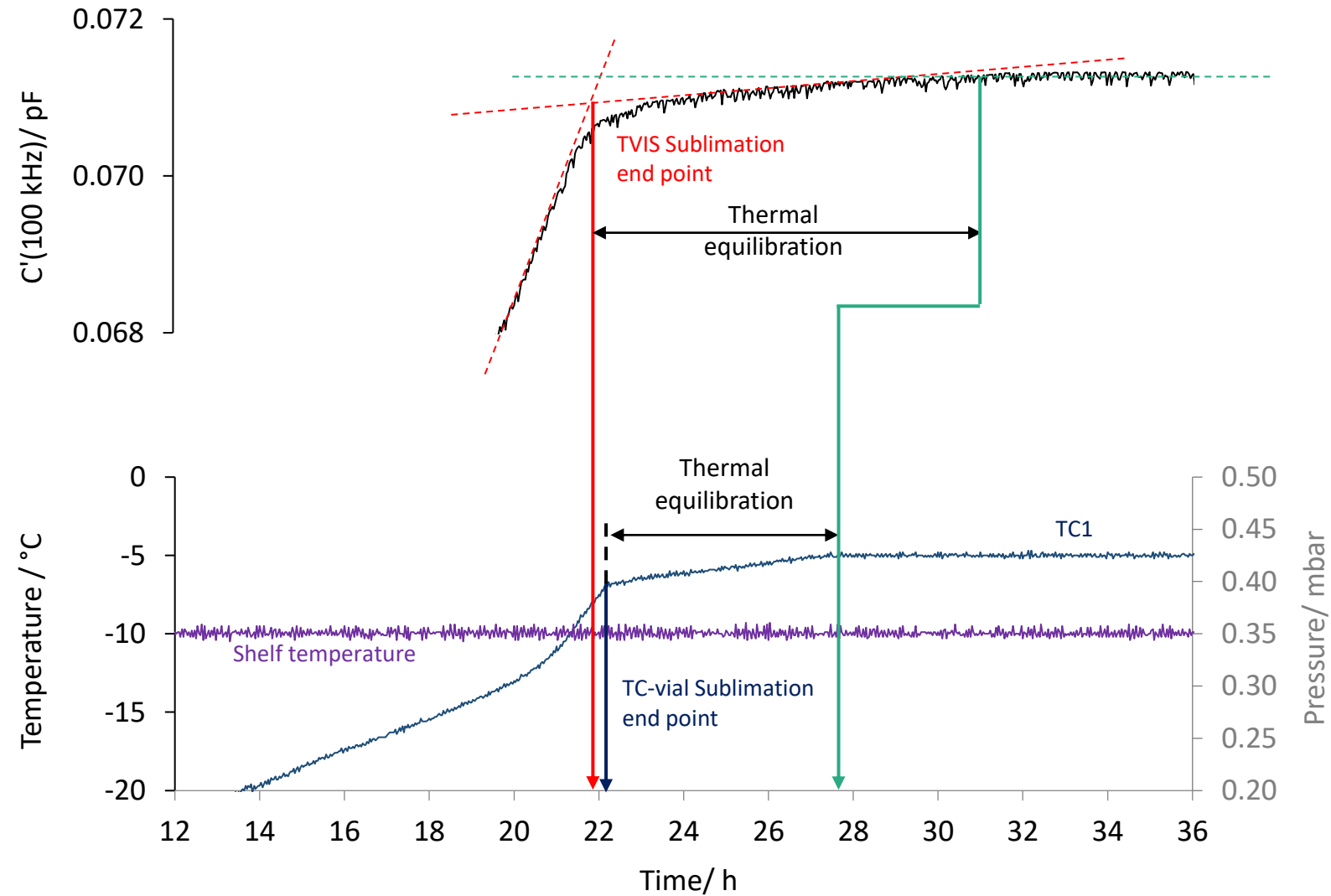
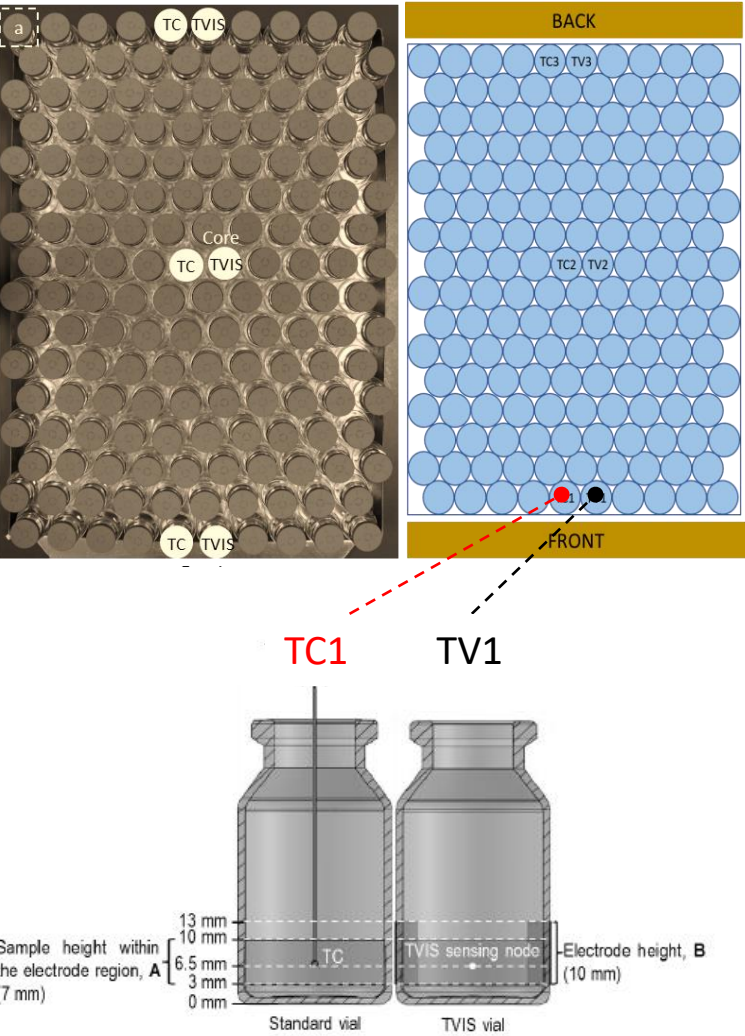
## TVIS real-part capacitance spectra



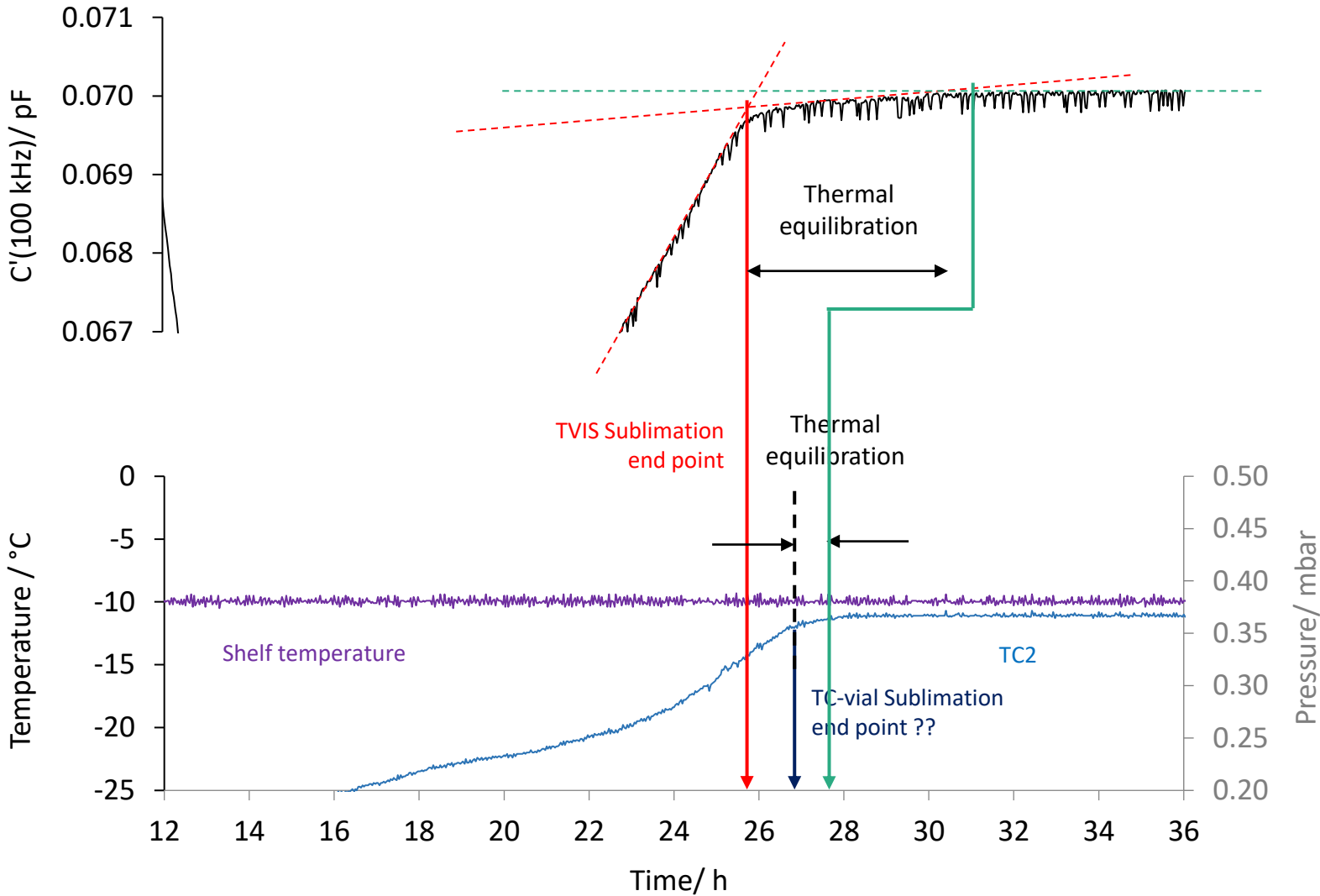
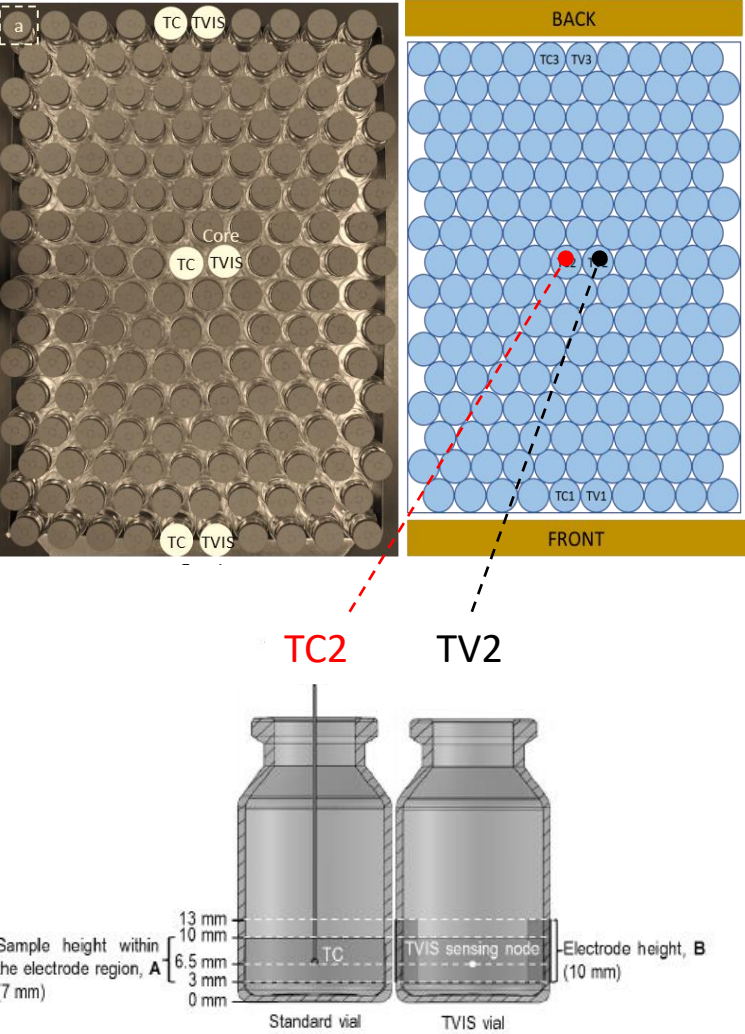
# TVIS Sublimation end point



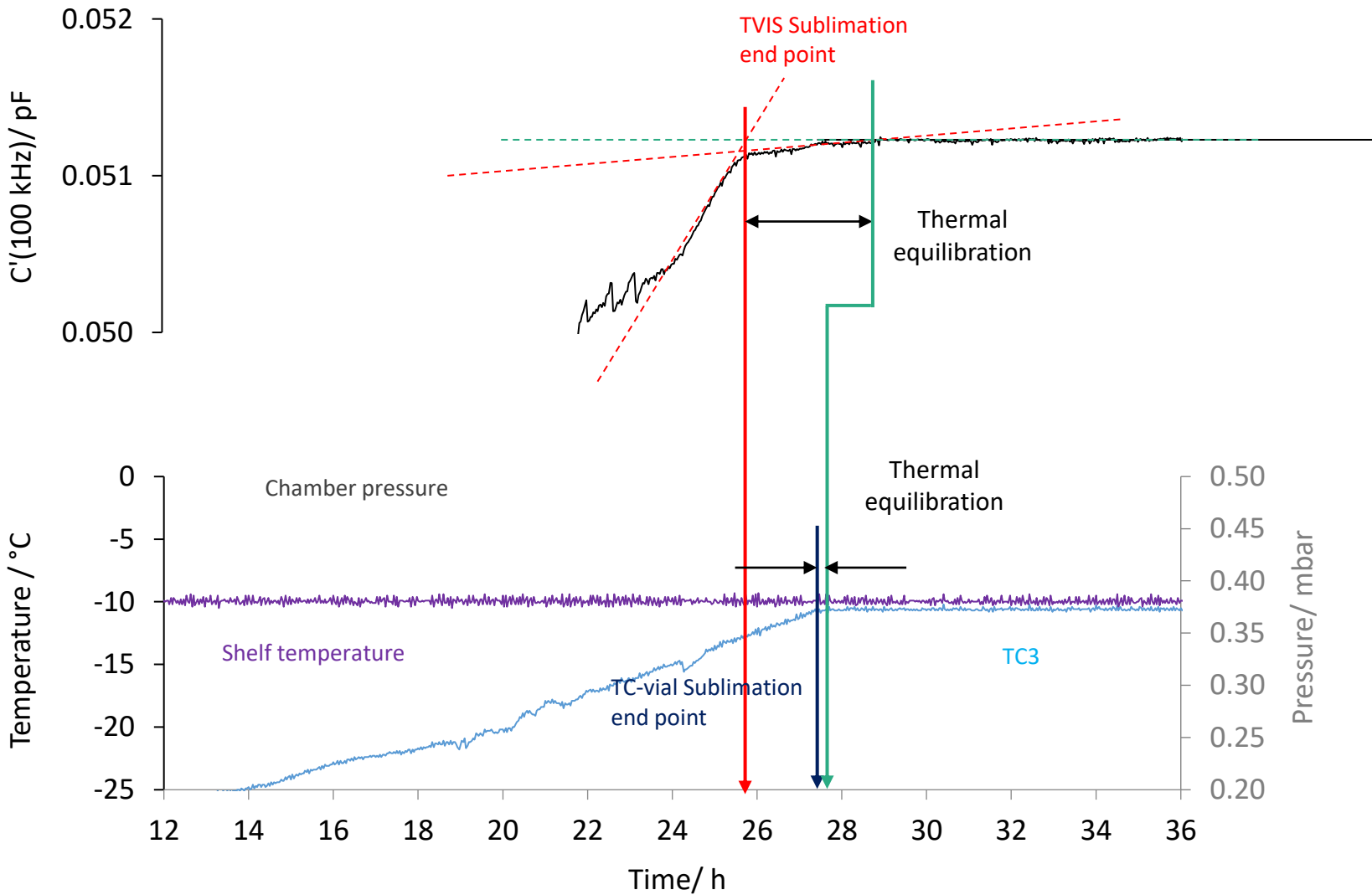
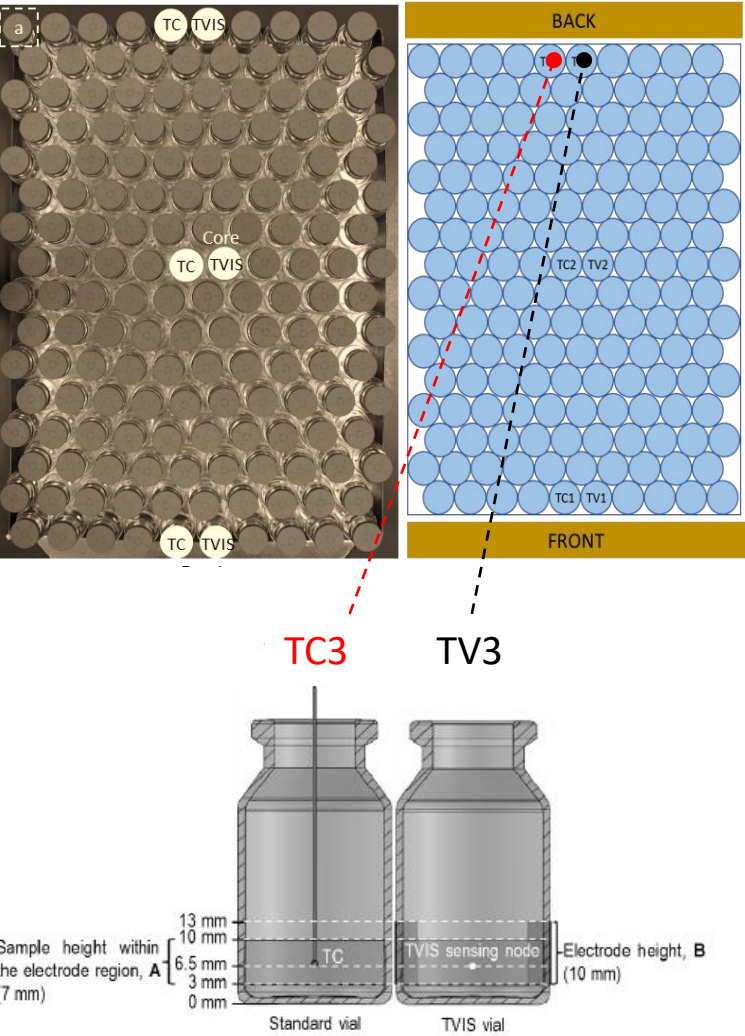
# Nano-pure water



