



THE THIRD GLOBAL FOOD REGULATORY SCIENCE SYMPOSIUM

in conjunction with the 18th Dubai International Food Safety Conference (DIFSC).

21-24 October 2024 • Dubai World Trade Centre, Dubai, UAE

– Report –



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Organizers and Partners

Organizer

The Global Food Regulatory Science Society (GFoRSS) – in collaboration with Dubai Municipality.

International Partners

The Arab Industrial Development, Standardization and Mining Organization (AIDSMO)

The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Standardization Organization (GSO)

The International Union for Food Science and Technology (IUFoST)

Laval University and the Food Risk Analysis and Regulatory Excellence Platform (PARERA)

The Arab Section of AOAC INTERNATIONAL (ARAB AOAC)

Day 1 • Monday, 21 October 2024

❖ **Opening Ceremony**

The conference commenced with an official opening ceremony that welcomed all participants, speakers, and distinguished guests. Insightful opening speeches were shared by:

- H.E Eng. Dawood Abdulrahman AlHajri, Director General - Dubai Municipality
- Mr. Kayan Al Jaff, Head of Mission and Advisor - Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)
- Mr. Robert Raines, Consul General - USA

❖ **Session 1: Performance Criteria for Acceptance of Quantitative Gluten Methods – Development of Arab Analytical Method Standards for the Determination of Gluten in Gluten Free Foods**

- **Chair:** Dr. Amine Kassouf, President of the Arab Section of AOAC INTERNATIONAL

[Session 1 recording \(EN\)](#) - [Session 1 recording \(AR\)](#)

Presentations:

This session began with an [Introduction to Food Allergens and Gluten Management from a Regulatory Perspective](#) presented by Prof. Samuel Godefroy, Professor, Food Risk Analysis and Regulatory Policies, Université Laval, Canada; President International Union of Food Science and Technology (IUFoST); President and COO, Global Food Regulatory Science Society (GFoRSS).

An [Introduction to the AOAC Guidelines for Validation of Quantitative Gluten Methods](#) followed by means of a pre-recorded talk by Dr. Laura Allred, co-chair of the Gluten & Food Allergens (GFA) Program at AOAC INTERNATIONAL.

Next, a pre-recorded presentation entitled [Performance of ELISA-based Analytical Methods Supporting Compliance with Gluten-Free Regulations](#) was delivered by Dr. Stefan Schmidt, Product Manager: Allergens at R-Biopharm.

An overview of [The Arab Gluten and Food Allergen Management Initiative: Summary of Achievements and Future Perspectives](#) was then provided by Dr. Amine Kassouf, Research Manager at the Global Food Regulatory Science Society (GForSS) and President of Arab Section of AOAC INTERNATIONAL.

Wrapping up the initial session was a roundtable discussion, moderated by Prof. Samuel Godefroy, where attendees expressed their support for this endeavor and encouraged that work continue towards adopting performance criteria for quantitative gluten testing specific to the Arab region, particularly for food products of interest for the region.

Day 2 • Tuesday, 22 October 2024

❖ Session 2: Current and Emerging Issues in Food Risk Assessment Affecting the Arab region and Beyond

- **Chair:** Prof. Samuel Godefroy, Professor, Food Risk Analysis and Regulatory Policies, Université Laval, Canada; President International Union of Food Science and Technology (IUFoST); President and COO, Global Food Regulatory Science Society (GForSS)

[Session 2 recording \(EN\)](#) - [Session 2 recording \(AR\)](#)

Presentations:

The session began with a presentation by: Dr. Jérémie Theolier and Dr. Silvia Dominguez, PARERA, Laval University, Quebec, Canada on [How Can Risk Assessment Support to Alleviate Food-Related Concerns; Stochastic Health Risk Assessment of Aflatoxin M1 in Cow's Milk among the Lebanese Population](#). During this presentation, the advantages of using a distribution of data rather than averages in the dietary exposure process were emphasized.

A presentation about [Applying Evidence-Based Approaches to Manage Titanium Dioxide as a Food Additive - Review of the international context and next steps](#), was then provided by Dr. Wiem Guissouma, GForSS Expert, National Agency for Risk Assessment, Tunisia. This presentation enabled very substantial discussion on this additive's regulatory status in the Arab region and beyond, including best practices to manage it from a regulatory perspective.

Next, a presentation regarding [Egypt's Approach to Develop Risk-Based Management for Energy Drinks in Food](#) was delivered by Dr. Rasha Galal, National Food Safety Authority (NFSA) – Egypt.

The second session concluded with a presentation on [Reviewing Emerging Issues in Risk Assessment Impacting the Arab Region and Beyond](#), given by Prof. Samuel Godefroy, Professor, Food Risk Analysis and Regulatory Policies, Université Laval, Canada; President International Union of Food Science and Technology (IUFOST); President and COO, Global Food Regulatory Science Society (GFoRSS).

