



Report of the U.S. Delegate on the 36th Session of the Codex Committee on Methods of Analysis and Sampling (CCMAS)

**February 23-27 2015
Budapest, Hungary**

The Codex Committee on Methods of Analysis and Sampling ([CCMAS](#)) held its 36th Session from February 23-27, 2015, 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 forwarding the document *Principles for the Use of Sampling and Testing in International Food Trade: Explanatory Notes* to step 5/8 for adoption by the Commission.

CCMAS also established five intercessional electronic working groups (eWGs), all working in English. An eWG will again be chaired by Germany, with technical assistance from New Zealand, on developing specific examples of sampling and testing as a supporting and informational document to the *Principles for the Use of Sampling and Testing in International Food Trade: Explanatory Notes*. A second eWG, chaired by the United States, will continue the development of a discussion paper on procedures for establishing the equivalency of two analytical methods. Brazil will chair a third eWG, co-chaired by Japan, 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 fifth eWG will be chaired by Chile, co-chaired by France, to develop criteria for biological methods.

More detailed summaries on several agenda items from the recent session of CCMAS are provided below. Further information on each agenda item, including the Terms of Reference (TOR) and scope for each of the new eWGs and discussion papers may be found in the CCMAS final report (REP 15/MAS).

MATTERS REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE BY THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION AND OTHER COMMITTEES (Agenda Item 2)

Methods for determination of marine biotoxins

The committee discussed the previous typing of bioassays (mouse bioassay (MBA), receptor binding assay) for the determination of marine biotoxins as Type IV methods, with all of the discussion focused on the MBA. A number of delegates supported the



Type IV endorsement, pointing out that the historical validation studies were less stringent than current studies. Other delegates presented data on the precision and accuracy of the MBA and noted the historical, common and wide-spread use of the method. In conclusion, the committee agreed to confirm the typing of the methods as Type IV and to note in the report that Type IV method may be used for control, inspection and regulatory purposes.

Committee on Nutrition and Foods for Special Dietary Uses (CCNFSDU)

Methods for dietary fibre

The Association of Analytical Communities (AOAC) confirmed that the methods AOAC 2009.01 and AOAC 2011.25 were identical to the AACCI 32-45.01 and AACCI 32-50.01, respectively, so that both could be listed in Codex STAN 234-1999 under the section, "Methods of analysis for dietary fibre: Guidelines for Use of Nutritional and Health Claims: Table of Conditions for Claims."

Trans fatty acids

Notwithstanding the request of CCNFSDU on the lowest level of trans fatty acids (TFA) that can accurately be detected by analytical methods, CCMAS noted that detection limits are matrix dependent and that a single limit for trans fatty acids cannot be established. CCMAS also noted that the low levels of TFAs cannot be routinely determined in the average laboratory and that a high level of expertise is required for accurate analysis of foods.

The United States supported the Committee's decision on this.

ENDORSEMENT OF METHODS OF ANALYSIS PROVISIONS IN CODEX STANDARDS (Agenda Item 3)

Committee on Contaminants in Foods (CCCF)

Sampling plans for fumonisins in maize and maize products

CCMAS found a number of inconsistencies in the sampling plan for fumonisins in maize and maize products and incorrect values listed for the analytical performance criteria. CCMAS presented detailed edits and suggestions for both the sampling plan and performance criteria, which will be referred to CCCF.

The United States supported the Committee's decision to refer this to CCCF for further development.



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 were adopted at Step 2/3 at last year’s Commission and further developed during an inter-session eWG chaired by Germany, were further revised during the plenary session of CCMAS. After extensive discussion, the Committee agreed that the explanatory notes were complete and they could be forwarded to the Commission for adoption at Step 5/8 at this year’s session.

The United States supports the Committee’s decision to forward the explanatory notes to the Commission for final adoption.

DISCUSSION PAPER ON DEVELOPMENT OF PROCEDURES/GUIDELINES FOR DETERMINING EQUIVALENCY TO TYPE I METHODS (Agenda Item 5)

The Delegation of United States of America introduced the discussion paper and noted that a number of delegates had suggested additional procedures for establishing equivalency between methods. Although one delegation considered the paper to apply only to the equivalency between two Type I methods, the United States pointed out, and the Committee agreed, that the procedures would apply to establishing equivalency to Type I methods. Therefore, they would be appropriate for establishing equivalency between a Type II, III or IV method and a Type I method.

A number of delegates expressed some apprehension at establishing such equivalency and noted that the Committee should proceed with caution. The United States is in full agreement with this approach. The United States agreed to chair an inter-session eWG which will continue the development of the discussion paper on procedures for establishing the equivalency of two analytical methods and will present the revised paper at the next session.

DISCUSSION PAPER ON CRITERIA APPROACH FOR METHODS WHICH USE A ‘SUM OF COMPONENTS’ (Agenda 6)

The Delegation of the United Kingdom presented their paper at an in-session working group on the Criteria Approach for Methods which use a “Sum of Components.” The working group reached a consensus on further development of the paper. During plenary, the Delegation outlined the conclusion of the working group and proposed terms of reference for an intersession eWG to further elaborate on the current document. The Committee agreed to the terms of reference and to establish an eWG, chaired by the UK



The United States plans to participate in the eWG once it is established.

DISCUSSION PAPER ON ELABORATION OF PROCEDURES FOR REGULAR UPDATING OF METHODS (Agenda Item 7)

The delegation of Brazil, as chair of the eWG, introduced the report of the Working Group (CX/MAS 14/35/6) and document CX/MAS 15/36/7. The Committee agreed on the importance of the work and noted that confusion could be reduced by creating a single standard for methods of analysis. It was noted that this approach would have procedural consequences and that CCGP could be requested to amend the *Procedural Manual* to allow such an approach. A number of delegates, who also participate in other Codex committees, expressed some reservation about a single standard approach. As such, the Committee agreed to establish an eWG, led by Brazil, to continue the work of updating methods of analysis.

The United States is interested in the procedure for the reviewing of methods, specifically how the methods and/or validation data will be supplied to interested members and how the review will be performed. The United States plans to participate in the eWG once it is established.

NEXT SESSION

The next Session of the CCMAS is tentatively planned for March 2016 in Budapest, Hungary.