



Conference organizing team and friends

2023 AOAC SEA 2nd Annual Conference recaps:

- Talks on *Facilitating Compliance for Food Safety and Quality in International Trade*
- Highlighted activities of the AOAC SEA 2nd Annual Conference
- Some of the messages behind the scenes

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Facilitating Compliance for Food Safety and Quality in International Trade

"AOAC INTERNATIONAL provides an excellent platform to the Southeast Asia region to drive the improvement of analytical competence and capabilities, as well as improving the standards and performance of food testing labs -- be it private, research, academic or government. This will facilitate trade, which benefits all stakeholders including consumers," said Dr. Erik Konings, Past-President of AOAC INTERNATIONAL (AOACI) and Section Mentor of AOAC Southeast Asia Section (AOAC SEA).

AOAC SEA's 1st Annual Conference was held in Oct 2022 in Singapore with the theme of "Food Safety: Regulation and Analytical Science." The conference attracted over 200 delegates, with a good mix of public and private sector groups and academia.

On 1-2 Aug 2023, our 2nd Annual Conference was held in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam with the Institute of Drug Quality Control, Ho Chi Minh City (IDQC-HCMC) as the co-organizer. The theme of the conference was "Facilitating Compliance for Food Safety and Quality in International Trade."

Major topics of the conference were consulted with regulatory organizations in Vietnam and AOAC INTERNATIONAL to develop a list that are relevant to Vietnam and the participants in the region, with alignment to AOAC INTERNATIONAL's vision, mission, and programs. AOAC SEA also casted a section-wide Call for Proposals to listen to its members and develop a well-rounded program.

Talks could be separated into two categories, somewhat overlapping and not exclusive from each other, that are "Standard development and method harmonization to facilitate compliance" and "Global and local emerging issues."



Representative talks on "Standard development and method harmonization to facilitate compliance" include:

- Keynote speech on "The Tendency of Referencing to AOAC Methods in TCVNs, QCVNs and Harmonizing TCVNs in the Food Chain According to the AOAC Methods" by Dr. Trieu Viet Phuong, Vietnam Standards and Quality Institute (VSQI), Vietnam. TCVNs are Vietnam's National Standards and can be applied voluntarily while QCVNs stands for National Technical Regulations and are mandatory. AOAC methods play an important role in food and feed testing for both state management (referenced in QCVNs) and public and private testing labs (used directly; referred to in in-house methods; or harmonized in TCVNs). The harmonization rate of TCVNs to AOAC methods is second only to ISO standards (16.9% and 46.2%, respectively). This is significant alignment to international trade requirements, as guided by the WTO Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade and Free Trade Agreements.
- "Applying the AOAC Method to Food Testing at Accredited Laboratories in Vietnam," by Ms. Hoang Thanh Duong, Bureau of Accreditation (BoA), Vietnam. BoA has accredited 1,500+ conformity assessment bodies in Vietnam, as well as Laos, Cambodia, Brunei, Philippines, Indonesia and China. Food, feed, supplement, and pharmaceutical labs account for more than 40% of those. While most testing labs use ISO standards, TCVNs (referencing to ISO, AOAC, EN methods and others), AOAC methods, and more, the choice of testing methods depends on the request of relevant Ministries and customers supplying goods to meet the demands of the markets.



- "AOAC & ISO Harmonization in Microbiological Test Methods Validation," by Ms. DeAnn Benesh, Neogen, USA. She is also Past-President of AOACI and Member of MicroVal General Committee (MicroVal is an international certification organization for the validation and approval of alternative methods following ISO 16140-2/-6 to meet the European requirements in EC 2073/2005). As ISO and AOAC are two standards organizations that have their methods frequently selected in Codex Alimentarius as International Food Standards Type I/II to use as reference in trade disputes, the AOAC and ISO partnership, which started in 2012 in the scope of ISO/TC 34, has been broadening global acceptance of standards and methods, as well as helping to ensure food products conform to their declarations worldwide.
- Technical Workshop on "AOAC Official Methods and Method Validation," by Mr. Darryl Sullivan, Eurofins Scientific, USA and Dr. Erik Konings, Nestlé Institute of Food Safety and Analytical Sciences, Switzerland. They are also Past-Presidents of AOACI. Although Mr. Sullivan had to cancel his trip due to emergent matters, the workshop was still successfully delivered with 3 talks on



“AOAC INTERNATIONAL Process for the Development and Use of SMPR’s in Standards Development,” “Measurement Uncertainty in Chemical Analysis,” and “AOAC INTERNATIONAL Method Validation Process.”

