

# Degeneration of Fermat hypersurfaces in positive characteristic

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We work over an algebraically closed field  $k$  of positive characteristic  $p$ . Let  $q$  be a power of  $p$ . Let  $A$  be an  $(n+1) \times (n+1)$  matrix with coefficients  $a_{ij}$  in  $k$ , and let  $X_A$  be a hypersurface of degree  $q+1$  in the projective space  $P^n$  defined by  $\sum a_{ij}x_i x_j^q = 0$ . It is well-known that if the rank of  $A$  is  $n+1$ , the hypersurface  $X_A$  is projectively isomorphic to the Fermat hypersurface of degree  $q+1$ . We investigate the hypersurfaces  $X_A$  when the rank of  $A$  is  $n$ , and determine their projective isomorphism classes.