



MoniQA eNews Alert 2015-12-22

Dear Colleague,

At the end of an eventful and successful year, we would like to thank all our members, friends and collaborators for their support and involvement in 2015. As a global network for food safety monitoring and quality assurance, MoniQA www.moniqua.org - first funded as an EU Network of Excellence and then established as an international association - has been active since 2007. We are happy to see that MoniQA is growing in numbers of involved network partners and collaborators, as well as in strength of impact with a number of new activities and plans for the years to come.

Looking ahead! We would like to extend the invitation to be involved and stay in touch with us for one or more of the following activities:

1. **Preparation and exploring research proposals for EU's Horizon2020 Funding Programme.** Currently MoniQA is facilitating project participation for members in Horizon 2020 calls for 2016.
2. **MoniQA's Think Tank and Task Force on emerging food safety and quality issues:** discussion forum and exchange of experience to benefit MoniQA's research agenda and collaboration agreements, new call texts (e.g. EU projects), workshop/conference themes, joint publications and opinion papers and support to other international organisations such as AOAC, AACCI, Codex, DIN
3. **MoniQA's Task Force on method validation:** Preparation of guidelines and protocols for validation of screening methods, validation of binary methods, validation of mass spectroscopic methods, current focus on mycotoxins, allergens, and authenticity issues. MoniQA contributed in the past to AOAC guidelines and EU directives.
4. **MoniQA's Task Force on Food Allergen Reference Materials:** Preparation, design and production of allergen and gluten-free reference materials for milk, egg, peanut, hazelnut, wheat, barley, rye, oats, a.o. MoniQA's first allergen reference materials (dry skim milk and a gluten free matrix material) are currently being tested by an international ring trial.
5. **Upcoming events with MoniQA's (in)direct involvement as supporter or (co-)organiser:**
 - 26 January 2016: "Global Markets – Regional Production, using new opportunities and meeting challenges in view of TTIP" (in German), Vienna, Austria, www.imprint-analytics.at/resources/Globale_Maerkte.pdf
 - 19-24 February 2016: IAM – Inter Agency Meeting and Codex CCMAS, Budapest, Hungary
 - 25 February 2016: Think Tank and MoniQA Supervisory Board Meeting, Austria, www.moniqua.org
 - 28 February-1 March 2016: iFAAM Consortium Meeting, Amsterdam, the Netherlands, www.inflammation-repair.manchester.ac.uk/iFAAM/
 - 4-8 April 2016: EuroFir Food Forum 2016, Brussels, Belgium, www.eurofir.org/foodforum2016/
 - 18-21 April 2016: 15th ICBC – ICC Cereals and Bread Congress in Istanbul, Turkey, <http://icbc2016.org/en/>, including a MoniQA food allergen session, a MoniQA supported pre-conference workshop and MoniQA Task Force Meeting of Food Allergen Reference Materials (gluten, wheat, rice)
 - 4-6 May 2016: 9th Workshop on Food Allergens Methodologies will be in Ottawa, Canada, including a MoniQA Task Force Meeting of Food Allergen Reference Materials (milk, egg, gluten, wheat, rice)

Looking back! We would like to thank you for your association in MoniQA and your contribution to the following **highlights in 2015:**

A summary report in a presentation format is available online at

(https://www.moniqa.org/sites/moniqqa.org/files/file_upload/page/818/MoniQA%20Activity%20Report%202014-2015.pdf):

1. **First MoniQA Food Allergen Quality Control Testing Material** was characterized and is ready for testing. MoniQA's first food allergen QC material, dried skim milk powder, characterized for food allergen analysis, has recently become available. At the moment an international testing trial is being organised.
2. **Several international guidelines and regulations** have been passed after contributions from MoniQA and its network of experts.
3. **The 5th MoniQA International Conference in Porto, Portugal**, attracted some 100 participants – somewhat fewer than previous conferences, but the attendants were thrilled by an exciting programme and various views into the future of food safety management, risk assessment and risk communication, and visionary tools to better manage food safety in a food manufacturing and/or retail/consumer environment. <https://porto2015.moniqa.org/home>.
4. We would like to congratulate **the MoniQA awardees 2015** premiered at the 5th MoniQA International Conference 2015: **The Highest Impact Award** was received by **Telmo Fernandes** from REQUIMTE-LAQV, Portugal, www.requimte.pt/laqv/, on behalf of all co-authors for his work on "Evaluating the performance of a novel single-tube nested real-time PCR on the detection of walnut allergens in cakes as affected by thermal processing". **The Best Poster Award** was received by **Ricardo Assuncao** from INSA - Instituto Nacional de Saúde Dr. Ricardo Jorge, Portugal, www.insa.pt, on behalf of all co-authors for his work on "Risk assessment of Portuguese children dietary exposure to co-occurring mycotoxins in processed cereal-based foods". **The Best Abstract Award** was received by **Joana Costa** from REQUIMTE-LAQV, Portugal, www.requimte.pt/laqv/, on behalf of all co-authors for her work on "Exploiting bioinformatics tools to assess CP4-EPSPS peptides as potential biomarkers of genetically modified soybeans".
5. **MoniQA's contribution to iFAAM - the largest EU funded food allergen management project**: iFAAM (Integrated Approaches to Food Allergen and Allergy Risk Management; 2013-2017) is the world's biggest ever study of allergies - coordinated by Clare Mills from the University of Manchester www.inflammation-repair.manchester.ac.uk/ifaam. The MoniQA Association is partner in iFAAM. MoniQA leads Workpackage 9 on translating iFAAM developed tools and food allergen management approaches to practice. Current activities involve the development of a database on food allergen recalls, which will be published shortly. Furthermore, MoniQA leads work within iFAAM to make "May Contain" labeling more transparent and to provide a sustainable online toolbox for allergen management along the food supply chain.
6. **A new membership category for micro-companies** was initiated together with EuroFIR ASBL to better meet the needs of small companies. Micro-companies can enjoy the full suite of benefits of a regular membership in MoniQA at half price (500.- € per year) including all services listed at <https://www.moniqa.org/node/818>.
7. **MoniQA contributed to various meetings in 2015** – find a short selection here:

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| February 2015 | Codex Alimentarius, Budapest, Hungary |
| March 2015 | Reference Materials and Method Validation, Workshop and University Course at BOKU, Vienna, Austria |
| March 2015 | iFAAM Consortium Meeting, Brussels, Belgium |
| April 2015 | Cereals and Europe, Budapest, Hungary |
| May 2015 | IFAMS, Sydney, Australia |
| July 2015 | Feed the World, World Expo, Milan, Italy |
| July 2015 | DIN Food Allergen Analytical Methods Validation Working Group, Berlin, Germany |

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| September 2015 | 5 th MoniQA International Conference, Porto, Portugal |
| September 2015 | AOAC Annual Meeting, Los Angeles, CA, USA |
| October 2015 | iFAAM Consortium Meeting, Berlin, Germany |
| October 2015 | PWG Meeting, Tulln, Austria |
| October 2015 | AACCI Centennial Meeting, Minneapolis, MN, USA |
| November 2015 | DAAB Expert Summit on Food Allergen Pre-cautionary Labelling (in German: "Risiko Allergene?", Berlin, Germany |
| November 2015 | 6 th Fresenius Food Allergen Conference, Frankfurt, Germany |

Best wishes for all of you!

We would like to wish you a blessed Christmas time and good success in the New Year! We are looking forward to working with you in 2016.

On behalf of the MoniQA Association

Richard Cantrill (USA), President
Paul Finglas (UK), Vice-President
Roland Poms (Austria), Secretary General

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