# Nano-pure water

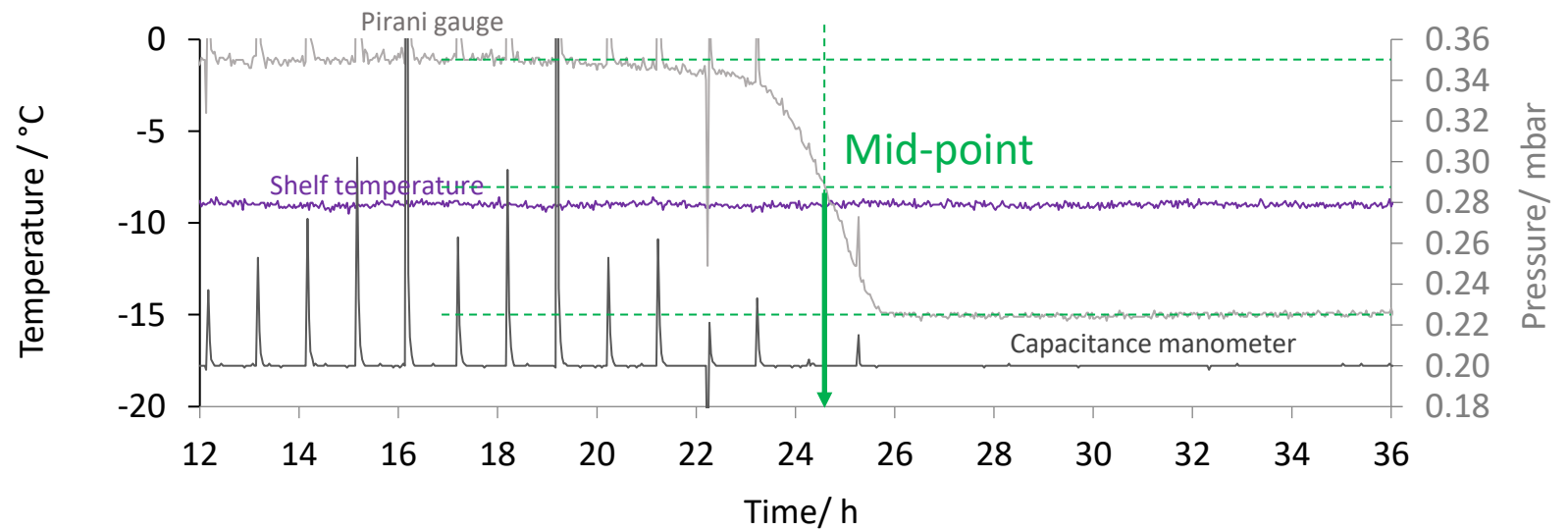
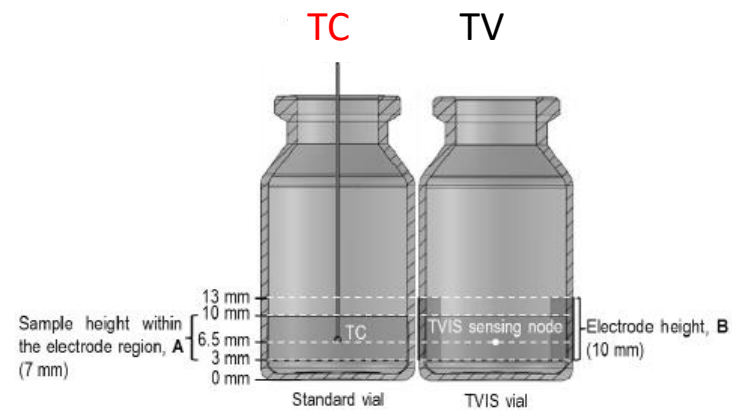
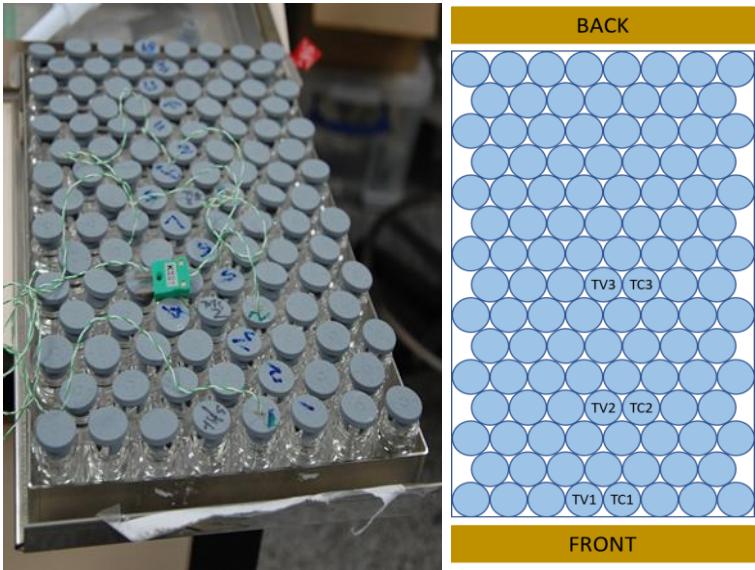


# Nano-pure water

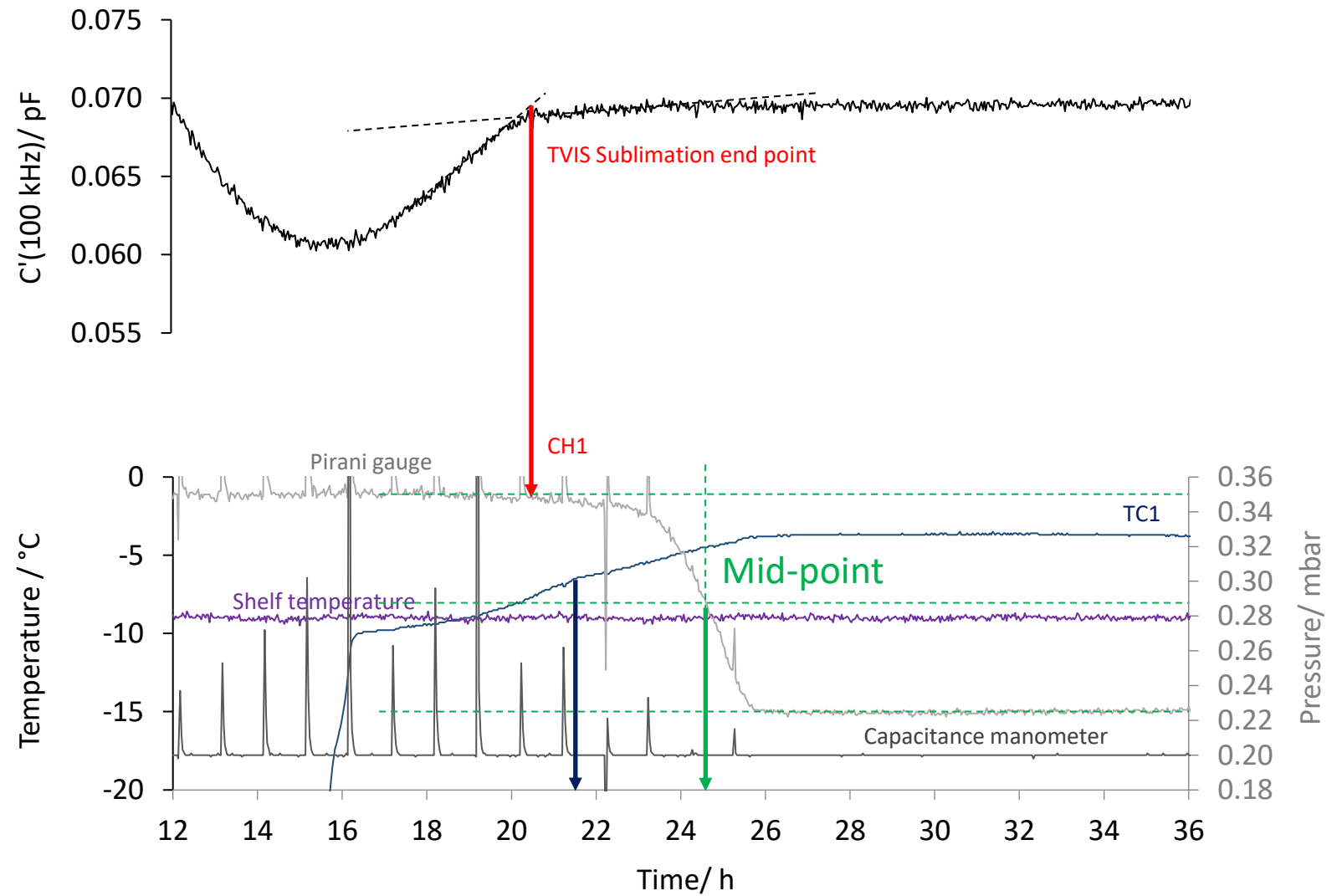
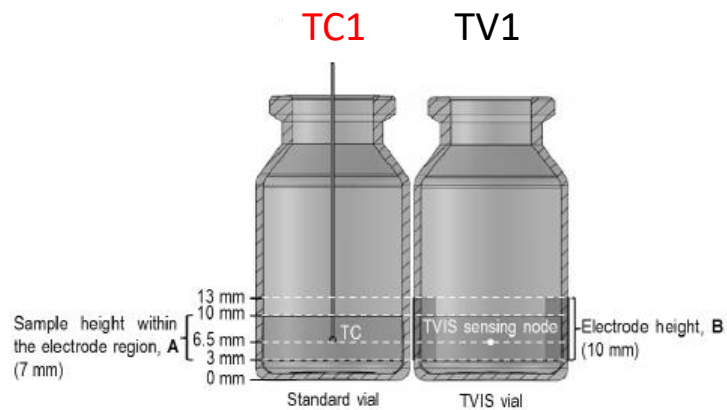
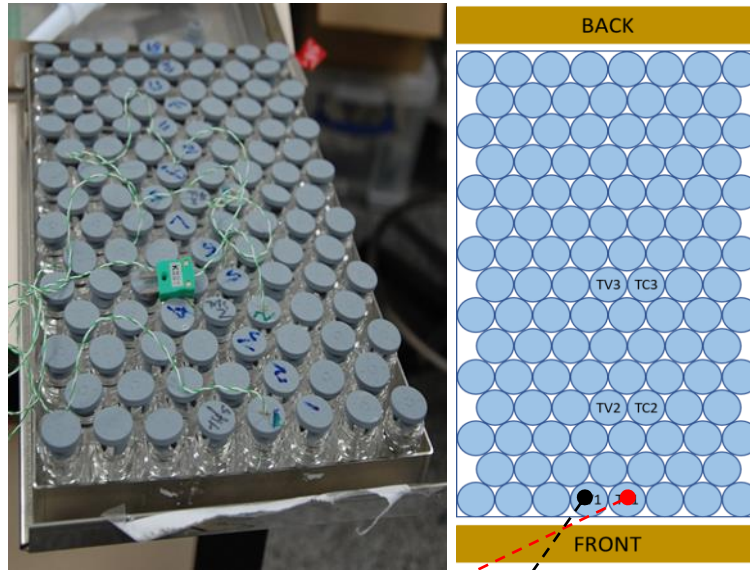