AOAC Standard Method Performance Requirements (SMPRs®) are used internationally as consensus standards to guide method developers for the creation of new, fit-for-purpose analytical test methods.



Representative talks on “Global and local emerging issues” include:

- Keynote speech on “Food Safety Initiatives: Current and Future Standard Development Activities at AOAC INTERNATIONAL” by Dr. Katerina Mastovska, Deputy Executive Director and Chief Science Officer of AOACI, USA. With a vision on “Global alignment for trusted analytical solutions,” AOACI advances food safety and product integrity through standards, validated methods, and laboratory quality programs. Many new AOAC Standard Method Performance Requirements (SMPRs®) are available to address emerging analytical targets that are of interest to nations’ legislations and consumer markets.
- “PFAS: Development in Global Regulations, Analytical Challenges and AOAC Activities,” by Dr. Susan Genualdi, US FDA. She is also chair of AOAC PFAS Working Group. Draft PFAS SMPR has 30 analytes in the target list, basing on those recommended in EU 2022/1431 and EURL POPs guidance document, and 10 additional analytes to consider. The target matrices include the ones in EU 2022/2388 for foods where maximum and indicative levels have been set. It has just undergone final comments by the working group and is being posted for public comment before publication in the Official Methods of AnalysisSM (OMA).
- “Updates From the AOAC Heavy Metals Working Group,” by Dr. Kevin Kubachka, US FDA. As current heavy metals legislations by EU, US, China,

and India, and also Codex, target down to low parts-per-billion (ppb) level for food and drinks, especially for baby food, analysis is not trivial and contamination control is key. The working group, led by experts from US FDA, Nestle and Coca-Cola, is finalizing the Heavy Metals SMPR and invites people to join their [LinkedIn AOAC Metals Community](#).

- “Risk Assessment and Development of Ethylene Oxide Risk Mitigation Guidelines for Food,” by Dr. Didik Joko Pursito, Indonesian FDA. As Indonesia received the first notification from EURASFF regarding ethylene oxide (EtO) in instant noodle product in Dec 2021 from Germany, and then from other countries such as Taiwan, Singapore, and Malaysia, Indonesian FDA has followed up with conducting investigative inspections, conducting periodic socialization/training, issuing Decree of the Head of IFDA No. 229 of 2022, and proposing EtO and 2-CE as priority list contaminants for evaluation by the Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives (JECFA) at the CCCF session. Risk assessment of EtO in food was done through mapping international regulations on EtO, mapping potential risk and source of contamination, processing factor analysis and meeting with experts, and exposure level and maximum residue level calculation. Health risk mitigation guideline for EtO was published and mitigation strategies include application of Good Agricultural Practices (GAP), application of Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP), and periodically monitoring and testing exported and imported products. To avoid more cases of product notifications, a uniform limit globally for EtO and 2-CE was proposed.

- “Nitrosamines – Analytical Methods and Risk Assessment in Vietnamese Food,” by Ms. Nguyen Thi Hong Ngoc, National Institute for Food Control (NIFC), Vietnam. Nitrosamine compounds can be found naturally or synthetically in various foods, with IARC 2020 classifications to group 2A (probably carcinogenic to humans) and group 2B (possibly carcinogenic to humans), and are regulated differently by different legislations. The project developed an analytical method that uses QuEChERS for sample cleanup and GC-MS/MS for analysis, with parameters meeting AOAC validation guidelines. NIFC has been carrying out the 4-Step Risk Assessment Process in Risk Analysis as guided by WHO since 2017, collaborating with University of Perms and Federal Scientific Centre for Medical and Preventive Health Risk Management Technologies (FBSI), Russia in different phases of the study. Data show that the presence of nitrosamines in Vietnamese food products poses a potential health risk to consumers. Planned to complete in 2025, the next steps include reporting the assessment of exposure doses of substances in Vietnamese diet, proposing risk management and risk communication solutions to reduce risks, and planning initial experiment on biomarkers in animal models.