❖ Session 3: Harmonization of Food Regulatory Frameworks

- **Chair:** Prof. Samuel Godefroy, Professor, Food Risk Analysis and Regulatory Policies, Université Laval, Canada; President International Union of Food Science and Technology (IUFOST); President and COO, Global Food Regulatory Science Society (GFoRSS)

Presentations:

This session was structured in the form of G2B discussions with a focus to review current food regulatory challenges in the region and internationally and highlighted the importance of the development and sustainability of food regulatory convergence forums.

Eng. Ahmad Al-Basha, GSO presented the [Current Efforts to Develop Harmonized Standards Among Country Members of the Gulf Cooperation Council Standardization Organization \(GSO\)](#).

Dr. Hussein Al Masroori /Director General of Centre of Food Safety and Quality (Oman) and Prof. Samuel Godefroy, introduced [the Concept of the Arab Food Regulators Network \(Arab FoRNet\)](#).

A panel discussion followed, titled [Panel Discussion on Food Regulatory Cooperation and Convergence in the Arab Region](#). The discussion focused on:

- Current food safety regulatory irritants regionally and globally.
- Lessons Learnt and Best practices in G2G and G2B Collaborations.
- Harnessing Technology to Support Data Sharing G2G and G2B.
- Codex Agenda and Perspectives of G2G Collaborations.
- Managing Emerging Issues and Preventing Food Regulatory Divergence.

Day 3 – Wednesday 23 October 2024

❖ Session 4: International Perspectives on Food Safety

Please note that this session was not broadcast by GFORSS – however, we are pleased to share Dr. Moez Sanaa's (HQ-WHO) presentation on "[Future-Ready Food Safety: Managing Risk, Building Resilience, and Ensuring Sustainability in Emerging Food Systems](#)".

❖ Session 5: Data-Based Decision-Making Workshop: Supporting the Arab Codex Community in Accessing and Providing Data to Codex Proceedings – PART 1

[Recording \(EN\)](#) – [Recording \(AR\)](#)

The workshop was organized in collaboration with WHO, and facilitated by Dr. Moez Sanaa, HQ-WHO.

Day 4 – Thursday 24 October 2024

❖ Session 5 (continued): Data-Based Decision-Making Workshop: Supporting the Arab Codex Community in Accessing and Providing Data to Codex Proceedings – PART 2

Morning session: [Recording \(EN\)](#) – [Recording \(AR\)](#)

Afternoon session: [Recording \(EN\)](#) – [Recording \(AR\)](#)

Presentations:

Kicking off the final session was a presentation on [Risk Based Food Monitoring Activities as a Foundation for Robust Food Safety System](#) provided by Dr. Karima Zouine, food safety expert – GFORSS. The main emphasis was on: Introducing the Importance of Food Monitoring; and, Offering an Overview on Methods of Risk Based Food Monitoring.

[GEMS Food Database Introduction & Review of the Requirements of Data Input into the GEMS Food Program](#), was presented next by Dr. Amine Kassouf, Research Manager – GFORSS. The WHO's GEMS/Food (Global Environment Monitoring System - Food Contamination Monitoring and Assessment Program) database is a global platform that compiles data on chemical contaminants in food. It provides essential information for risk

assessments, supports international food safety standards, and helps monitor exposure to hazardous chemicals in the food supply. This database is a key tool for health agencies, governments, and scientists working to protect public health and ensure food safety worldwide.

A presentation on the [Importance of Food Consumption Data for Food Decision-Making](#) followed. Dr. Élie Bou Yazbeck, Research Specialist – GFORSS, covered the following topics:

- Introduction to Food Consumption Data: Overview of the significance of high-quality consumption data in assessing dietary exposure to chemicals.
- Types of Food Consumption Data - Introduction to the various types of data used in chemical risk assessment, including:
 - Household Budget Data: General insights into food availability at the household level.
 - Cluster Diet Data: Grouping populations by dietary patterns to estimate exposure.
- Individual Dietary Surveys: Accurate data on individual consumption using 24-hour recall and food frequency questionnaires.

Next, a presentation on [Practical Considerations Related to the GEMS Food Database¹](#) was given by Dr. Moez Sanaa, HQ-WHO who shared insights into:

- Data Extraction: Step-by-step guidance on how to search for and retrieve data on chemical contaminants in food, with practical examples.
- Data Submission: Instructions on how to submit national food contamination data to GEMS, including data format, quality control, and reporting requirements.
- Hands-on Practice: Practical exercises on extracting relevant data and submitting sample datasets to the GEMS platform.

He then presented [Food Consumption Data – Practical Considerations¹](#), with concentration on the different types of food consumption data critical for chemical risk assessments by JECFA and JMPR.

Dr. Sanaa's final presentation on [Maximum Levels of Contaminants in Food¹](#) centered on the process for establishing Maximum Levels (MLs) for aflatoxins in cereals, with a particular focus on balancing public health protection with practical implications for food supply and trade.

For more information, please visit https://gforss.org/2024/10/11/2024_gforssymposium/

¹ Unfortunately, Dr. Moez Sanaa's presentation is not currently available.