**Through Vial Impedance Spectroscopy  
(5% mannitol)  
CRYSTALLINE SOLIDS FRACTION**

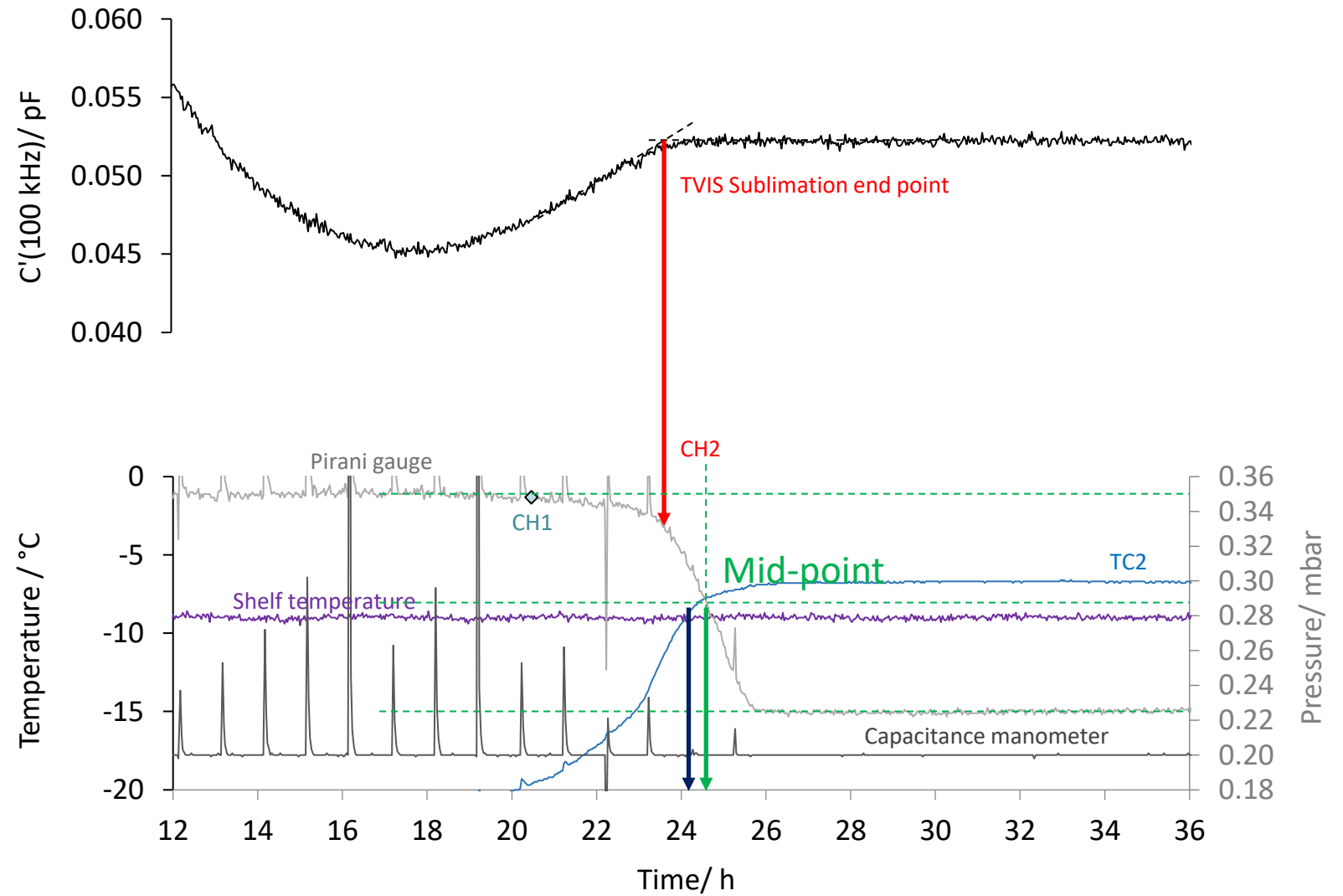
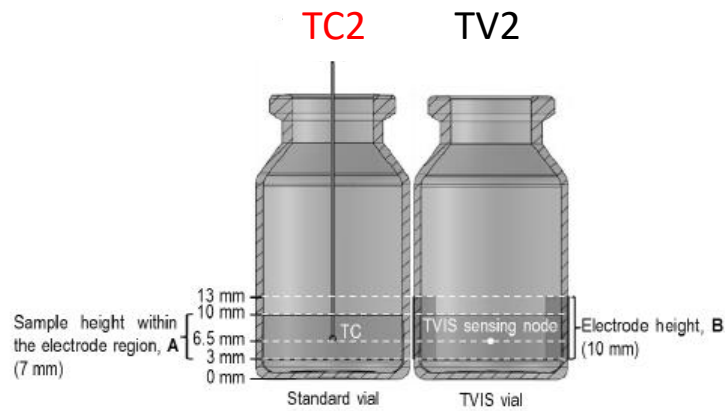
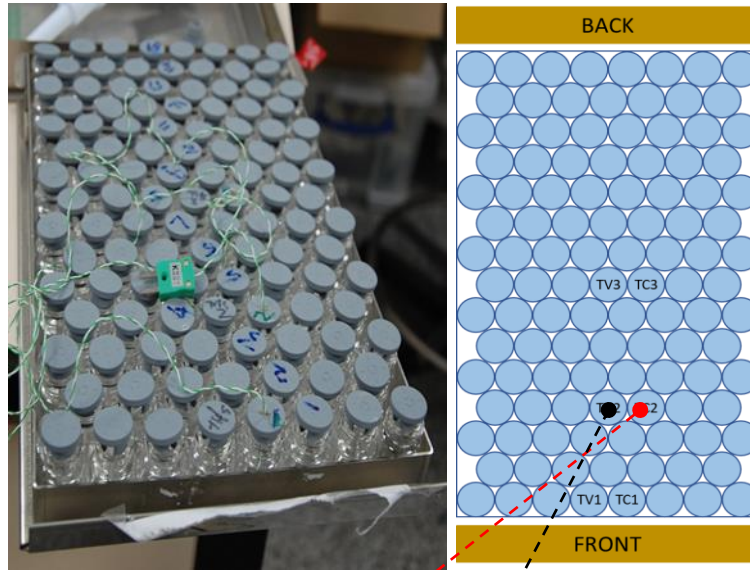
# Drying of 5% mannitol



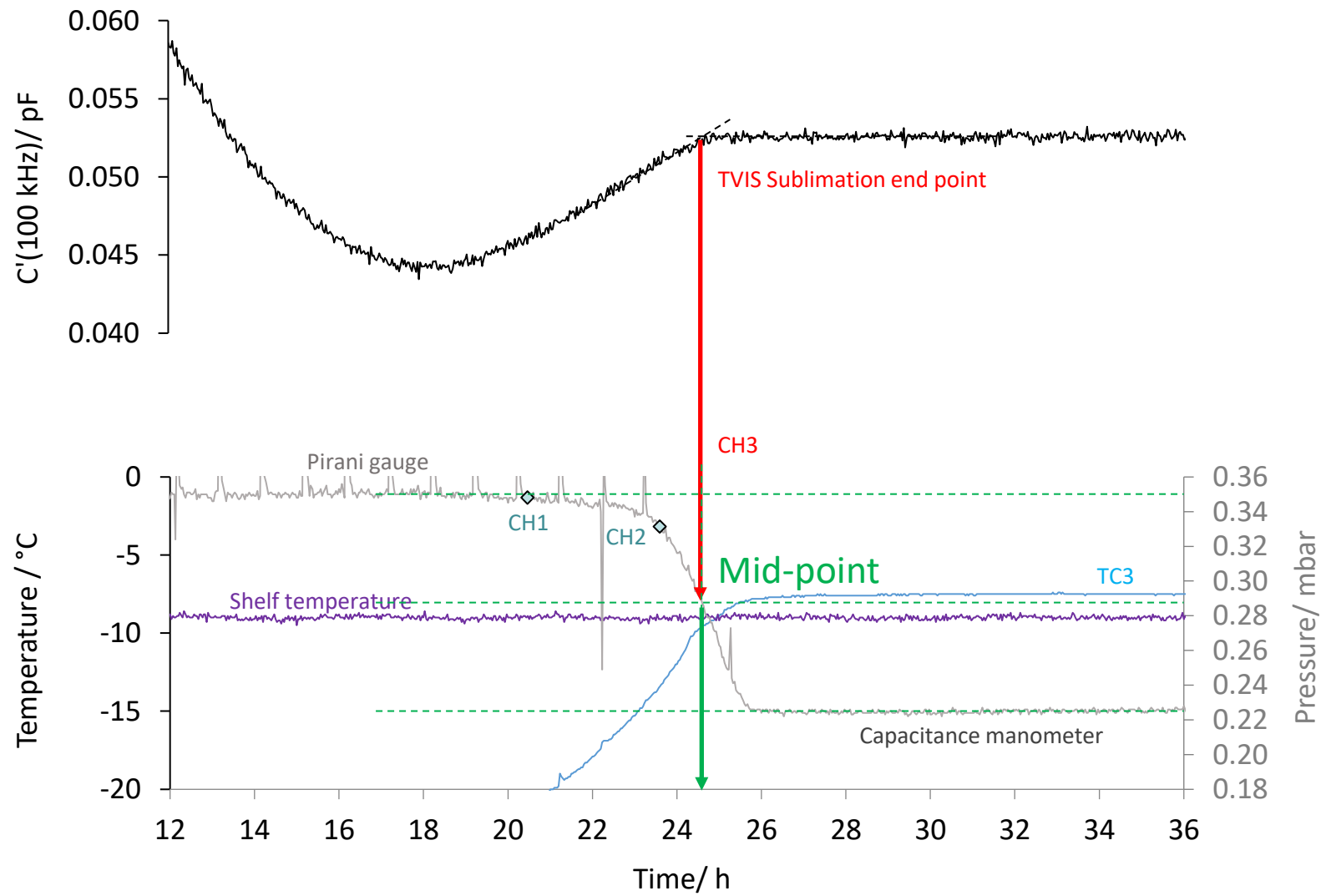
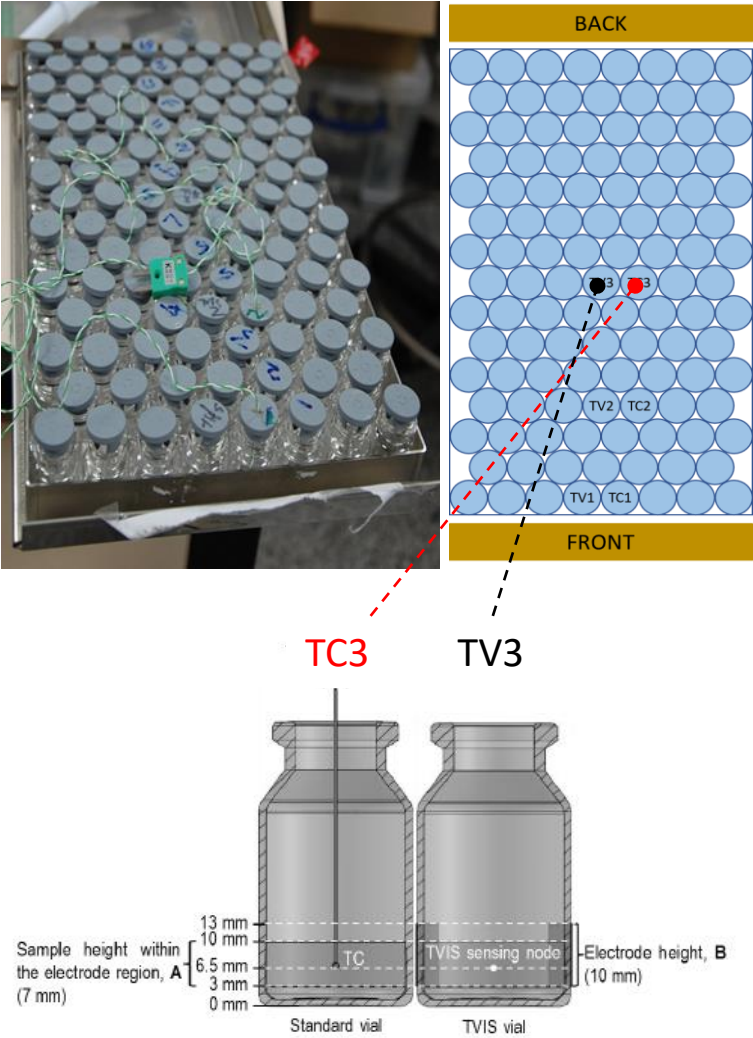
# Drying of 5% mannitol



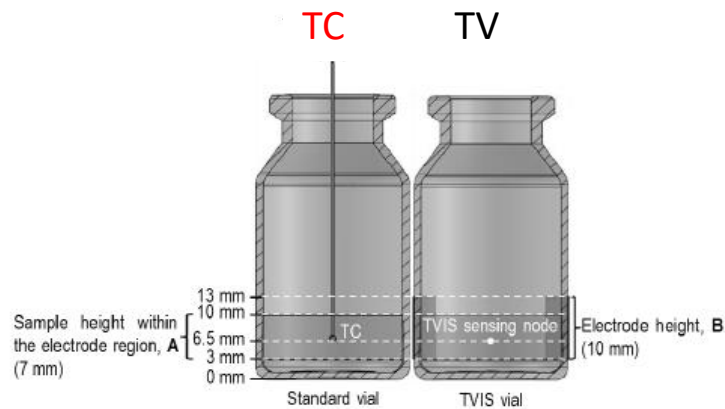
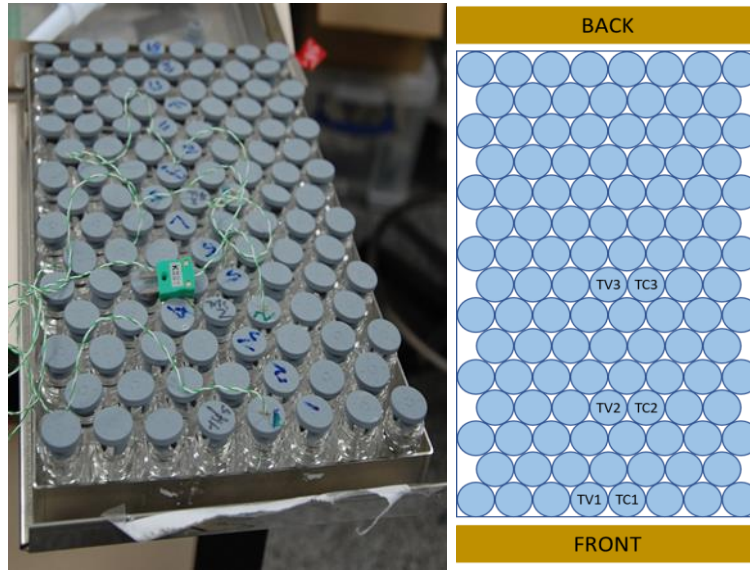
# Drying of 5% mannitol



