



Agenda Item 21.3:
Updates by other organisations in liaison

Agenda Item 21.3c:
Update from ICUMSA

International Commission for Uniform Methods of Sugar Analysis (ICUMSA®)

Why is ICUMSA® important?

Analytical Laboratories; Analysts and Quality Managers:

ICUMSA® publishes validated methods of analysis in a loose-leaf methods book which is easily updated. The Methods Book is also available in an on-line version and contains more than 100 analytical methods.

The book is used widely by

- Official Laboratories
- Cane Mills
- Beet Factories
- Sugar Refineries

It is a valuable source of methods for general food laboratories in need of reliable methods for testing sugar ingredients. ICUMSA® representatives are involved in the review of SUPS (a UKAS accredited proficiency scheme for sugar laboratories).

Participants receive regular samples for testing and their results are compared with those of the other participants in order to demonstrate competence to customers and others.

Buyers and Sellers

„The exact determination of the value of goods is essential to the promotion of their international exchange.“

This statement, from 1876, is as true today as it was then. Disputes between buyers and sellers can often arise when contract terms do not specify the analytical methods to be used or when unsuitable or out of date methods are specified. ICUMSA® methods are recognised worldwide and maintained up to date according to modern standards.

Regulators

When regulations are being considered for sugar products (be it food, pharmaceutical, or industrial use) please consider the use of analytical methods provided by this international body. ICUMSA® methods are used by the European Union, Codex Alimentarius Commission, United States Food Chemicals Codex, and International Organisation of Legal Metrology. ICUMSA® is an accredited NGO observer to the Codex Alimentarius Commission.

ICUMSA® Methods

Methods are ranked according to the state of their development and validation:

Official Methods are fully validated and have satisfactory performance. Validation and performance statistics are available. If there is more than one Official Method for a particular parameter, one of them will be designated the Reference Method.

Reference methods should be used in cases of dispute between parties (e.g. buyers and sellers).

Accepted Methods are those which have not been fully validated. There are a number of reasons why this might be the case (e.g. it might not be possible to use normal validation methods to characterise the method). However, these methods are accepted by industry and others to be useful and fit for purpose.

Tentative Methods are those which are either new, revised or awaiting further study.

ICUMSA® Activities

Our members engage with ICUMSA® to further the state of knowledge for sugar analysis and by acting as the Referees for a number of “Subjects” related to Sugar and Sugar Products. International Collaborative investigations ensure that ICUMSA® methods are up to date, acceptable worldwide and properly validated.

The Subjects covered by ICUMSA® include:

- raw sugar
- white sugar
- plantation white sugar
- speciality sugars
- molasses
- sugar cane and sugar beet analysis and methods to aid their processing
- microbiological, chemical and physical methods of analysis
- colour measurement
- sampling and new technologies

Each Referee is supported by Associate Referees who have expertise in the area.

Referees are provided by National Committees representing all significant sugar producing and consuming countries. National Committees have voting rights at International Meetings and pay a subscription for membership.

International meetings (or Sessions) are held every 2 years. Referees report on their progress and decisions are made about new and amended methods. The Proceedings of ICUMSA® Sessions are published.

To participate in ICUMSA® activities please contact your National Committee. If your country does not have one, please contact ICUMSA® directly.

ICUMSA®

The International Commission for Uniform Methods of Sugar Analysis (ICUMSA®) is the internationally recognised organization for validated analytical methods for sugar products.

ICUMSA® was established in 1897 and more than 20 National Committees contribute to the work. ICUMSA® is established as a non-profit company and run by the elected Officers and National Committee Members.

To learn more about ICUMSA® or to purchase the Methods Book please go to www.icumsa.org

For details of the Sugar Scheme (SUPS) please go to www.lgcstandards.com