

6th International Conference on

FOOD SAFETY & REGULATORY MEASURES

June 05-07, 2017 Milan, Italy

Importance of proficiency testing and reference materials in food analysis: New opportunities

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Reference Materials (RMs) and Certified Reference Materials (CRMs) are required for analytical method validation, equipment calibration while PT is used to test performance of laboratory equipment as well as personnel, thus play major role in quality control of food analysis. Problems of poor proficiency have emphasized on need of development of reference materials in analytical testing. As per a report, CRM users and producers in Europe feel that the communication process with the legislating authorities needs to be improved significantly; however, the situation is more or less same till today. RMs is preferred over CRMs for lower price even having lower accuracy but no formal structure for RM is established in Europe. There is vertical segregation between CRM, CODEX and Pharmacopeia. However with support of EC, a very well structure for CRM development has been established. Same report has figured out that agricultural product exporters in developing countries will turn out to be potential users of CRMs. The benefits of CRMs are relatively unknown to average QC users with major reason being price. With requirement of ISO 17025, use of CRMs is increasing. FSMA 2011 highlighted importance of CRM through legislative mandate. Checking the availability of CRMs on a global scale is possible through COMAR database but its use seems to be still limited. Development of CRMs in Asia pacific region was one of the major subjects in 2009 international conference, Thailand. However, an issue addressed was easy availability of matrix based CRMs for many food analytes and labor intensive uneconomic production.

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