

Food Safety Committee Report

2015-2016

During 2015, ASTA's Food Safety Committee (FSC) made significant progress to align its priorities with ASTA's strategic plan and provide food safety and technical resources to ASTA. The committee worked in conjunction with ASTA's Education Committee to ensure alignment of priorities.

During 2015, the FSC met twice in person. The committee has participation from a diverse group of professionals who contributed their technical and business expertise through years of experience in the industry.

HIGHLIGHTS OF FSC ACCOMPLISHMENTS DURING 2015 ARE:

- ASTA's Website now hosts a complete section on Food Safety. As the focus on food safety continues to rise across the world, earning the trust of customers, consumers and regulatory agencies will create distinctive value for the spice industry. The section now hosts a variety of information in detail for members to access.
- The HACCP Guide was revised to account for changes companies need to implement related to Preventive Controls in the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA).
- A new Good Manufacturing Practices Guide (GMP Guide) was published following a very rigorous approach by a group of focused FSC member. This new Guide provides a very comprehensive tool for use by the spice industry worldwide.
- During 2015, the FSC Committee has formed four subcommittees to enable more focused work in the key areas of Microbiology, Pathogen Reduction, Analytical Methods and Food Safety and Regulatory Compliance Tools. Work in some of these groups was already underway while two of them are new.

Microbiology Subcommittee

- The subcommittee has reviewed the methods specifically used in detection of *Salmonella* in spices and the dilution protocols which need standardization to ensure that industry is following standardized methodologies. The reviewed document was submitted to FDA for feedback and recommendations, with the Agency currently considering additional changes.
- ASTA continues to fund research with ILSNI North America to identify suitable surrogates for validation of microbial reduction processes. The research was originally expected to be completed by October 2015, but has been delayed by six months. Once completed it will be published and the surrogates will be available at no cost to ASTA members through ILSI North America.

Analytical Methods Subcommittee

- A draft method for rapid screening of dressed black pepper has been circulated for review of the recommended time /temperature parameters.
- Method 29.0 – method for illegal dyes in spices is being taken up as a collaborative project. The committee agreed to add information about the need to use a spiked sample for validation on the product matrix of interest.
- It was concluded that there is not a need for an ASTA method to detect ochratoxin/aflatoxin as there is an AOAC method in place for individual matrices.
- A revision for ASTA Method 18.0 for determination of cucuminoids in turmeric is being reviewed for publication during 2016.

- A number of ASTA members participated in a project led by FARRP to evaluate testing options for allergens. Preliminary results have been shared with ASTA and the research is expected to be published in 2016.

Check Sample Program

- The Check Sample Program was successful in 2015 with higher number of participants for the program, up to 64 labs from 61 the previous year. The committee is considering revising instructions in the pathogen detection methods based on the proposed changes in the dilution protocols as soon as it is agreed with FDA.
- Members of the Food Safety Committee continue to volunteer to donate the spices required for the Check Sample Program.

LEADERSHIP TRANSITION:

During the Annual Meeting in 2016, Lynda Lathrop will take over the chair of the ASTA FSC. I would like to take this opportunity to thank and congratulate all members of the FSC for their active participation and accomplishments through voluntary work. It has been a learning experience for me in the last two years and I would like to thank the ASTA Board and Cheryl for having the confidence in me and providing guidance to lead the FSC.

Food Safety Committee:

Lynda Lathrop, Griffith Laboratories, Vice Chair
Stan Bailey, Biomerieux Industry
Abdul Basit, Kalustyan Corp.
Roger Clarke, Cannamela Divisione Di Bonomelli S.R.I.
Paula Coe, Mincing Overseas Spice Company
Alain Darriet, Wixon, Inc.
Rebeca Hard, ConAgra Foods
Dan Hemming, Sensient Natural Ingredients
Matt Hollister, Oregon Spice Company
Sebnem Karasu, Birlik A.S.
Karim-Franck Khinouche, Novolyze
Erik Knedgen, Kalsec, Inc.
Amy Lytle, ACH Food Companies Inc.
Marty Mitchell, Certified Laboratories, Inc.
Supat "Sam" Sirivicha, Eurofins US Food Division
David Lessans, Chesapeake Spice Company, Board Liaison

Siva Subramanian, Olam Spices and Vegetable Ingredients
Food Safety Committee, Chair
March 11, 2016