



46th Joint Coordination Meeting of Arab and CCNE Codex Contact Points

**PREPARATION FOR THE 45th SESSION OF THE CODEX
COMMITTEE ON METHODS OF ANALYSIS AND SAMPLING
(CCMAS45)**

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Agenda Item 7.1: Review of Sampling Plans in CXS 234-1999

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Background

- At its 44th Session (CCMAS44, 2025), CCMAS initiated discussions on the need to review the sampling plan information contained in CXS 234-1999.
- While CXS 234 serves as the single reference for analytical methods in Codex standards, the format, location, and presentation of sampling plan information have not been reviewed comprehensively in light of evolving needs and the planned development of an electronic database.
- An Electronic Working Group (EWG), chaired by Zealand and Germany, to explore how sampling plan information should be structured and integrated within the Codex system.
- The EWG has completed its mandate and submitted the revised discussion paper for consideration at CCMAS45.

What is Requested from CCMAS45

- **CCMAS45 is invited to:**

1. **Consider the options presented for the inclusion and organization of sampling plan information, with particular attention to:**
 - Including all sampling plan information in CXS 234-1999; or
 - Developing standards at the commodity-group level while maintaining sampling plan details in a central repository or database.
2. **Decide on the way forward, including:**
 - The type of information to be included.
 - The structure and functionality of a potential database tool.
 - How existing information would be incorporated and maintained.
 - How non-standard elements (e.g., footnotes, comments) should be handled.
3. **Consider how CCMAS could assist in the development of sampling plans where they do not currently exist.**
4. **Consider the establishment of a new EWG to continue technical discussions on database structure, content migration, system functionality, and ongoing maintenance.**

Analysis

- The discussion paper does not yet enter into detailed technical design of sampling plans. Rather, it addresses a structural and governance question:
- **Where and how should sampling plan information be located within the Codex system?**
- Currently, sampling information in CXS 234-1999 (Part B) is limited, inconsistently structured, and often confused with physical sampling procedures rather than full sampling inspection plans. A review of Codex standards shows that most standards either contain no sampling information or refer to outdated or incomplete references. This situation undermines harmonization and creates potential inconsistencies in implementation.
- The core principle reaffirmed in the paper is that, just as each provision has a designated analytical method, it should also have a clearly designated sampling inspection plan. Therefore, the current fragmented system needs reform.

Con . Analysis

- In this context, CCMAS45 is primarily invited to decide the preferred structural approach for advancing this work, specifically:
- **Option 1**
- Include all sampling plan information in CXS 234-1999 (as a single reference), ideally within a searchable electronic database integrating methods and sampling plans.
- **Option 4**
- Develop separate “meta-standards” for each commodity group describing sampling plans, while still maintaining sampling details in a central repository or database.
- Options 2 and 3 are presented but have less support and greater administrative burden.
- The EWG showed a clear preference for **Option 1**, as it would maintain CXS 234 as the single consolidated reference and would be more user-friendly, especially if supported by a modern database format.

At this level, CCMAS45 is asked to:

- Agree on the structural direction (Option 1 or Option 4).
- Provide general guidance on the way forward.
- Consider whether CCMAS should play a stronger role in supporting commodity committees in developing sampling plans.
- Consider establishing a new EWG to continue detailed work.

Beyond the structural choice, a broader governance question arises:

- Commodity committees are responsible for standards and thus logically for sampling plans.
- However, many committees are inactive or lack statistical expertise.
- CCMAS endorses sampling plans but may lack authority to determine risk levels without commodity committee input.

Recommendations

1. Support a Single Consolidated Reference (Option 1)

Option 1 – Inclusion of all sampling plan information in CXS 234-1999, ideally through a searchable electronic database integrating methods of analysis and sampling plans.

Rationale:

- Ensures consistency with the principle that CXS 234 is the single reference.
- More user-friendly and transparent.
- Reduces fragmentation across standards.
- Avoids the administrative burden of revising all commodity standards.

2. Support Development of a Database Tool

Development of a modern, searchable database for methods and sampling plans.

Clear presentation linking each provision to:

- The analytical method.
- The corresponding sampling plan.
- However:
- Emphasize gradual implementation.
- Avoid creating unnecessary complexity at this stage.

Con. Recommendations

3. Clarify Responsibilities

- Commodity committees remain responsible for defining sampling requirements for their provisions.
- CCMAS Can provide technical /statistical support and assist in identifying priority areas and endorsing sampling plans
- Clear guidance be developed on division of responsibilities.

4. Support Establishment of a New EWG

- Establishing a new EWG to:
 - Define the database structure,
 - Clarify minimum required sampling information,
 - Develop practical implementation steps