# Drying of 5% mannitol

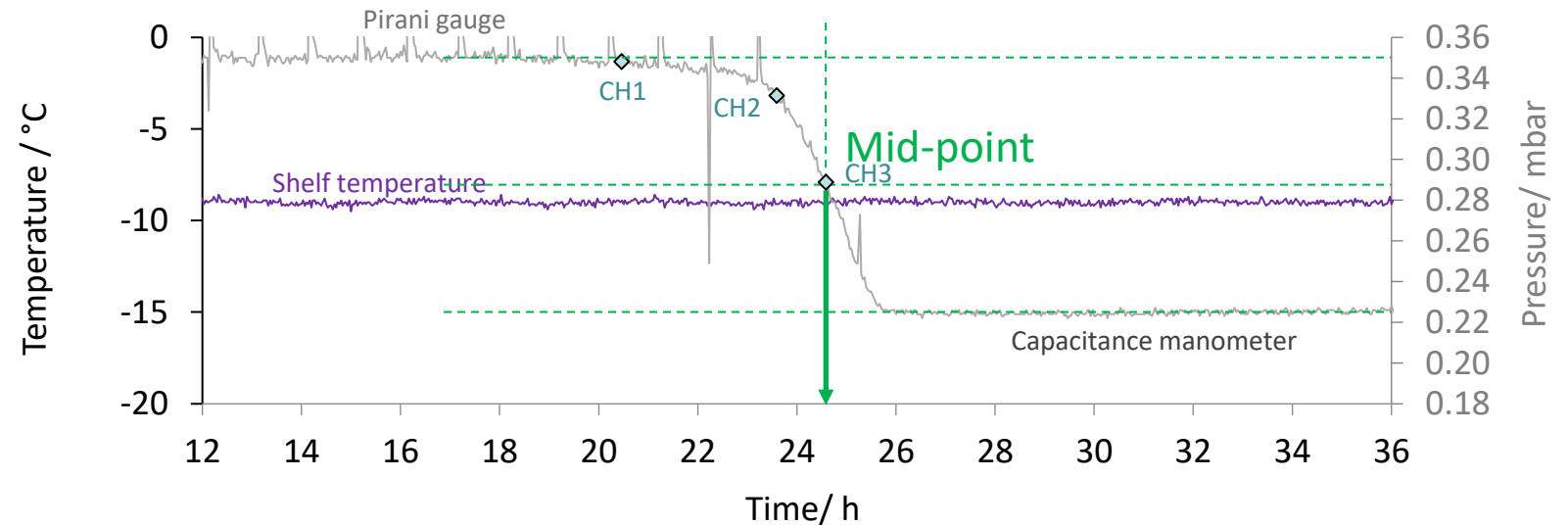


# Drying of 5% mannitol



## Key observation:

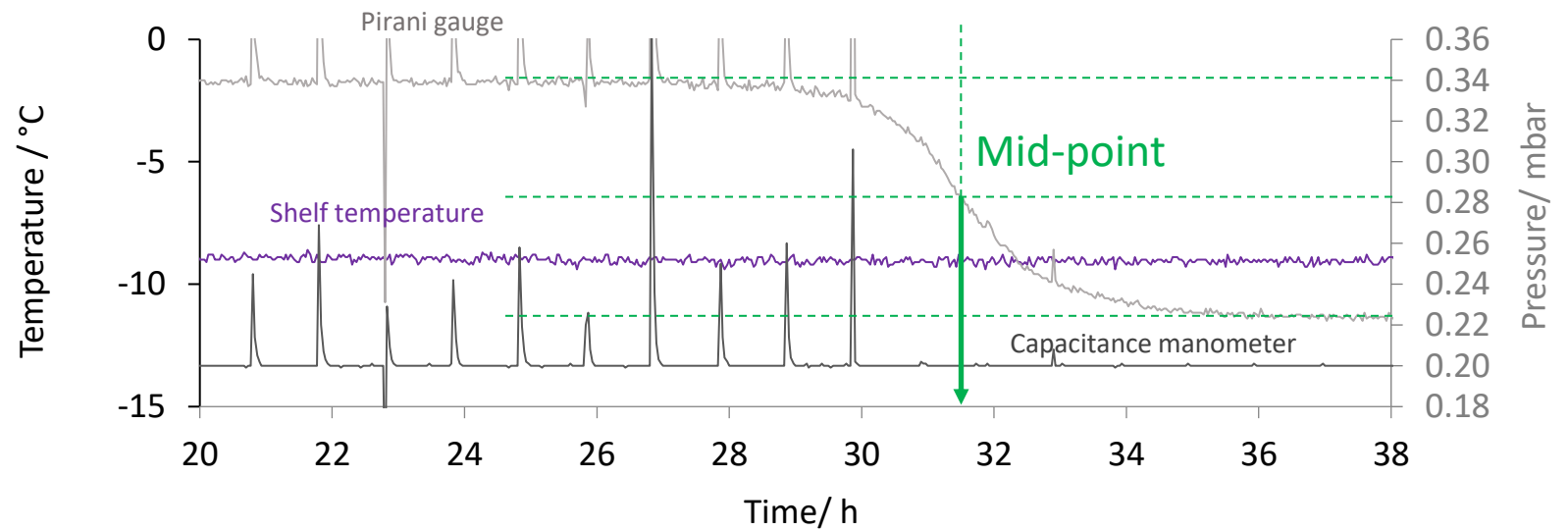
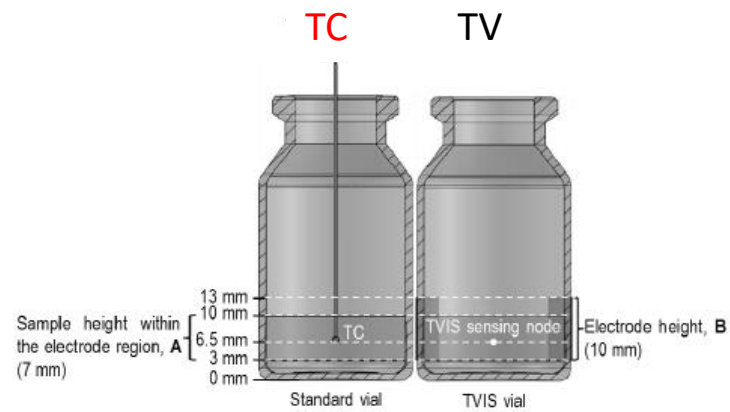
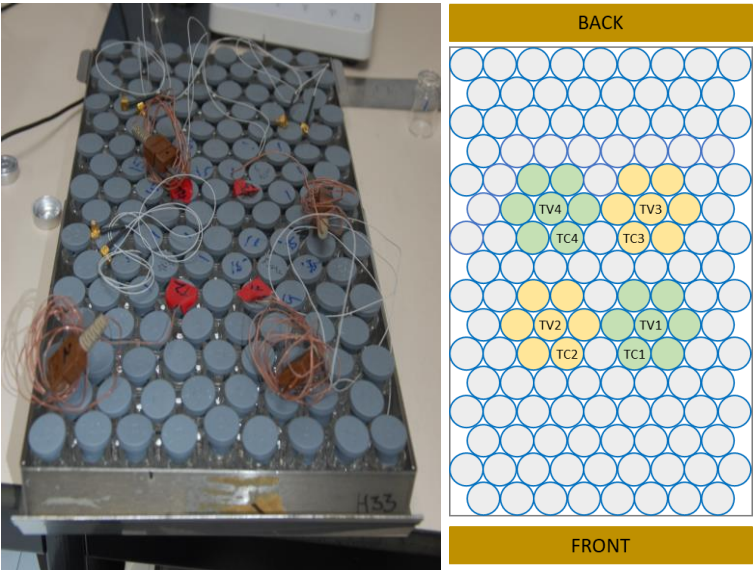
- (1) All TVIS vials have sublimation end points either before, or coinciding with the mid-point of the Pirani curve
- (2) The end point for the front vial coincides with the beginning of the step down in the Pirani profile
- (3) The end point for the middle vial coincides with the mid point of the step down in the Pirani profile



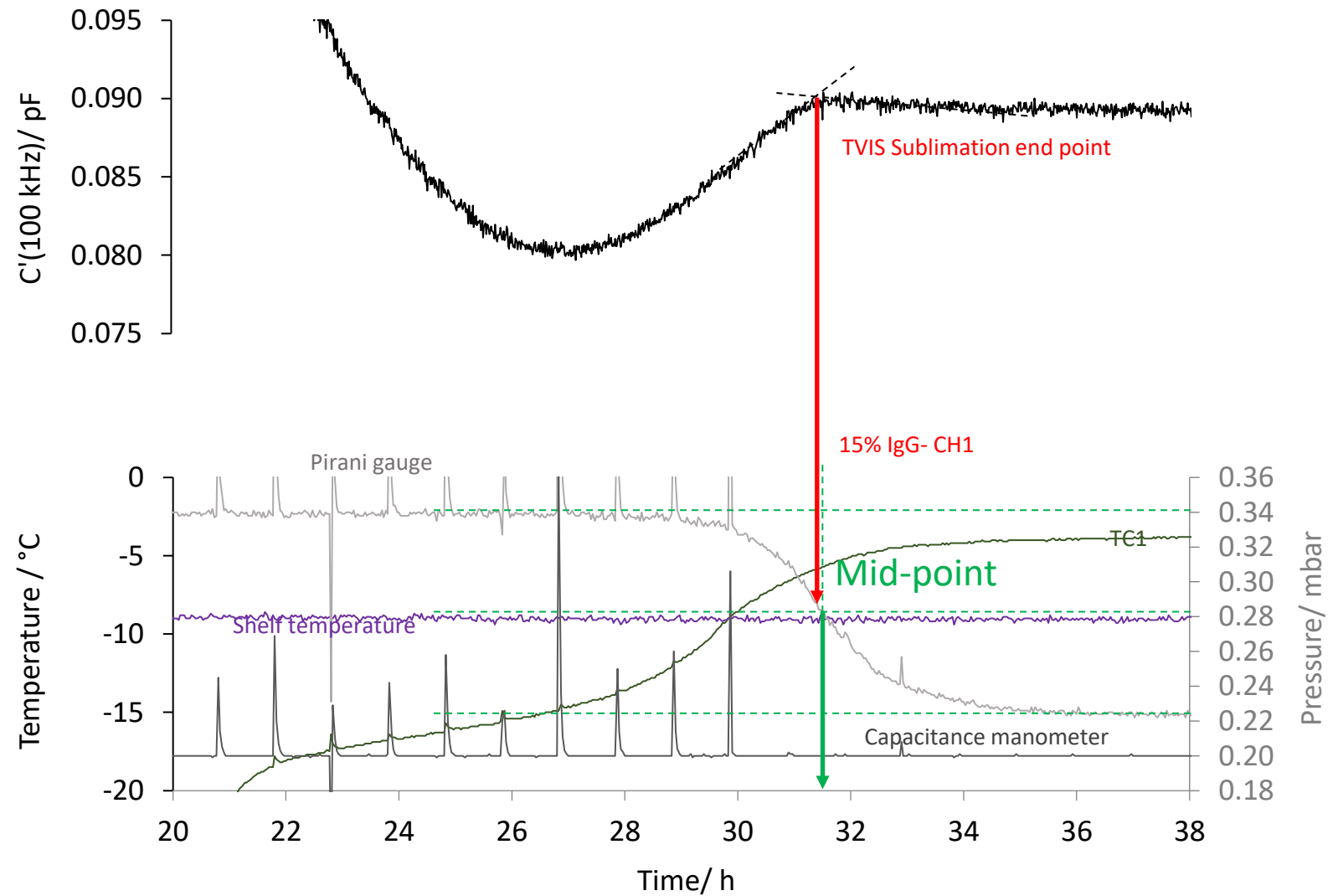
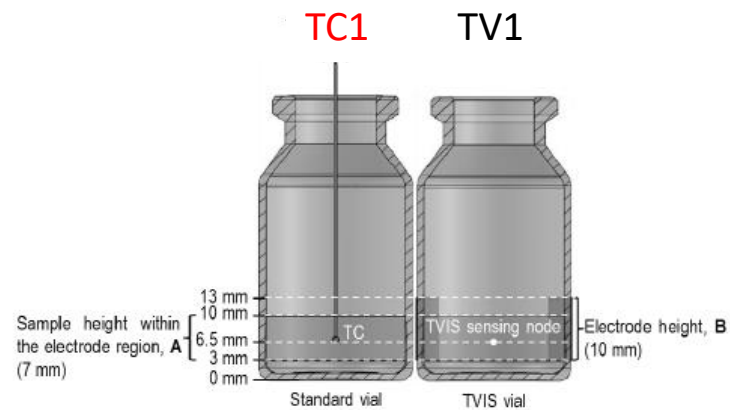
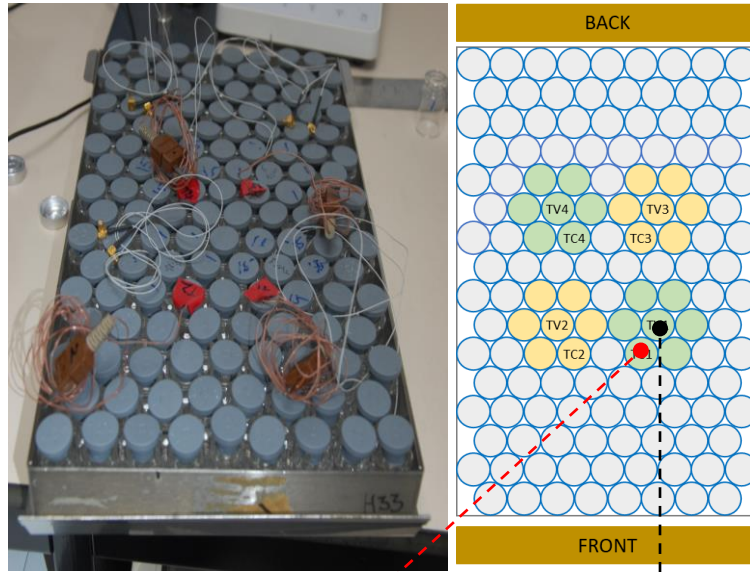
## **Through Vial Impedance Spectroscopy**

**(15% IgG, 1% Sucrose, 4% Mannitol, 20 mM Histidine, 0.01% Tween 20)**

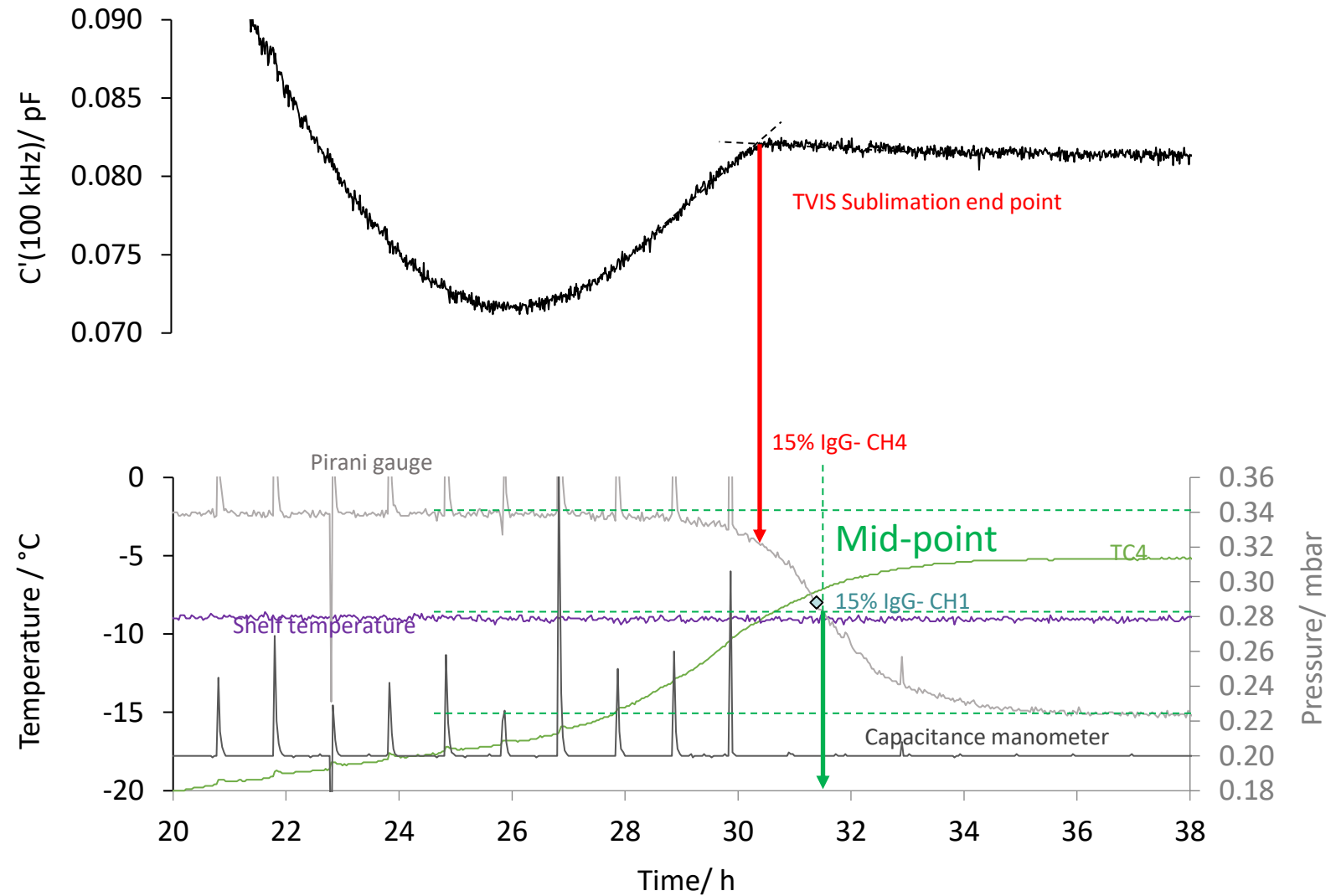
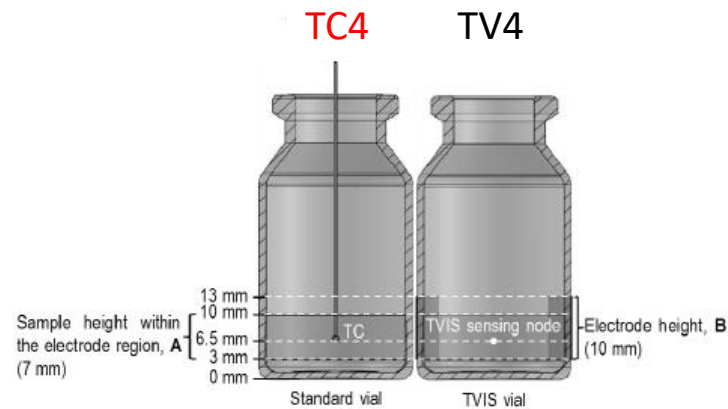
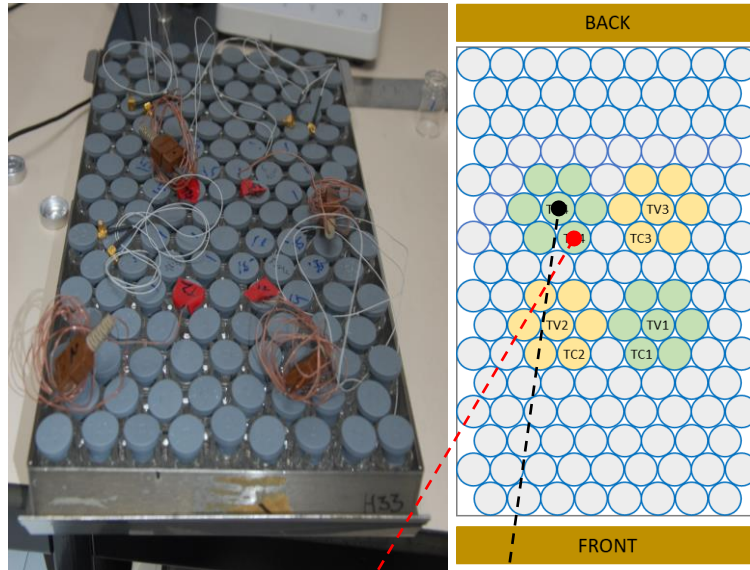
# Drying of a protein formulation



