

Editorial – Food safety and quality

The start of a new volume confirms the continued relevance of *Quality Assurance and Safety of Crops & Foods* in a world which continues to demand safe and nutritious foods of the appropriate quality for a growing population. In the last 12 months the editorial team have remained busy dealing with many submissions from researchers around the world. To help authors we have taken the opportunity to make some small but important revisions to the scope of *Quality Assurance and Safety of Crops & Foods*. We have maintained our emphasis on the core subjects that we started with at the beginning of this particular publishing journey. The new scope can be viewed in detail on-line along with the requirements for submissions to *Quality Assurance and Safety of Crops & Foods*.

In the last 12 months I have visited many countries around the world on business and attended a number of international conferences to offer and listen to technical and scientific presentations. While having been involved with the food industry for many years, I remain impressed by the quantity and quality of work that is being carried out and published. I have long appreciated that ensuring that crops, raw materials and the foods produced from them are safe to eat and have the appropriate quality, is a complex task. Safety remains a key priority for foods though the quality aspect should not be ignored. Consumers around the world commonly make the basic assumption that food is safe to eat and because of the efforts of many people involved in the food chain, this is a reasonable assumption. However, there is always the need to remain vigilant to the new challenges that the production of safe food on a global basis raise. This means that we must constantly strive to develop and publish new methods and procedures, something which is at the heart of *Quality Assurance and Safety of Crops & Foods*.

Quality on the other hand, is expected but never assumed by consumers. Delivering the appropriate quality of food for consumers is not an easy task as it requires a detailed knowledge of the chemistry and physics of the raw materials and how they are modified during processing. For long-established food products many of the basic ‘rules of manufacture’ are known, understood and applied to ensure that consistent quality reaches consumers. However consumer preferences can change and along with other pressures such as legislation, can provide a spur for new product development.

The process of new product development as such is not within the scope of *Quality Assurance and Safety of Crops & Foods* but the basic knowledge of the functionality of

raw materials most certainly is. Basic research into new ingredients and their functionality in food manufacture provides the essential building blocks for new product developments. These building blocks may be through a better understanding of existing and common raw materials, or associated with less familiar crops and raw materials which have specific functionality which can add value to existing foods as well as contributing to the development of new ones.

Whether dealing with quality assurance or safety of foods the availability of appropriate analytical tools is essential. We need to be able to check many different aspects of food quality and while there are a large number of tools already available for such purposes, there is the ever present need to develop improved and new ones so that we can ensure that they provide comprehensive coverage for delivering safe food with relevant qualities. In this context *Quality Assurance and Safety of Crops & Foods* has a major role to play.

As we start a new volume, I would like to take a moment to thank all the editorial team for their hard work in delivering the previous volumes. Ensuring that the many submissions that we receive fit the *Quality Assurance and Safety of Crops & Foods* scope is only the start of their task which continues through to ensuring the quality of the published work. These is not an easy task, but then aiming to deliver a quality product to consumers never is.

Stanley P. Cauvain

Editor-in-chief

spc@baketran.demon.co.uk