To revisit the whole conference program book, please scan the QR code.



Highlighted activities of the AOAC SEA 2nd Annual Conference

Panel discussion on “Method Standardization - Key to Reduce Technical Barrier in Cross-border Trade”



L-R: Dr. Xinping Hou (BV-AQ), Dr. Erik Konings (Nestle), Ms. Hoang Thanh Duong (BoA), Dr. Trieu Viet Phuong (VSQI), Ms. DeAnn Benesh (Neogen)

AOAC is uniquely qualified to help laboratories standardize test methods and protocols. When this safety testing is harmonized, data can be shared between different organizations and even different countries. Use of harmonized test methods ensures reliable test results can be produced in many laboratory locations.

The panel discussion, tied together with the conference theme and setup, brought together stakeholders that have the voice and capabilities to make AOAC standards more well-recognized and better utilized to protect public health and facilitate cross-border trade.

Collaborating with the Institute of Drug Quality Control, Ho Chi Minh City



Sharing the missions in ensuring the safety and integrity of food and other products that directly impact public health through excellence in analytical testing, AOAC SEA and IDQC-HCMC are honored to partner up to deliver a successful conference



Health supplements, regulated by food authorities in Vietnam and many countries and by drug authorities in others, represent a challenge in terms of aligning stakeholders' interests. With the fast growth of the health supplement sector globally, ensuring the safety and quality of the products to protect public health is of high concern. We are thankful for the participation of the honorable stakeholders in Vietnam, as well as all the distinguished conference attendees!

Panel discussion on “Needs of Pesticide Analysis in the Southeast Asia Region”



L-R: Dr. Erik Konings (Nestle), Dr. Tran Cao Son (NIFC), Dr. Annabelle Briones (DOST-ITDI), Dr. Kaushik Banerjee (ICAR-NRC), Ms. Edna C. Mijares (Jefcor Laboratories)

AOAC Southeast Asia Section, in collaboration with AOAC INTERNATIONAL, is developing a new project on the analysis of pesticides, with the focus on pesticide multi-residue analysis (MRA) in difficult food commodities such as herbs and spices.

The panel discussion, preceded by 2 talks on pesticide analysis, warmed up the audience and community to share their challenges and encouraged collaboration. 75 have responded to the survey. Main challenges in pesticide MRA in herbs and spices include matrix effects, sample preparation, and MRLs-related issues. A kick-off meeting is next on the agenda.

2023 AOAC SEA Student Awards Program



At each annual conference, AOAC SEA holds the Student Awards Program, which is organized by Training of Young Scientists Working Group, one of the 5 working groups of the organization. Contributing to the growth of the next generation, the program encourages and appreciates students and works that promote analytical excellence.



Congratulations to the Student Travel Awardees and Best Student Poster Awardees!

Some of the messages behind the scenes



“

IDQC-HCMC would like to express our appreciation and gratitude to the Southeast Asia Section for inviting IDQC to participate as a co-organizer. The sense of sincere appreciation IDQC experienced for having AOAC SEA on our team, sharing responsibility, and providing significant suggestions and concepts during the planning and execution of the conference, is indescribable. A professional and efficient environment for all participants was made possible by AOAC's assistance and effort. We conquered all the challenges and barriers to provide a successful and memorable conference because of our cohesion and concentration.

“

Thank you for your kind message. I am very happy that I could contribute to your conference and that my presentation was useful for the attendees.

Dr. Katerina (Kate) Mastovska
Deputy Executive Director, Chief Science Officer
AOAC INTERNATIONAL



SIG

“

We want to actively participate in realizing our tagline "towards a safer world," get information updates that are currently developing related to testing, and are ready to become a collaborator laboratory at AOAC [as an Organizational Member].