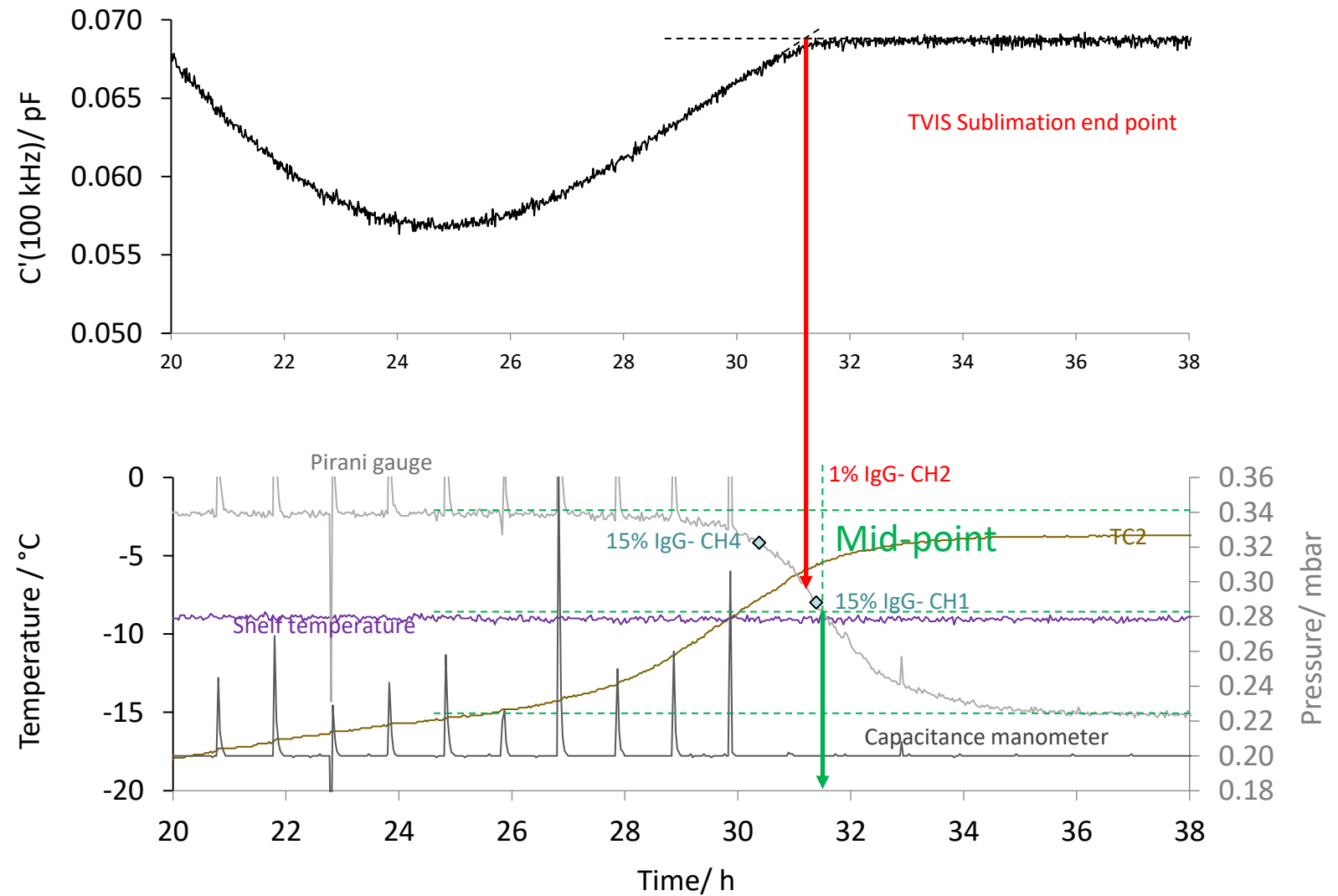
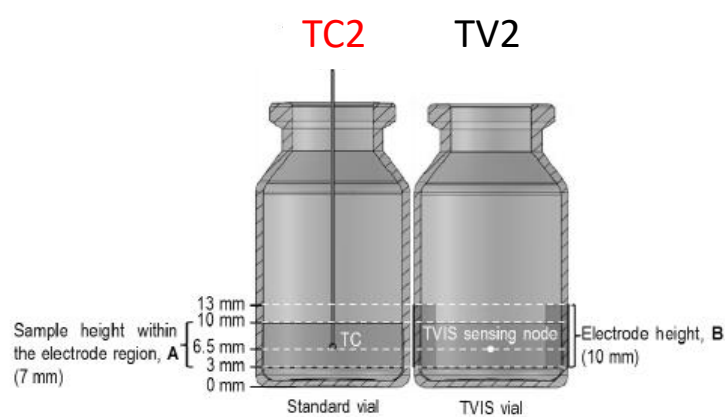
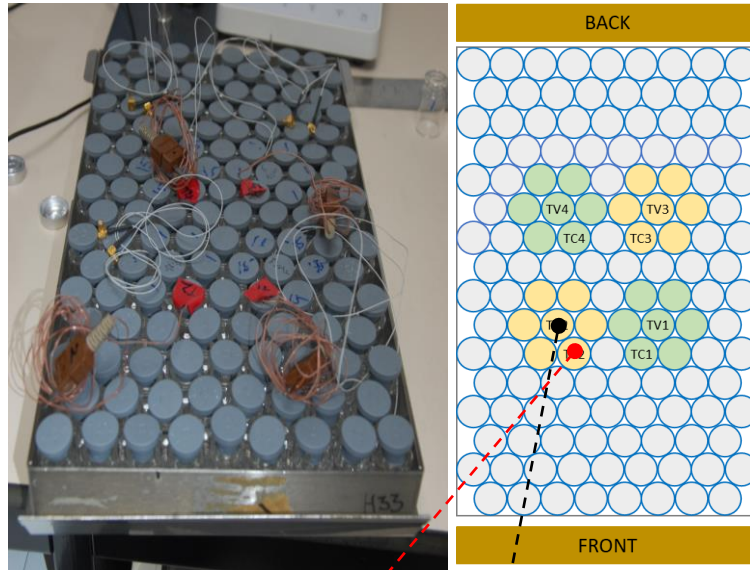
# Drying of a protein formulation 15% IgG, 1% Sucrose, 4% Mannitol, 20 mM Histidine, 0.01% Tween 20



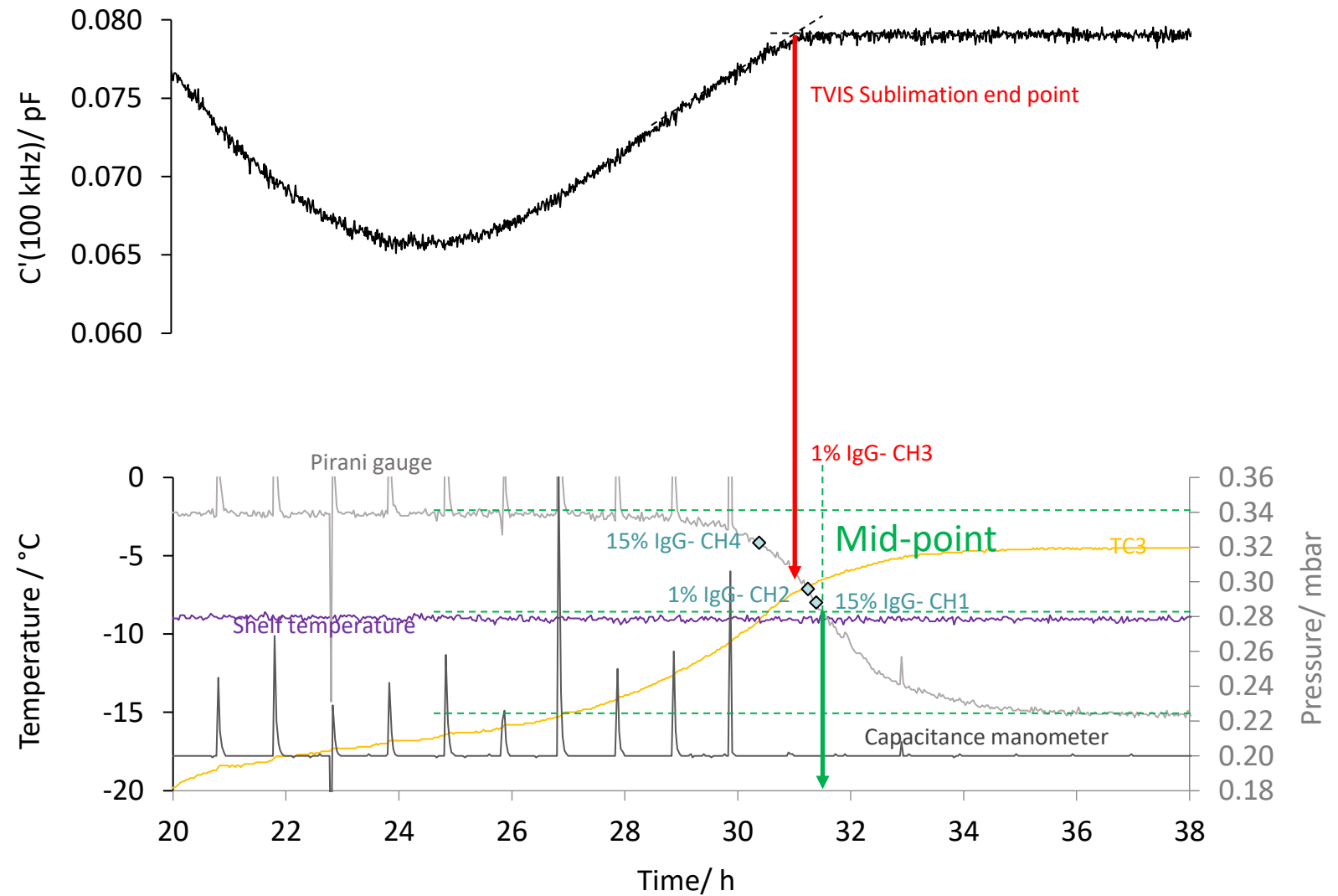
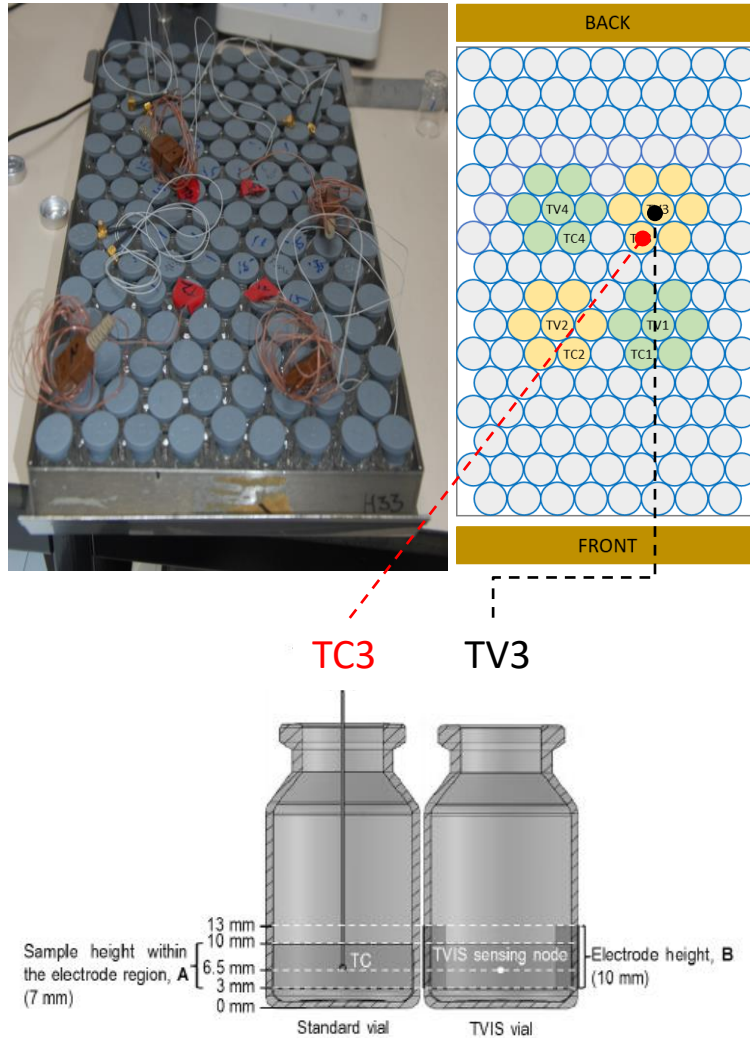
# Drying of a protein formulation 15% IgG, 1% Sucrose, 4% Mannitol, 20 mM Histidine, 0.01% Tween 20



