

30 years of unique international training in the production and use of food composition data: Wageningen University Food Composition Course

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Background

What started at Wageningen University in 1992 has grown to an well-established training activity that provides up to today one of the very few opportunities where compilers of food composition data bases and users of such data bases wish to obtain a better understanding of how databases are prepared and the constraints upon their use. The format of the course has changed a little with the duration being shortened from 3 weeks to 2 weeks over the years, and involves lecturers, demonstrations, group activities spending 8-10 hours per day.

Improve evidence basis

The participants of the Foodcomp Course learnt about the quality of food composition compilation, analysis and use giving them a strong evidence based understanding of all aspects related food composition research. The faculty consisting of world-leading experts gives the participants unique and comprehensive knowledge and links to established organisations such as FAO INFOODS, US Department of Agriculture (USDA), and EuroFIR.

Programme implementation

The initial programme of the FoodComp course was based on the book by Greenfield and Southgate and has further been developed and refined by the late Clive West and Paul Hulshof with input from other leading food composition experts who act as Course Directors. The course programme has been further developed into specific regional courses for Asia, Africa, Latin America and Central & Eastern Europe.

Success

The time line shows that a total of over 25 editions of Foodcomp with 25-35 participants per course have been organised in Europa, Latin America, Africa and Asia. At least 800 people have attended FoodComp! The participants of the courses remain in contact and meet, for example, IFDC, EuroFIR, and other meetings and conferences. There is a strong link with existing food composition database centres. The success of the course is also shown by the increasing number of self-paying participants.

Source

Three heroes in the field food composition have been very important for the success of the Foodcomp Course. Unfortunately all three have passed away in recent years. The late Clive West took up the responsibility of hosting the course in his laboratory at Wageningen University in The Netherlands. David Southgate brought in his vast expertise as co-author of the book he wrote together with Greenfield 'Food composition data, production, management and use', David taught for many years. Joanne

2015 INFOODS Success Story Prize

Holden brought a link to the USDA and supported the course up to 2011. At present the course thrives on the continuous leadership of Paul Hulshof (Wageningen University), Anders Moller and Jane Ireland, and Paul Finglas (IFR & EuroFIR).



Clive West



David Southgate



Joanne Holden