



## Report of the U.S. Delegate to the 33rd Session of the Codex Committee on Methods of Analysis and Sampling

March 5-9, 2012

Budapest, Hungary

The [Codex Committee on Methods of Analysis and Sampling](#) (CCMAS) held its 33rd Session from March 5-9, 2012, in Budapest, Hungary. The 33rd Session was attended by 163 delegates and observers, representing 55 Member Countries, one Member Organization (European Union), and 15 international organizations. The United States was represented by the Delegate, Dr. Gregory Noonan, U.S. Food and Drug Administration; Dr. David Funk and Mr. Larry Freese, Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration, U.S. Department of Agriculture; and Ms. Marie Maratos, U.S. Codex Office, Food Safety and Inspection Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture.

The United States fully participated on all agenda items and was successful in achieving its objectives during this Session. The Committee, recognizing that substantial progress had been made on the *Proposed Draft Principles for the Sampling and Testing in International Food Trade*, agreed to forward the Draft Principles, as amended during the session, to the 35th Session of the Commission for adoption at Step 5. Additionally, the Committee after thorough discussion, agreed to refer *Provisions on the Use of Proprietary Methods in Codex Standards* to the Committee on General Principles for endorsement and inclusion in the Procedural Manual.

More detailed summaries on several Agenda items from the CCMAS final report (REP11/MAS) are provided below. The full report of the Session can be found on the Codex Website, [www.codexalimentarius.org](http://www.codexalimentarius.org).

### Draft Principles for the Sampling and Testing in International Food Trade

*The Proposed Draft Principles for the Sampling and Testing in International Food Trade* (CX/MAS 13/33/3), which had been developed during an inter-session electronic Working Group (eWG) chaired by New Zealand with the assistance of the Netherlands and United States, were further revised by the in-session Working Group (WG) which met during the 33rd Session. Based on discussion during the plenary, the WG agreed first on the scope, introduction, and definitions. Then, removing all commentary, the WG agreed on the wording and position of each Principle. Along with removing the commentary for a number of principles, addressing dispute resolution was also deleted, because both fell outside the agreed upon scope of the document. Moreover, a number of principles dealing with lot variability were combined into a single principle and an overarching principle concerning transparency was added. The final Proposed Draft was forwarded to the 35th Session of the Commission for adoption at Step 5. The Committee decided to return the commentary to Step 2/3 and agreed that an intra-session eWG should be established to develop draft explanatory notes and commentary under the Principles, for consideration at the next session. Germany, with the assistance of New Zealand, agreed to chair the eWG.

### Endorsement of Methods of Analysis for Provisions in Codex Standards

A report of the ad hoc Working Group on endorsement of methods was presented by the Chair, Dr. Roger Wood from the United Kingdom. The Committee endorsed several methods of analysis in Codex standards and established criteria for the determination of a number of elements in food grade salt. When establishing criteria and attempting to establish a list of acceptable methods, the Working Group found that the validation data for a number of methods are not adequate. Additional data and/or methods are requested for these elements and matrix (paras. 23-52 and Appendix III of REP11/MAS).

### Discussion Paper on the selection of Methods of Analysis for the Determination of Dietary Fiber through the use of a decision tree

As part of the Endorsement Working Group agenda, the *Discussion paper on the use of a decision tree for the selection of dietary fiber methods* was discussed. At the 32nd Session of CCMAS, a substantial number of methods of analysis and sampling proposed by various Codex Committees were endorsed. Among these were methods from the Codex Committee on Nutrition and Foods for Special Dietary Uses (CCNFSDU). Approximately, 17 methods of analysis for dietary fiber (or specific components which contribute to dietary fiber assessment) were endorsed, including a number of methods, with possible overlap, which were endorsed as Type 1. There was concern that in



endorsing such a large number of potentially overlapping methods, there could be confusion for those required to use the endorsed methods of analysis.

One proposed method for avoiding such confusion was the development of a decision tree to be attached as an appendix to the Standard, to guide analysts in the selection of the method. An inter-session electronic Working Group (eWG) was established to develop a discussion paper on the structure and use of a decision tree. The discussion paper and possible options were discussed during the Endorsement Working Group, but a consensus could not be reached and the discussion was continued by the Committee. During the Session, there was consensus that multiple Type I methods could be confusing and that some additional information to guide countries and/or analysts could be beneficial. However, there was no consensus on the form or location of this information. The Committee did agree to encourage an external publication, in an open access format, to make the information contained in the Discussion Paper openly available. However, many delegates noted that such a format may not reach as many interested parties as a Codex document. A compromise was reached, by the Committee creating a table which lists each method and identifies what is and what is not measured with that method. The table was entered as a Conference Room Document available to participants and explicitly referenced in the final report.

### **Provisions for Proprietary Methods in Codex Standards to be Included in the Codex Procedural Manual**

The Committee considered "*Provisions for Proprietary Methods in Codex Standards*" (CX/MAS 12/33/5) created by an inter-session electronic working group (eWG). The document defines, for CCMAS, a proprietary method and stipulates requirements that should be fulfilled for the endorsement of a proprietary method. The definition and subsequent requirements were discussed line-by-line during the plenary session and a number of delegates expressed concern over the endorsement of any proprietary methods. It was pointed out that proprietary methods already exist in the Codex system and that proprietary methods are often the only (or best) test methods available. Additionally, the requirements specifically state that preference should be given to nonproprietary methods or to developing method criteria rather than endorsing specific proprietary methods. After detailed discussion and changes to the document, the committee agreed to forward the document to the Committee on General Principles for inclusion in the Procedural Manual. If approved, the new text will be inserted after the *General Criteria for the Selection of Methods of Analysis in the Principles for the Establishment of Codex Methods of Analysis*.

### **Next session of CCMAS**

The 34th Session of CCMAS is tentatively set for March 4-8, 2013, in Budapest, Hungary.