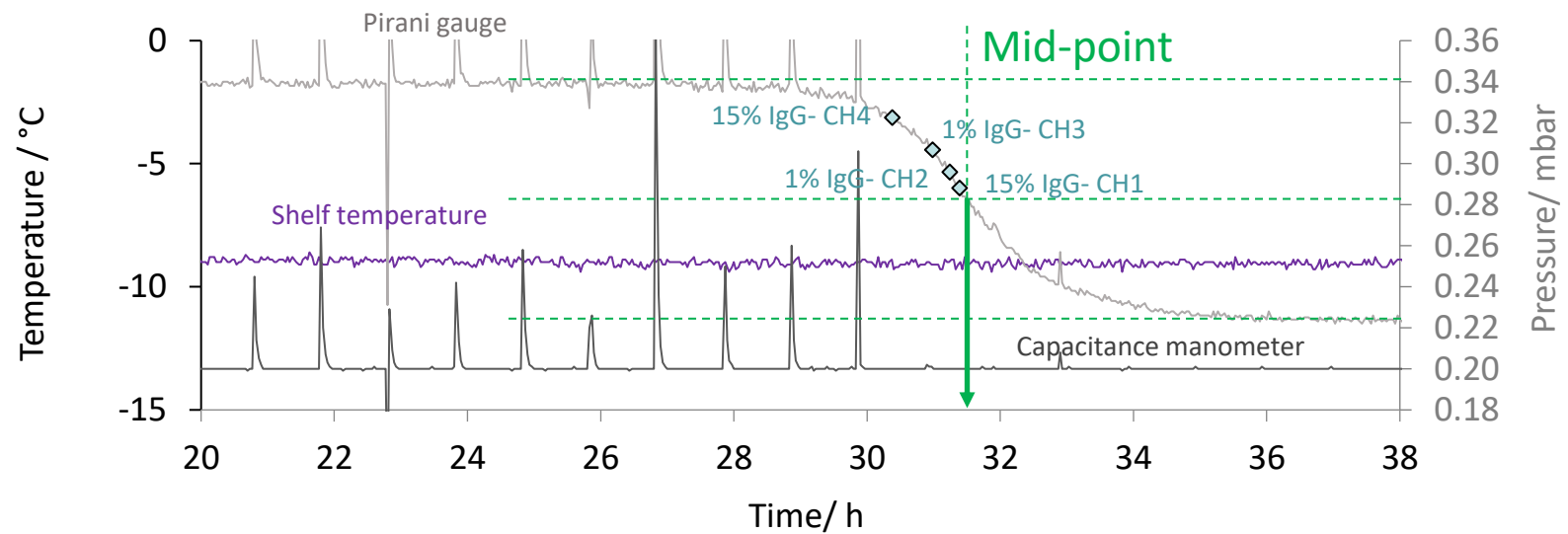
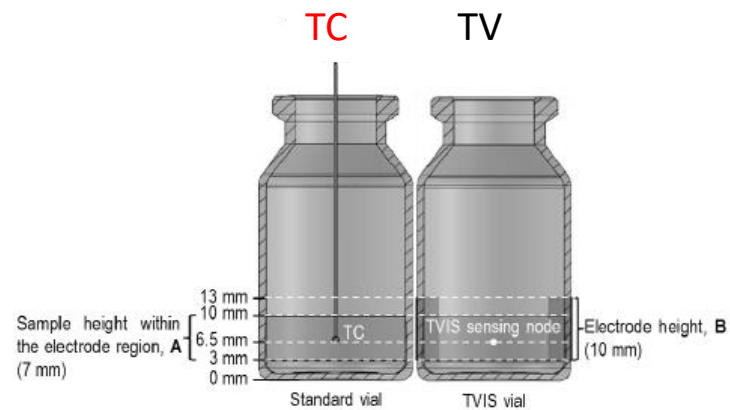
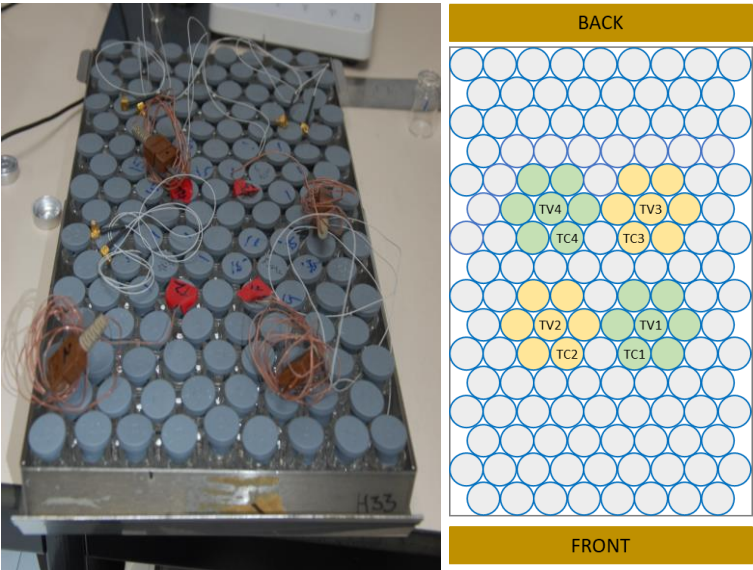
# Drying of a protein formulation 1% IgG, 1% Sucrose, 4% Mannitol, 20 mM Histidine, 0.01% Tween 20



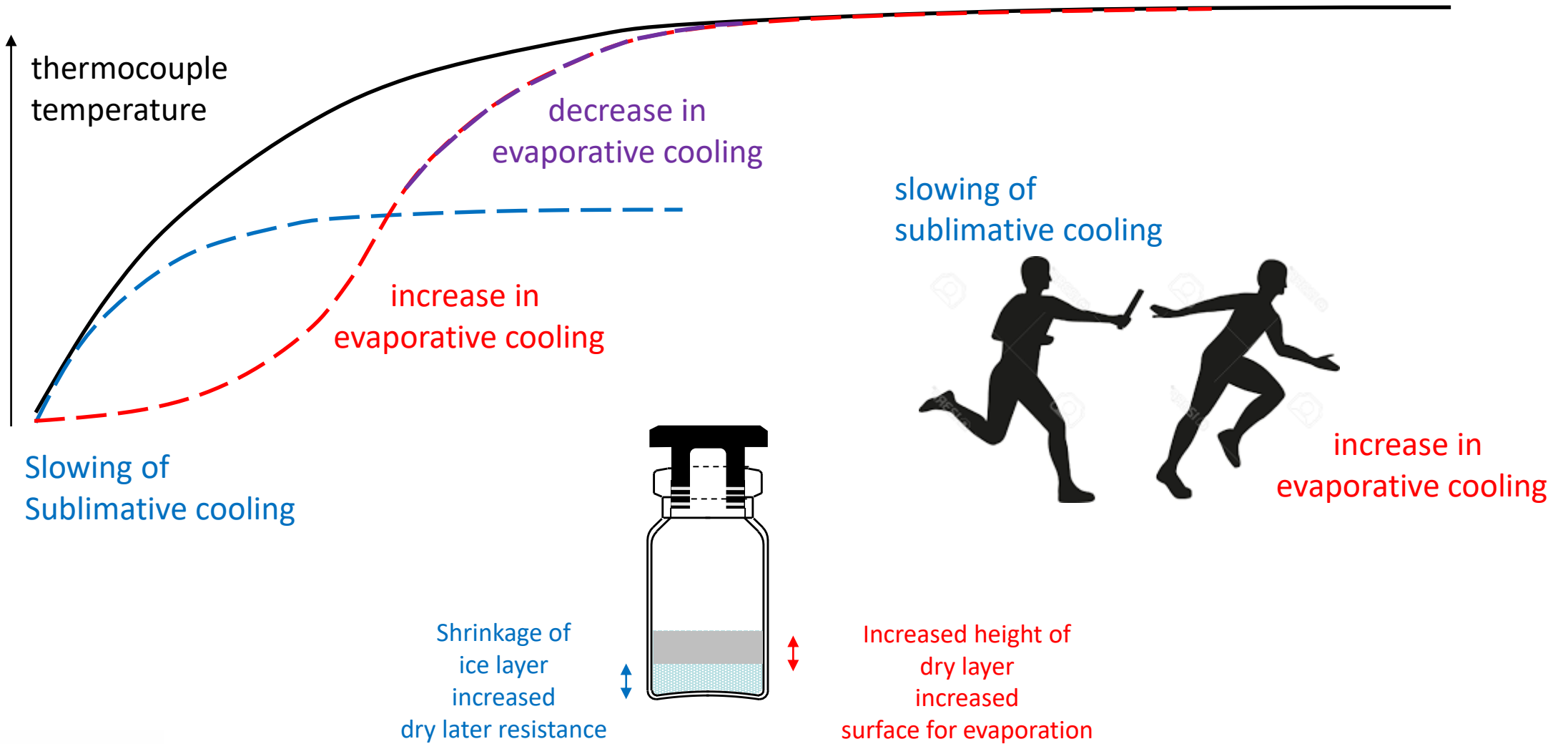
# Drying of a protein formulation 1% IgG, 1% Sucrose, 4% Mannitol, 20 mM Histidine, 0.01% Tween 20



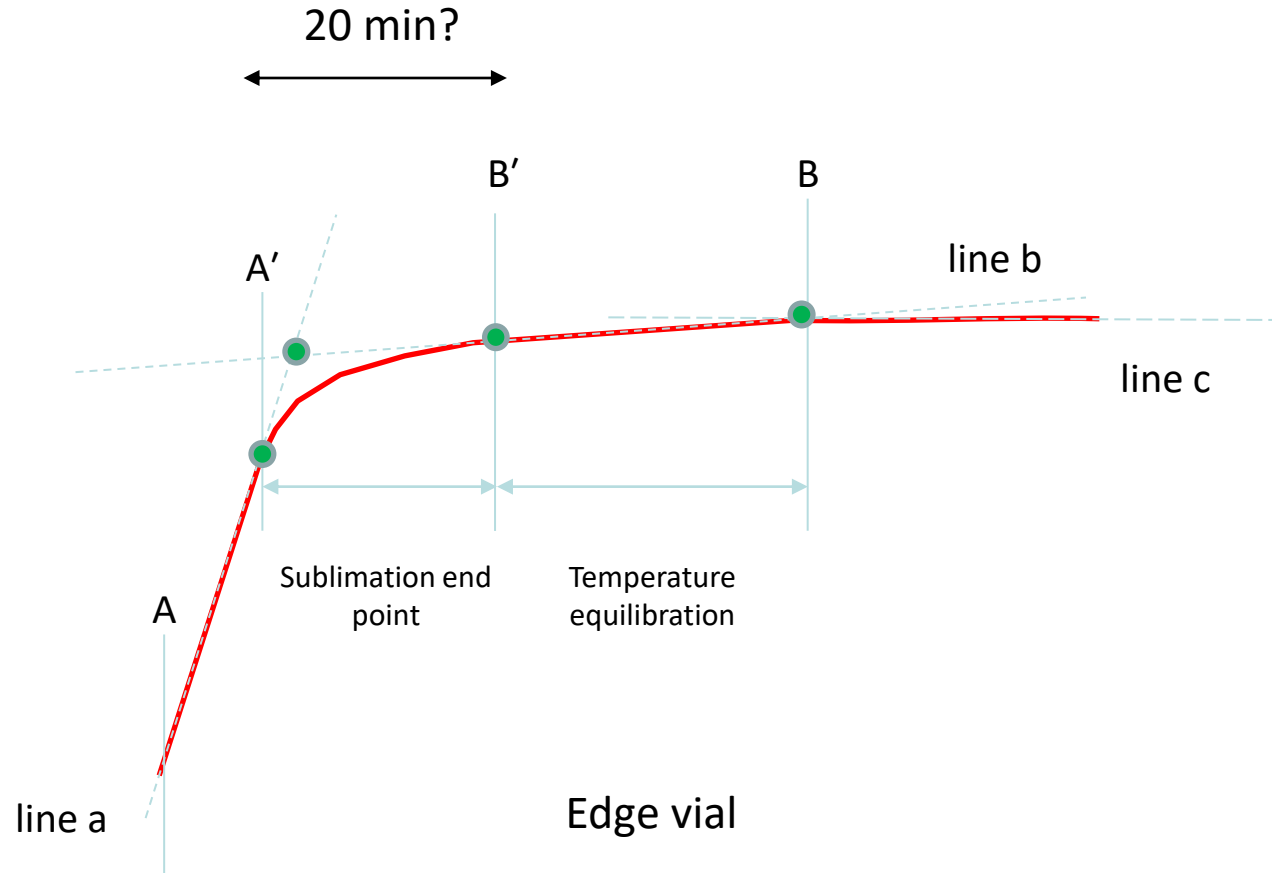
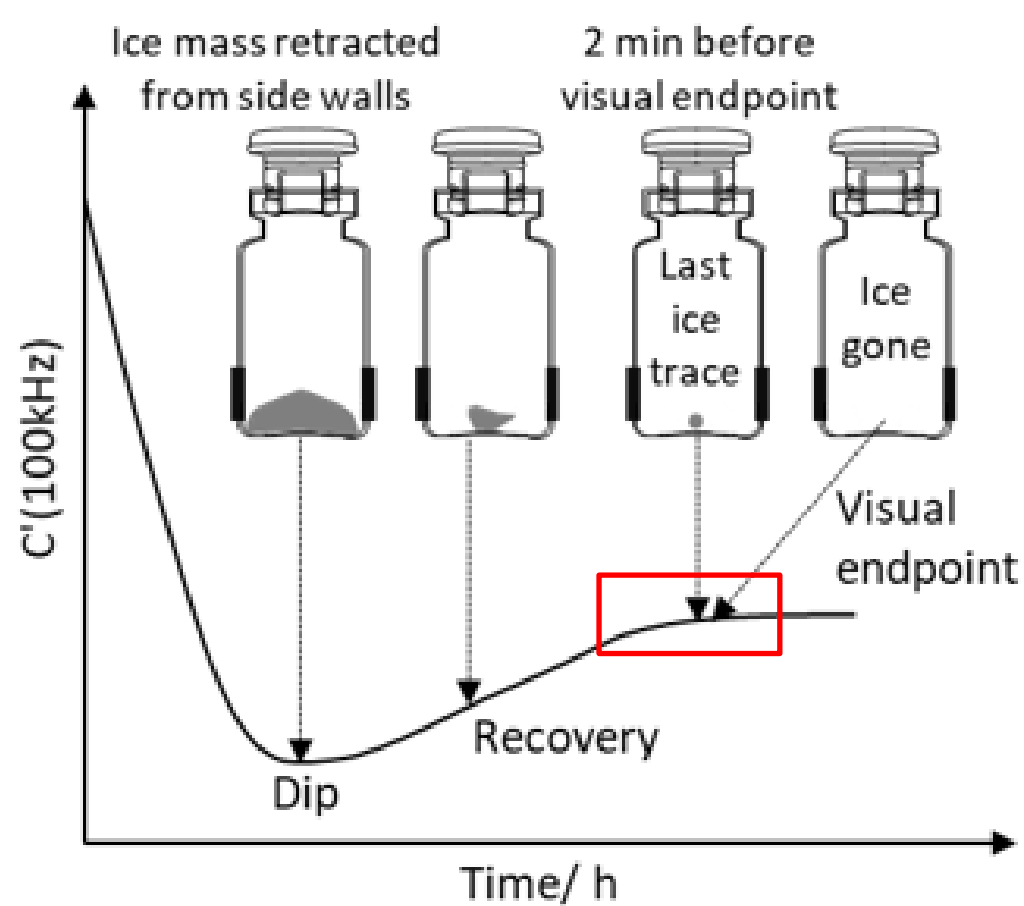
# Drying of a protein formulation



