



## Work Programme 2015 of the EURL for Heavy Metals in Feed and Food

Overview of the major objectives for the period January-December 2015

The following activities will be carried out:

1. Organisation of a proficiency test for the determination of heavy metals in chocolate (Deadline: September 2015), and report on the organisation and outcome of the mentioned proficiency test (Deadline: October 2015) (\*)

*Matrix:* 1

Dark chocolate containing 64% cocoa

*Analytes:* As (total), iAs, Cd, Pb and Hg(\*\*).

To monitor and maintain appropriate levels of proficiency in NRLs

This PT is meant to support the future enforcement of established Cd levels in chocolate in the EU legislation.

In case the outcome of the exercise shows some scientific interest, a manuscript will be submitted to a peer-reviewed journal.

2. Organisation of a proficiency test for the determination of heavy metals in mineral feed, containing a significant amount of kaolinitic clay (Deadline: September 2015), and report on the organisation and outcome of the mentioned proficiency test (Deadline: November 2015)(\*)

*Matrix:* 1

Mineral feed containing a significant amount of kaolinitic clay

*Analytes:* As (total), iAs, Cd, Pb and Hg(\*\*)

To monitor and maintain appropriate levels of proficiency in NRLs

Specifically, this PT aims to monitor the determination of lead in mineral feed, containing a significant amount of kaolinitic clay identified as challenging in the EURL-HM report JRC90090 (2014). This PT aims also to monitor the influence of the used extraction procedure on the determined heavy metal (in particular lead) content.

(\*) Subcontracting foreseen for activities 1 and 2:

The analytical measurements for the evaluation of homogeneity and stability of the test item will be subcontracted, for each analyte investigated.

(\*\*) Participants will be requested to determine total mercury in the chocolate and feed samples. Insofar possible laboratories will also be requested to report the level of methylmercury separately. However, the endogenous concentration is expected to be low and may be below the analytical limit of detection for many of the participating NRLs. No z-score will then be calculated for results reported as "less than".

3. Follow-up of results reported by underperforming NRLs in the two PTs organised in 2014. This implies: - the review of root-cause analyses submitted by the NRL, and - the evaluation of improvements actions implemented and their effectiveness. Report to SANCO (Deadline May 2015).
4. Organisation of the 10<sup>th</sup> Workshop of the EURL-HM with participation of National Reference Laboratories (September 2015) and report on this activity and its outcome (Deadline October 2015).
5. Set-up and maintenance of the CIRCABC knowledge sharing platform for the NRLs (Deadline: Dec. 2015).
6. Providing support to NRLs when requested.
7. Providing support to DG SANCO, which implies the management of the EURL-HM and the support on technical matters related to heavy metals analysis, which implies participation in the Working Groups of National Experts on Industrial Contaminants and on Analytical Methods (feed). Furthermore, the EURL-HM will contribute-to/co-chair the Working Group 1 created by DG SANCO(\*) at the meeting of EURLs (Brussels, July 4, 2014). WG1 relates to "the development and evaluation of NRL workshops and training programmes". (Deadline: December 2015).

(\*) Final Title and composition of WG1 to be confirmed by DG SANCO.

8. Providing support to standardisation bodies such as CEN for the harmonisation of analytical methods for the determination of heavy metals in food and feed. This will require a regular participation in the meetings of CEN TC 275/WG 10 (Elements and their Chemical Species in Food) and CEN TC 327/WG 4 (Heavy Metals, Trace Elements and Minerals in Feed) (Deadline: December 2015).
9. Collaborate with the EURL for Chemical Elements in Food of Animal Origin (EURL-CEFAO), which includes participation to the annual workshop in Rome (Deadline: October 2015).
10. Providing support to EFSA on technical matters related to heavy metals analysis, which might imply participation to meetings of the relevant EFSA working groups (Deadline: December 2015).