

## ARAB WORKING GROUP

### Development of Arab Requirements for the Acceptance of Gluten Quantitative Methods

3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting

#### Record of Discussions and Decisions

Tuesday 26 May 2026

Virtually

2 PM (GMT+2)



Member	Organization	Country	Present	Regrets
<b>Mrs. Celine Homsy</b>	Lebanese Agricultural Research Institute (LARI)	Lebanon	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Dr. Intisar Salim Al Gharibi</b>	Food Safety and Quality Center (FSQC)	Oman	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>Dr. Sana Jaballah</b>	Agri-food Technical Center (CTAA)	Tunisia	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Dr. Jérémie Théolier</b>	PARERA/GFoRSS – Laval University	Canada	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Dr. Amine Kassouf</b>	President Arab Section	Lebanon	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Dr. Mustafa Sultan</b>	Secretary Arab Section	Egypt	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Observer	Organization	Country	Present	Regrets
<b>Mrs. Abida Al Qaisi</b>	Celiac Care Providers Society (President)	Jordan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Mrs. Kaouthar Boumeddane</b>	University of Health Sciences	Algeria	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Mrs. Nisrine Sawaya</b>	Celiac Association in Lebanon (President)	Lebanon	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Mrs. Shadwa El Araby</b>	Standards and Metrology Center AIDSMO (Director)	Morocco	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Dr. Markus Lacorn</b>	R-Biopharm AG	Germany	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

GFoRSS Representatives	Organization	Country	Present	Regrets
<b>Prof. Samuel Godefroy</b>	GFoRSS (President & COO)	Canada	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## 1. Opening Remarks

Dr. Amine Kassouf, President of the Arab Section of AOAC INTERNATIONAL, opened the meeting welcomed participants and thanked all experts and stakeholders for their continued engagement and contributions to the activities of the Arab Working Group. The meeting was convened to continue discussions on the development of harmonized Arab

requirements for the acceptance of gluten quantitative methods and to review progress on the draft document prepared by the Group.

## **2. Adoption of the Agenda**

The proposed agenda was presented for consideration. The Working Group reviewed the agenda and adopted it without amendments.

## **3. Review of Objectives and Background**

A brief recap of the Working Group's mandate and objectives was provided, re-emphasizing the importance of developing harmonized regional requirements for quantitative gluten methods aligned with internationally recognized practices while considering regional needs and implementation aspects.

The proposed document aims to establish a scientific and practical framework for the validation and acceptance of quantitative immunological methods, primarily ELISA-based approaches, intended for gluten determination in foods labelled as gluten-free.

## **4. Technical Discussion on the Draft Document**

Prof. Samuel Godefroy presented the different sections of the draft document, followed by a detailed discussion by Working Group members.

The discussion covered several technical aspects, including:

- Method validation requirements for method developers.
- Independent laboratory studies and collaborative studies.
- Performance requirements and acceptance criteria.
- Selectivity considerations for different cereal sources.
- Cross-reactivity requirements.
- Matrix effects and impacts of food composition on analytical performance.
- Recovery criteria, limits of detection and quantification, and robustness requirements.
- Analytical challenges associated with complex gluten-free products and processed matrices.

The Working Group highlighted the importance of ensuring that the proposed requirements are scientifically robust while remaining practical and applicable.

Following detailed review and discussion, the Working Group endorsed the draft document as a final draft, pending a final editorial and proof-reading review to be conducted by the GForSS team.

## **5. Discussion on Future Framework Development**

The Working Group discussed broader implementation considerations beyond the current draft document.

Members highlighted the importance of establishing an appropriate conformity assessment framework that would support implementation and acceptance of validated methods in the Arab region.

The possibility of supporting future initiatives such as harmonized certification mechanisms and broader gluten-free regulatory frameworks was also discussed.

## **6. Agreement on Next Steps**

The Working Group agreed on the following next steps:

1. The GForSS team will conduct a final proof-reading and editorial review of the draft document.
2. The finalized draft document will be shared with the Omani focal point for AIDSMO for transmission through the appropriate official channels to TC9/AIDSMO.
3. The finalized draft document will be translated into Arabic and shared with AIDSMO at a subsequent stage.
4. Discussions will be initiated with AIDSMO leadership regarding the most appropriate approach for developing a conformity assessment structure supporting implementation.
5. The Working Group will continue exploring additional projects aimed at strengthening the regional framework for gluten-free products.

## **7. Action Items**

<b>Action Item</b>	<b>Responsible</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
Conduct final proof-reading and editorial review of draft document	GForSS Team	Upcoming days

Action Item	Responsible	Timeline
Translate finalized draft into Arabic	GFoRSS Team	Following final revision
Share Arabic draft with AIDSMO	GFoRSS Team	Following translation
Discuss conformity assessment framework with AIDSMO leadership	GFoRSS/AIDSMO	To be scheduled
Develop stakeholder questionnaire	Working Group	To be determined
Organizing stakeholder workshop	Working Group	To be determined

## 8. Closing of the Meeting

The Chair thanked all participants for their valuable contributions and constructive discussions. Members reiterated their commitment to advancing harmonized scientific approaches that support gluten-free product regulation and consumer protection across the Arab region.

The meeting was adjourned.