# Over-lapping processes (e.g. TC data) = broad/imprecise end-point

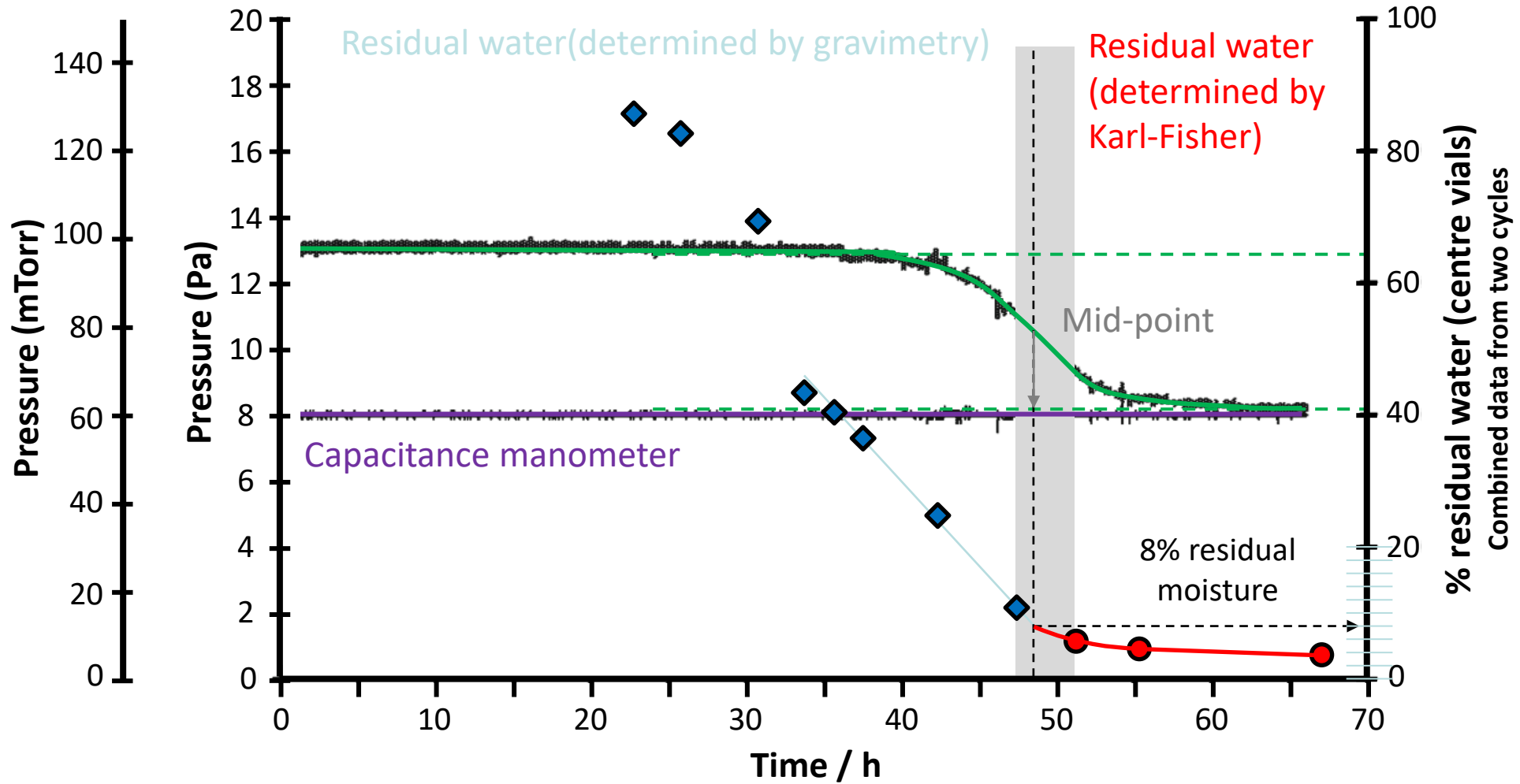


# Single? process (TVIS data) – ignoring thermal equilibration

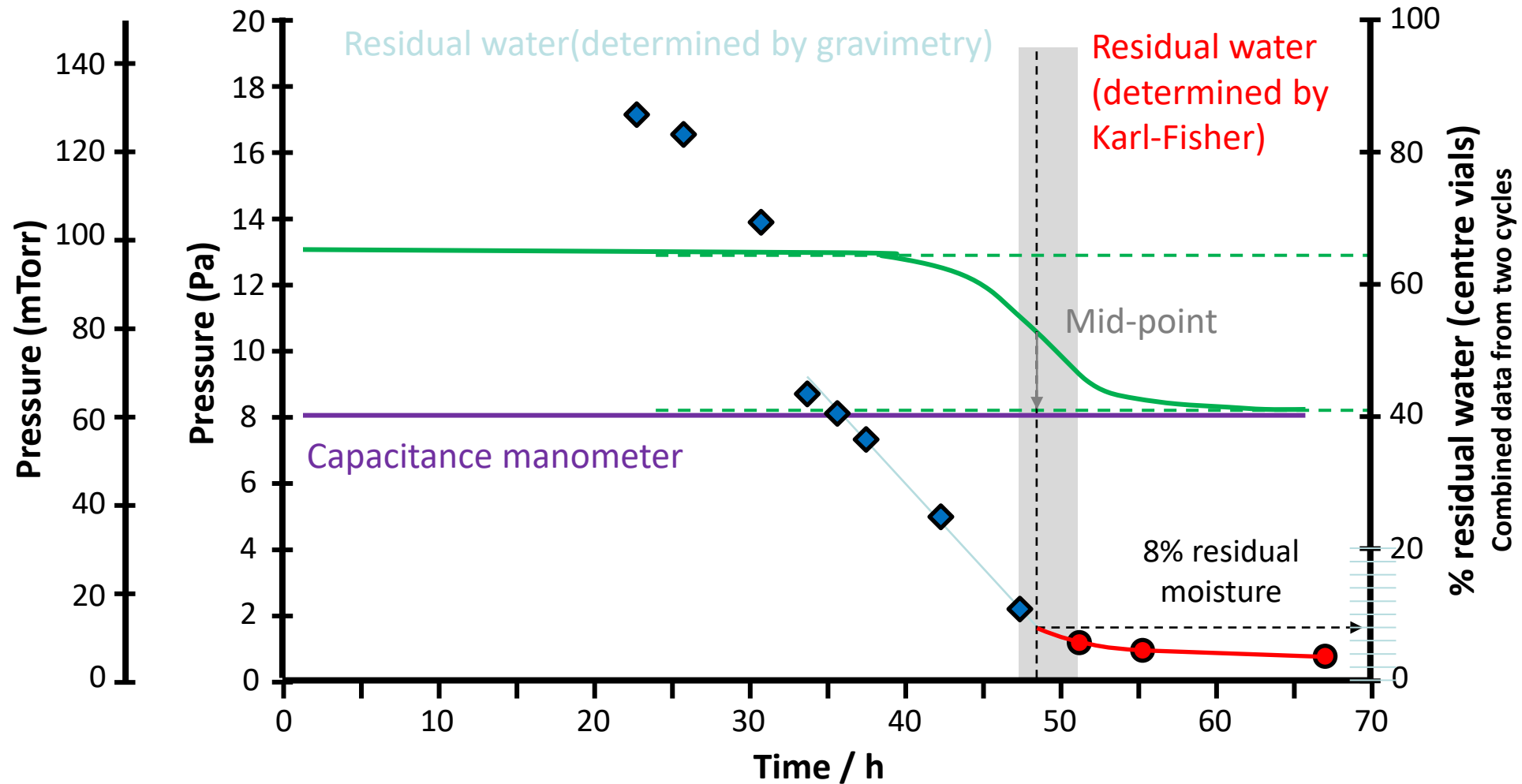


## Comparison of Pirani profiles

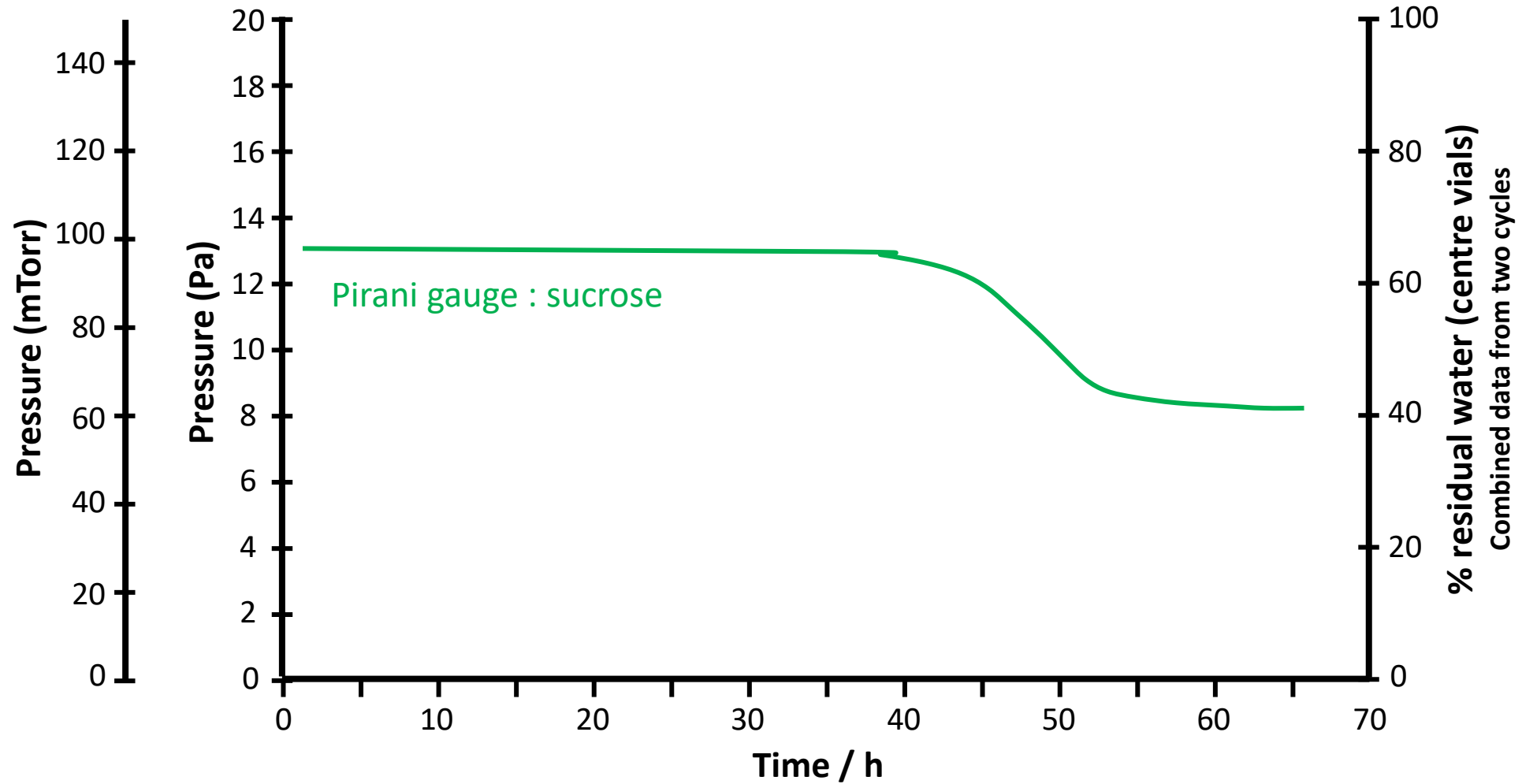
# Comparison of Pirani profiles



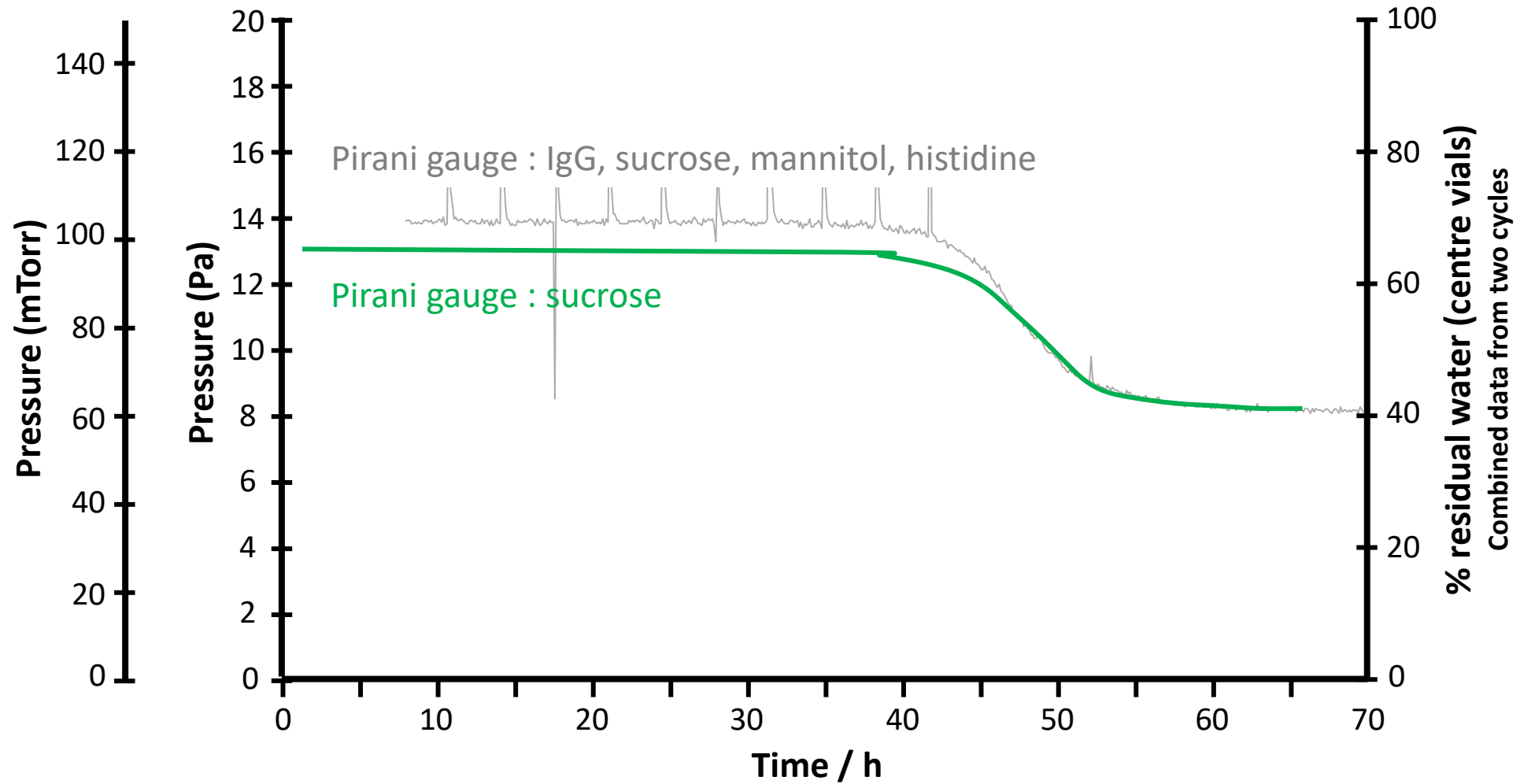
# Comparison of Pirani profiles



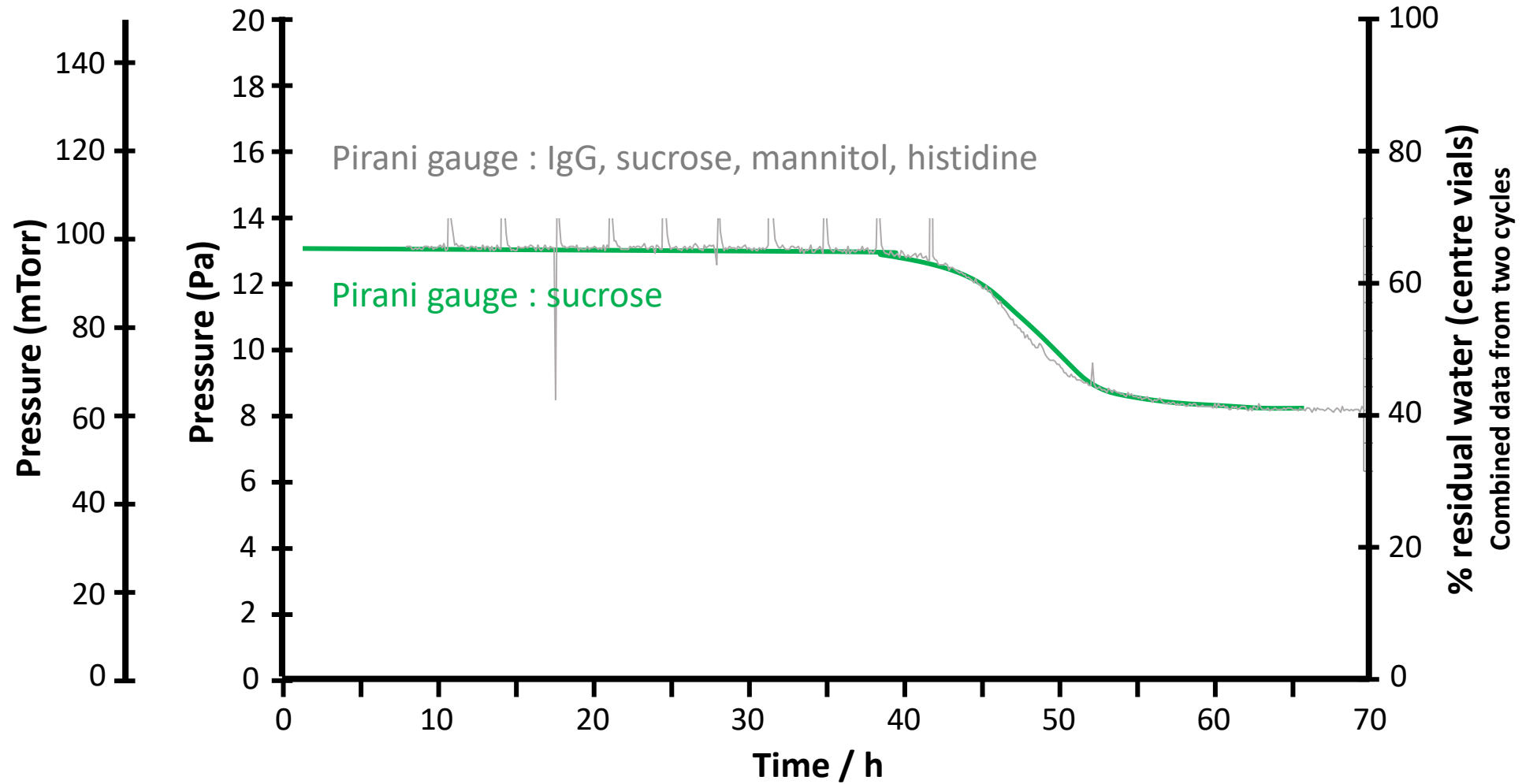
# Comparison of Pirani profiles



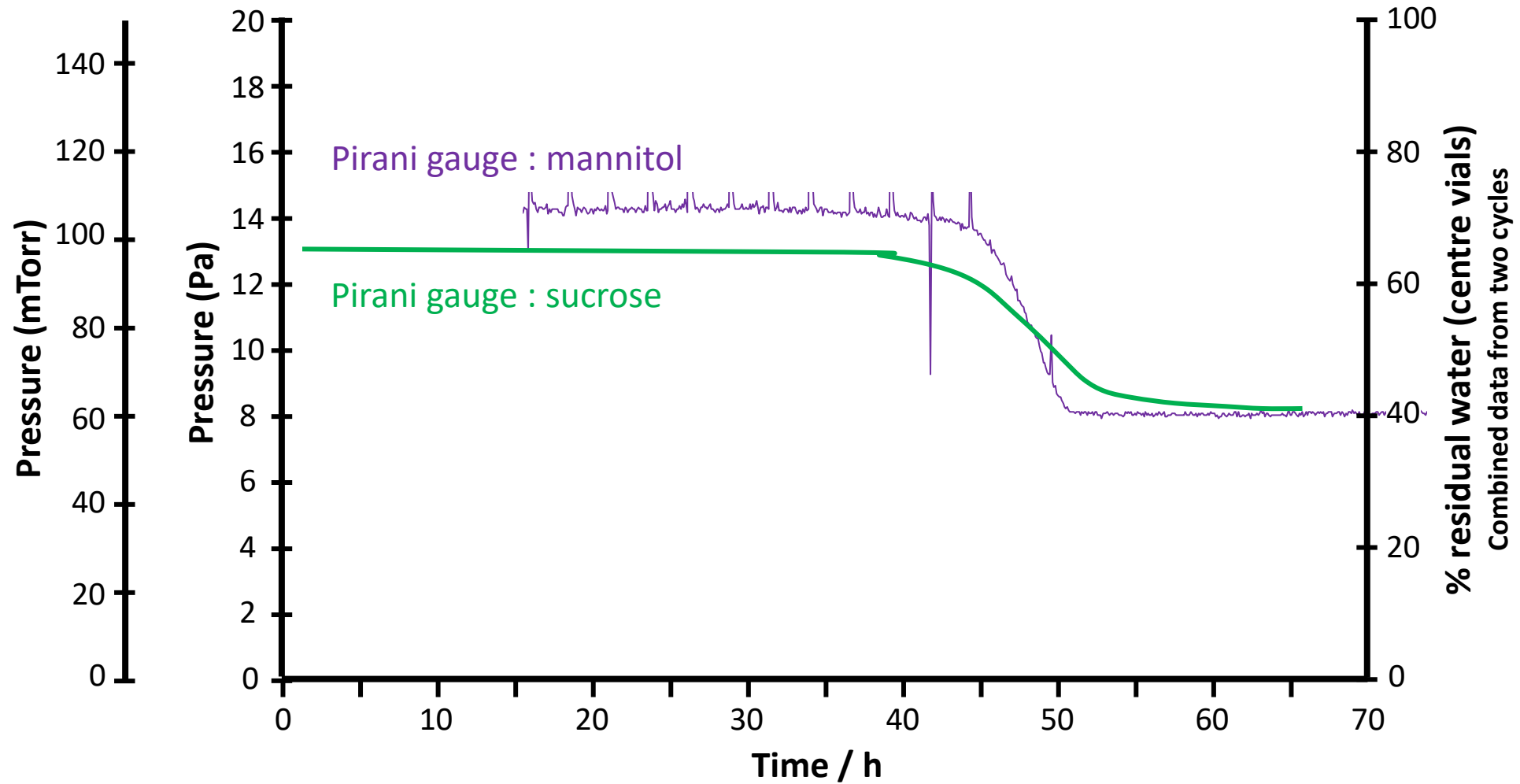
# Comparison of Pirani profiles



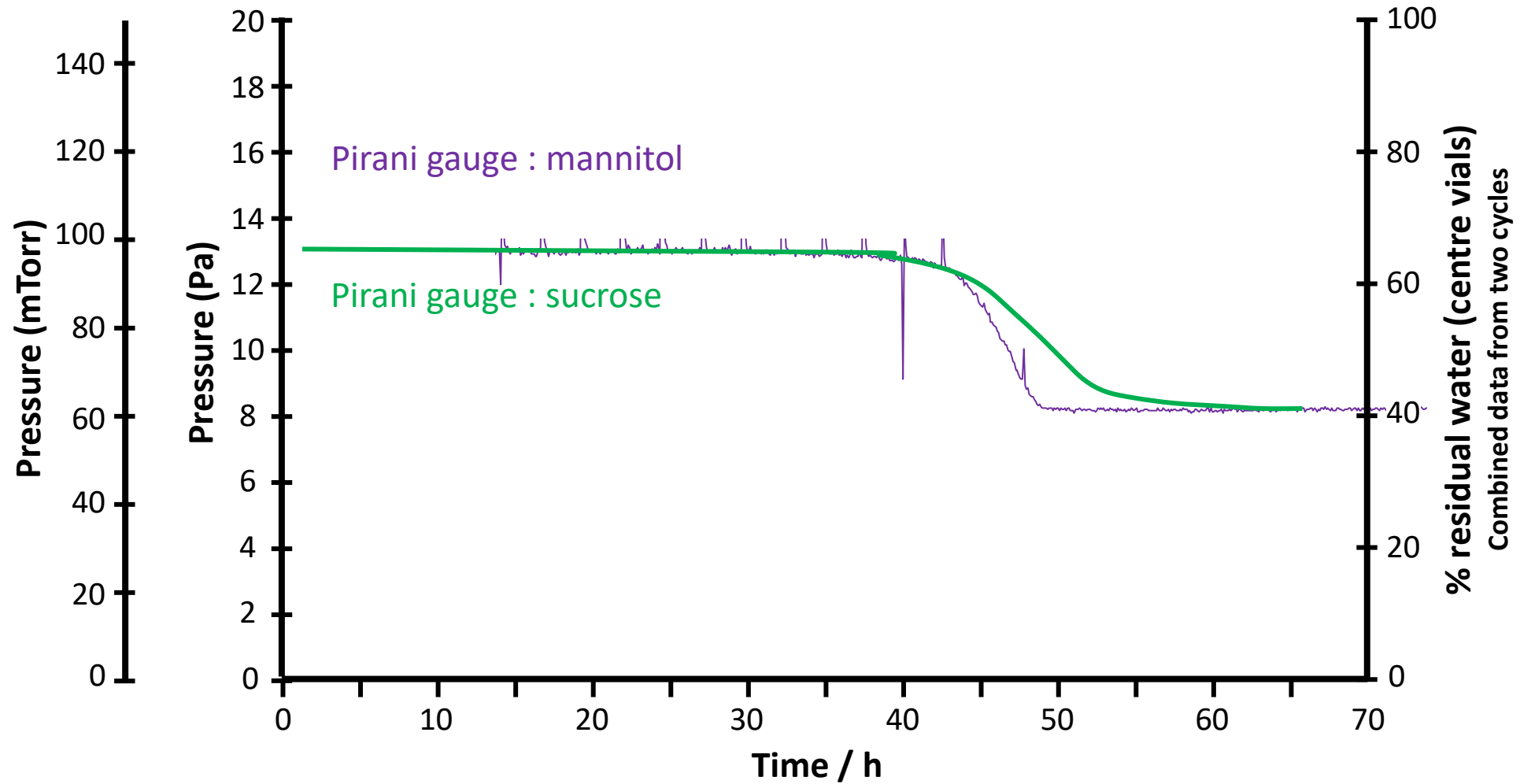
# Comparison of Pirani profiles



# Comparison of Pirani profiles



# Comparison of Pirani profiles



# Take home messages from this talk

Pirani and thermocouple measurements can not differentiate between water vapour evolved from ice sublimation and water vapour evolved from moisture desorption

- Vapour sensing technologies, such as CPM, can not differentiate between source of water vapour (ice or adsorbed water)
- Thermal measurements can also detect cooling from desorption of water adsorbed in the unfrozen fraction

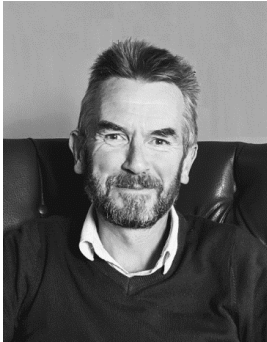
TVIS provides ....

- Identification of true sublimation (primary drying) end point

## Summary of Applications (not covered in talk)

| Dielectric loss peak                 |                                                                               | Dielectric constant             |                                                 |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| Log peak frequency<br>( $F_{PEAK}$ ) | Temperature calibration<br>(ice phase)                                        | Low frequency<br>(100 Hz)       | Ice nucleation<br>onset time and<br>temperature |
|                                      | Spatial measurements<br>of ice temperature<br>possible with multiple<br>nodes |                                 |                                                 |
| Peak amplitude<br>( $C''_{PEAK}$ )   | Ice mass & sublimation<br>rate                                                | High frequency<br>(100-200 kHz) | Ice solidification<br>end point                 |
|                                      | Annealing end-point                                                           |                                 |                                                 |
|                                      |                                                                               |                                 | Glass transition<br>temperature                 |
|                                      |                                                                               |                                 | Devitrification                                 |
|                                      |                                                                               |                                 | Sublimation end<br>point                        |

# Thank you for listening .....



DMU LyoGroup

Feel free to email me if you have any further questions :

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**Prof. Geoff Smith**

School of Pharmacy, De Montfort University, Leicester, UK

# Acknowledgements



**Evgeny Polygalov**  
Physicist and Inventor of TVIS  
**1952-2020**



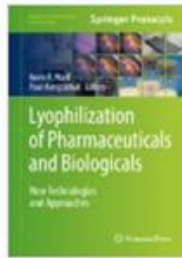
**Dr Paul Matejtschuk**  
Head of Standardization  
Science in the Analytical &  