“

Thank you from both of us.

Christine Eden Sevilla, DOST-FNRI
Admer Rey Dablio, DOST-ITDI

**** DOST-FNRI & DOST-ITDI are processing paperworks to become AOAC SEA Organizational Members**



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See you again in 2024!



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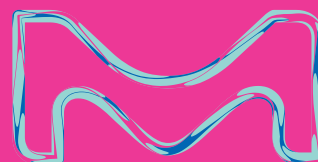
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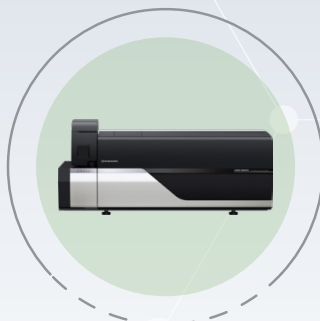
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END-TO-END SOLUTIONS FOR FOOD ANALYSIS



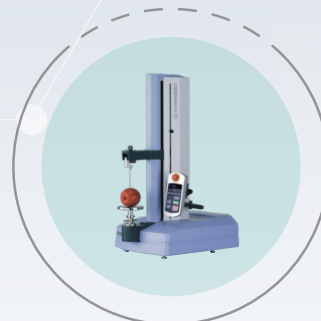
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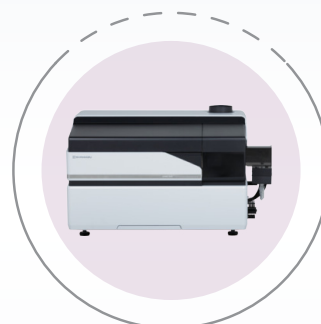
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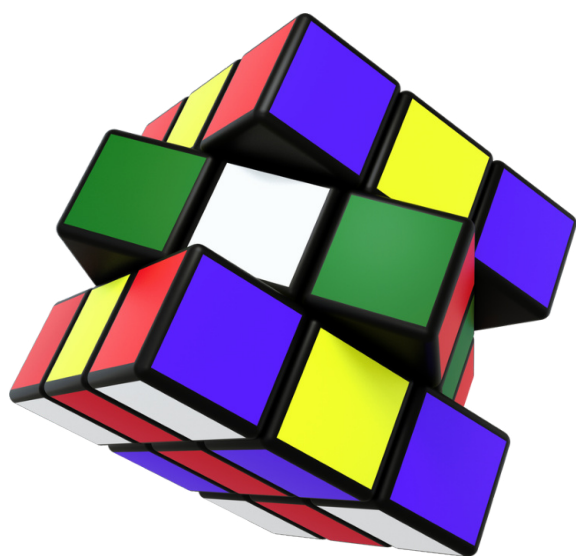
Pesticide multiresidue analysis in herbs and spices

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AOAC SEA has 5 working groups: Capacity Building, Emerging Issues, Harmonization of Methods, Microbiology, and Training of Young Scientists.

The Working Groups collaborate with one another when necessary to create mechanisms that support the Southeast Asia countries address their issues with analytical competence while building analytical capabilities. At the regional and international level, Harmonization of Methods Working Group aims to support the Southeast Asia countries' important roles in global food production, supply and trading.



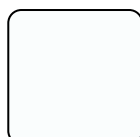
Capacity Building Working Group

The objective of Capacity Building Working Group is to develop competences, capacity and analytical capabilities for implementation of key processes of detection, assessment, response, notification, and monitoring of events.



Emerging Issues Working Group

The objective of Emerging Issues Working Group is to identify and monitor emerging issues to forecast and predict possible food safety risks, and develop appropriate measures to manage the identified risks.



Harmonization of Methods Working Group

The objective of Harmonization of Methods Working Group to identify methods to harmonize in line with SOUTHEAST ASIA priorities in order to achieve uniformity of results, or conversion of results such that different countries can use the data obtained from different laboratories.



Microbiology Working Group

The objective of Microbiology Working Group is to identify needs associated with the implementation of microbiological food safety by driving scientific agreement leading to a reduction in foodborne microbial incidents and recall along with microbiological capability development.



