



Report of the U.S. Delegate, 35th Session, Codex Committee on Methods of Analysis and Sampling

The Codex Committee on Methods of Analysis and Sampling (CCMAS) held its 35th Session from March 3-7, 2014, in Budapest, Hungary. The United States was represented by Dr. Gregory Noonan, U.S. Food and Drug Administration (Delegate); Dr. Timothy Norden, Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration, U.S. Department of Agriculture (Alternate Delegate); and Ms. Marie Maratos, U.S. Codex Office, Food Safety and Inspection Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture.

The Committee concluded a productive session and established four intersessional electronic working groups (eWGs), all working in English. An eWG on the *Principles for the Use of Sampling and Testing in International Food Trade: Explanatory Notes* will again be chaired by Germany, with technical assistance from New Zealand. A second eWG, chaired by the United States, will develop a discussion paper on procedures for establishing the equivalency of two analytical methods. Brazil will chair a third eWG, charged with the further development of procedures for the regular updating of methods. The United Kingdom will chair a fourth eWG to develop numeric criteria for multi-analyte methods. The Terms of Reference (TOR) and information on the scope for each of the eWGs and discussion papers can be found in the CCMAS final report (REP 14/MAS) at <http://www.codexalimentarius.org/meetings-reports/en/>.

More detailed summaries on several Agenda items from the CCMAS final report are provided below.

Matters Referred to the Committee by the Codex Alimentarius Commission and Other Committees (Agenda Item 2)

The Committee noted that some matters were for information and that several matters would be considered by the working group on method endorsement.

Endorsement of Methods of Analysis Provisions in Codex Standards (Agenda Item 3)

- The Committee proposed changes to the criteria for deoxynivalenol (DON) provided by the Codex Committee on Contaminants in Food (CCCF) to bring the values more in line with the numeric criteria listed in the *Procedural Manual*. The Committee failed to endorse the DON sampling plan, but referred the plan back to CCCF, with specific questions about the aggregate sample size and the number of replicates necessary for small (<0.05 tonnes) consignments.

The United States supported the aggregate sample size listed in the CCCF sampling plan and supported the intervention by the Chair, who informed the Committee that the FAO on-line sampling tool also agreed with CCCF sampling plan. However, the European Union considered the aggregate sample size too small and asked for additional review by the CCCF.

- The Committee endorsed the criteria proposed by the Codex Committee on Fish and Fishery Products (CCFFP) and endorsed two methods as Type IV for the *Determination of Paralytic Shellfish Toxicity*. The United States supported the endorsement of the CCFFP criteria and the endorsement of the methods as Type IV.
- A number of changes to *Codex Standard 234-1999 (Recommended Methods of Analysis and Sampling)*, proposed by the International Dairy Federation (IDF), were endorsed by the Committee, while other changes submitted by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) and the American Association of Cereal Chemists (AACCI) were not endorsed, but will be considered at next year's meeting. It was unclear if the changes recommended by ISO were purely editorial or technical in nature. The AACCI recommendation was referred to the Codex Committee on Nutrition and Foods for Special Dietary Uses (CCNFSDU).

Proposed Draft Principles for the Use of Sampling and Testing in International Food Trade: Explanatory Notes (Agenda Item 4)

The *Proposed Draft Principles for the Use of Sampling and Testing in International Food Trade: Explanatory Notes (CX/MAS 13/35/4)*, which had been adopted at Step 2/3 at last year's Codex Alimentarius Commission and further developed during an inter-session eWG chaired by Germany, were further revised during an in-session working group and at the plenary session of CCMAS. After extensive discussion, the Committee agreed that the



explanatory notes would be best integrated within the main document, CAC/GL 83-2013, with the understanding that the Principles in CAC/GL 83-2013 were not for further consideration and will remain unchanged, but that the introduction and scope will require some consequential amendment in order to explain the inclusion of the explanatory notes. The new, integrated document will be circulated again at Step 2/3 for further editing in an eWG chaired by Germany.

The United States supported the integration of the two documents and the return of the document to Step 2/3 for further comment.

Discussion Paper on Considering Procedures for Establishing Criteria (Agenda Item 5)

The Delegation of United States of America introduced the report of the eWG as presented in CX/MAS 14/35/5 and noted that there was general interest in the concept of developing criteria for Type I methods and/or multi-analyte methods, but that this was a starting point and no attempt was made to reach consensus at this session. In view of the general discussion on the recommendations, the Committee agreed to pursue the work further through the establishment of two eWGs. The first, led by the United States, will prepare a discussion paper which will consider different approaches for establishing equivalency between different Type I methods. The second, led by the United Kingdom, will prepare a discussion paper on a criteria approach to methods which use a "sum of components." The discussion paper will evaluate and discuss current options; consider general guidelines; and evaluate criteria for use on a case-by-case basis.

The United States recommended the separation of these two topics and supported the establishment of separate working groups to consider these topics.

Discussion Paper on Elaboration of Procedures for Regular Updating of Methods (Agenda Item 6)

The delegation of Brazil, as chair of the eWG, introduced the report of the Working Group (CX/MAS 14/35/6) and pointed out that the eWG had generally agreed that *Codex Standard 234-1999 (Recommended Methods of Analysis and Sampling)* and commodity standards contained a number of inconsistencies that included: making reference to outdated methods, errors and omissions, and the use of references that were not traceable. The Committee agreed to establish an eWG, led by Brazil, to compile a single workable list for all methods in *Codex Standard 234-1999* and commodity standards, and to divide the list into work packages based on the criteria developed by the Committee for prioritization of the methods of analysis. Once the priority list is established, the eWG will conduct a validation exercise on one pilot work package, the results of which will be considered by the Committee at its next session.

The United States continues to support a procedure for updating methods which clearly delineates the responsibility of CCMAS and does not put an undue burden on the Standard Developing Organizations (SDOs).

Discussion Paper on Sampling in Codex Standards (Agenda Item 7)

The Committee recalled that at its last session it had been agreed that the Inter-Agency Meeting (IAM) would develop a paper on sampling for consideration at this session. The Observer of the *International Commission for Uniform Methods of Sugar Analysis (ICUMSA)*, on behalf of IAM, introduced CX/MAS 14/35/7. Noting the points raised, the Committee agreed to develop practical examples of sampling plans and that these examples would be best placed in an Annex to the *Principles for the Use of Sampling and Testing in International Food Trade (CAC/GL 83-2013)* (see Agenda Item 4). For this purpose, the Committee agreed that other Codex Committees would be requested to submit practical examples for consideration by CCMAS.

Next Session

The next session of the CCMAS is tentatively planned for March 2015 in Budapest, Hungary.