Biological Sciences Division



**Pathum Wijesekara**  
PhD student, School of Pharmacy  
De Montfort University Leicester



# Further Reading



[Lyophilization of Pharmaceuticals and Biologicals](#) pp 241-290 | [Cite as](#)

## Through Vial Impedance Spectroscopy (TVIS): A Novel Approach to Process Understanding for Freeze-Drying Cycle Development

Authors

[Authors and affiliations](#)

Geoff Smith  , Evgeny Polygalov

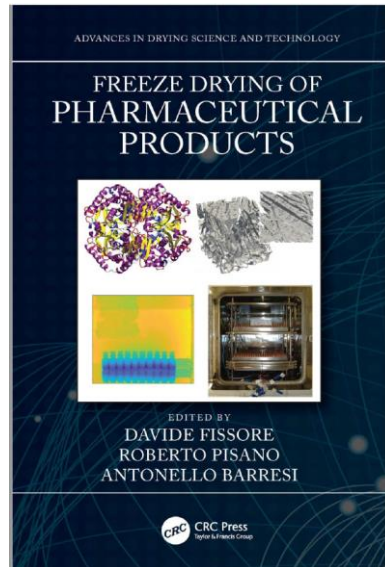
- Introduction to TVIS theory
- Description of the measurement principles
- Dielectric loss and relaxations mechanisms (liquid and frozen states)

# Further Reading

## Chapter 5 Through Vial Impedance Spectroscopy (TVIS) A New Method for Determining the Ice Nucleation Temperature and the Solidification End point

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- Bhaskar, P., Smith, G., Ermolina, I., Polygalov, E. (2021). Observations on the changing shape of the ice mass and the **determination of the sublimation end point in freeze-drying**: An application for through-vial impedance spectroscopy (TVIS). *Pharmaceutics*, 13(11) 1835. Accepted 13 October 2021, Available online 02 November 2021 <https://doi.org/10.3390/pharmaceutics13111835>
- Jeeraruangrattana, Y., Smith, G., Polygalov, E. and Ermolina, I. (2020) Determination of ice interface temperature, sublimation rate and **the dried product resistance**, and its application in the assessment of microcollapse using through-vial impedance spectroscopy. *European Journal of Pharmaceutics and Biopharmaceutics*, 152, pp. 144-163 [doi.org/10.1016/j.ejpb.2020.04.015](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ejpb.2020.04.015)
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- Smith, G., Arshad, M.S., Polygalov, E., Ermolina, I., McCoy, T.R., Matejtschuk, P. (2017). Process Understanding in Freeze-Drying Cycle Development: Applications for Through-Vial Impedance Spectroscopy (TVIS) in Mini-pilot Studies. *Journal of Pharmaceutical Innovation*, 12 (1), pp. 26-40 [doi.org/10.1007/s12247-016-9266-5](https://doi.org/10.1007/s12247-016-9266-5) **Key observation was the potential to measure temperature non-invasively**
- Arshad, M.S., Smith, G., Polygalov, E., Ermolina, I. (2014). Through-vial impedance spectroscopy of critical events during the freezing stage of the lyophilization cycle: The example of the impact of sucrose on the **crystallization of mannitol**. *European Journal of Pharmaceutics and Biopharmaceutics*, 87 (3), pp. 598-605 [doi.org/10.1016/j.ejpb.2014.05.005](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ejpb.2014.05.005)
- Smith, G., Arshad, M.S., Polygalov, E., Ermolina, I. (2014). Through-Vial Impedance Spectroscopy of the **Mechanisms of Annealing** in the Freeze-Drying of Maltodextrin: The Impact of Annealing Hold Time and Temperature on the Primary Drying Rate. *Journal of Pharmaceutical Sciences*, 103 (6), pp. 1799-1810 [doi.org/10.1002/jps.23982](https://doi.org/10.1002/jps.23982)
- Smith, G., Arshad, M.S., Polygalov, E. and Ermolina, I. (2013) An application for impedance spectroscopy in the characterisation of the **glass transition** during the lyophilization cycle: The example of a 10% w/v maltodextrin solution. *European Journal of Pharmaceutics and Biopharmaceutics*, 86 (3 Part B), pp. 1130-1140 [doi.org/10.1016/j.ejpb.2013.08.004](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ejpb.2013.08.004)

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