Training of Young Scientists Working Group

The objective of Training of Young Scientists Working Group is to establish programs across Southeast Asia countries to develop, train, encourage, support, and recognize young scientists.



Looking for volunteers and contributors

If you are interested in any of the working group(s), please scan the QR code to learn more about the working group activities and the respective leaders.

Please feel free to reach out to us during the conference or via email!



The Southeast Asia Section of AOAC (AOAC SEA) was formed in 2021 to establish effective vehicles to gather government, industry, and academia to drive development of analytical competence and capabilities to foster more public-private engagements, and ensure safety and integrity of foods and other products that impact public health to ultimately benefit consumers and economies in the region. AOAC SEA aims to bridge the SEA regional requests to AOAC INTERNATIONAL for its catering of products and services that meet regional needs.

AOAC SEA has established collaborations with regional organizations and associations on analytical solutions for food quality and safety testing that include a number of government organizations and other non-profit scientific organizations in Vietnam, Philippines, and Malaysia, as of Jul 2023. With the financial support of industry partners, we have held/are holding two successful annual conferences, with increasing amount of complexity to cater to the specific needs of the community.

We will be having more outreach programs in the year of 2024, through efforts of the 5 Working Groups (Capacity Building, Training of Young Scientists, Microbiology, Emerging Issues, and Harmonization of Methods) and Strategic Engagement Managers.



Looking forward to engaging more stakeholders in the region

AOAC SEA is seeking for more **Organizational Members, Program Supporters, and Experts** to join our efforts of convening government, industry and academia to develop and validate standards, methods and technologies, and ensure the safety and integrity of foods and other products that impact public health.



Looking for volunteers

AOAC SEA is looking for volunteers to join the Section and serve the regional analytical science community:

- Volunteers (WG chairs, engagement managers, expert panels, event volunteers, etc.)
- Program leaders
- ExCom officers (through election)

Please stay tuned with our newsletter and social media releases. Information can also be found at <https://aoac-sea.org/>.

AOAC is committed to being a proactive, worldwide provider and facilitator in the development, use and harmonization of validated analytical methods and laboratory quality assurance programs and services. AOAC International serves to its members and the communities of analytical sciences by providing the tools and processes necessary for community stakeholders.

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Membership in AOAC SEA expert working groups	Membership in AOAC SEA expert working groups	Membership in AOAC SEA expert working groups	Membership in AOAC SEA expert working groups
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100% discount on webinars hosted by AOAC SEA Section	75% discount on webinars hosted by AOAC SEA Section	50% discount on webinars hosted by AOAC SEA Section	100% discount on webinars hosted by AOAC SEA Section
Invitations to Section's Full Board Meetings; access to exclusive Section events	Invitations to Section's Full Board Meetings; access to exclusive Section events	Invitations to Section's Full Board Meetings; access to exclusive Section events	Invitations to Section's Full Board Meetings; access to exclusive Section events
Access to exclusive Annual Section Meeting benefits including first option on sponsorship packages at 10% discounted prices & stand placement, the VIP room & Keynote Meet & Greet	Access to exclusive Annual Section Meeting benefits including first option on sponsorship packages at 5% discounted prices	-	Access to exclusive Annual Section Meeting benefits including first option on sponsorship packages at 10% discounted prices & stand placement, the VIP room & Keynote Meet & Greet
Logo on AOAC SEA Section website (with link to organization's homepage)	Logo on AOAC SEA Section website (with link to organization's homepage)	Logo on AOAC SEA Section website (with link to organization's homepage)	Logo on AOAC SEA Section website (with link to organization's homepage)
Inclusion of technical article/information/news in AOAC SEA Section newsletter to Section membership	Inclusion of technical article/information/news in AOAC SEA Section newsletter to Section membership	Inclusion of technical article/information/news in AOAC SEA Section newsletter to Section membership	Inclusion of technical article/information/news in AOAC SEA Section newsletter to Section membership



To become an Organizational Member

Please contact us at info@aoac-sea.org and sponsor.engagement@aoac-sea.org.



The Southeast Asia Section of
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