



Training Workshop

First West and Central African Training Workshop

Food Composition and Biodiversity



The First West and Central African Training Workshop on Food Composition and Biodiversity will be held on

- 13-24 April 2009 (in French) Université de Abomey Calavi, Benin
- 20-31 July 2009 (in English) at the University of Ghana, Legon, Ghana.

These workshops are organized and supported by Bioversity International, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) AFROFOODS/ INFOODS, Le Conseil Ouest et Centre Africain pour la Recherche et Développement (CORAF), the West African Health Organisation (WAHO), and the International Nutrition Foundation (INF).

Workshop Objectives

This workshop aims to:

- strengthen food composition activities in West and Central Africa focusing on local food systems
- improve the availability, quality and reliability of food composition data.
- highlight and demonstrate the processes for generating data, and compiling food composition databases
- develop capacity in improving the use of food composition databases for all categories of users.

This workshop is targeted at analysts, compilers, food data generators and users of food composition database programmes, and teachers of nutrition and nutritional aspects of food chemistry.

Applicants should:

- be fluent in English (Ghana workshop) or French (Benin workshop)
- hold a BSc or Master degree in nutrition, food science, chemistry, agriculture or related fields.
- have relevant work experience, particularly in the field of food composition.

Preference is given to

- citizens of one of the countries of West and Central Africa
- citizens of countries outside West and Central Africa who work in one of the countries of West and Central Africa
- applicants who best demonstrate how the acquired knowledge will be used in their working environment, especially for those who are not yet actively involved in the field of biodiversity food composition or in Food Composition database programmes.

There is a limit of 20 students per workshop.

Workshop Directors

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Workshop Advisory Board

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For further information :
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Workshop Content

The major components of the workshop include:

Use of food composition data including local biodiversity

- Use of compositional databases at international, national, household and individual levels and for nutrition labeling
- Within traditional food systems
- Strengths and limitations of food composition data
- Nutrients in fortified foods

Biodiversity for food and nutrition:

- Biodiversity at ecosystems, species, and variety (genetic) levels
- Foods and local ecosystems (examples: dryland, forests, aquatic ecosystems)
- Crop varieties and nutrient composition
- Neglected and under-utilised species and their nutritional values
- Locally sourced food ingredients, condiments, spices, thickeners
- Traditional food processing and preparations
- Biodiversity, dietary diversity and food culture: neglect and revitalization.

Generation of food composition data

- Selection of foods and nutrients for inclusion in a food composition database, including a biodiversity perspective
- Sampling of foods for analysis, handling and preparation of samples, including biodiversity considerations (cultivar specific diversity in food crops)
- Using the Nutrition Indicators for Biodiversity: food composition
- Methods of analysis: critical evaluation and choice of methods
- Nutrient analysis – proximates, fatty acids, amino acids, minerals, vitamins, phytochemicals
- Assuring and documenting the quality of analytical data

Management and dissemination of food composition data

- Steps in establishing a food composition database
- National and international cooperation in food composition issues
- Nutrient bioavailability issues in food composition data
- Component identification and mode of expression of data, including INFOODS tag names
- Food nomenclature and coding
- Reviewing existing data
- Database quality considerations
- Data presentation and dissemination including copyright issues
- Reporting on biodiversity indicators on food composition

Workshop Structure

The workshop will be structured around the “Guidelines for the production and use of food composition data” by Dr. H. Greenfield and Professor D.A.T. Southgate. The workshop will cover the following broad areas: 1) sampling procedures for species and varieties; 2) biodiversity for food and nutrition: how biodiversity contributes to dietary diversity and nutrition; 3) ways in which compositional databases are used and how these determine the range of nutrients and bioactive non-nutrients for which values are required; 4) foods for which values are needed; 5) choice and validation of analytical methods to give nutritionally relevant values; 6) stages in the production of a nutrient database.

The workshop will comprise lectures, seminars, group work and practical sessions. This structure allows for many opportunities for interactive learning. Participants will become familiar with computer skills for constructing a computerized food composition database. Participants are expected to bring their own data sets based on which the principles of generation and management of food composition data can be applied.

Workshop Background

The International Network of Food Data Systems (INFOODS) was established in 1984 with the goal of stimulating and coordinating efforts to improve the quality and availability of food analysis data worldwide. INFOODS provides the administrative framework for the development of standards and guidelines for the collection, compilation and reporting of food composition data. The maintenance of these standards are ensured through the development and administration of regional training in the production and management of food composition data, as well as training in analytical methods and sampling techniques. Since the inception of the training programme in 1992, with the first workshop held in Wageningen the Netherlands, training has been delivered in Asia, South America, the Caribbean, central Europe and South Africa. This is the first food composition workshop for West and Central Africa, and the first with a biodiversity emphasis.

The availability of relevant, reliable and up-to-date data on the nutrient content of foods consumed by communities and populations have far-reaching policy and decision making implications for agriculture and health. With the increasing awareness of the vital role of accurate food composition data for nutritional planning as well as in agricultural and health policy, developing countries have been encouraged to establish national food composition programmes. As a result, several national and regional food composition databases have been prepared, providing valuable data on the nutrient composition of foods consumed by specific population groups. The new food composition data and tables have been useful but do not adequately cover micro-nutrient rich local foods, particularly at the level of crop varieties, local fruits and vegetables, and condiments. The local crop varieties, animal breeds, and local species are rich sources of nutrition that are of growing importance as West and Central Africa face drastic increases in food prices, food shortages, and a decline in nutritional quality of diets due to loss of dietary diversity and growing dependence on a few staples that are not easily produced in the region.

In the light of today's global crises in food prices and the epidemic of diet-related chronic diseases, there is an increased awareness of the nutrition and health benefits of the biodiversity of traditional food systems. To transform this awareness into scientific information and policies that contribute to better, more secure and diverse diets, nutritional and agricultural scientists and experts require training to document nutritional composition data on local and traditional foods from biodiversity. This workshop will provide the skills and frameworks to accumulate the scientific data that can demonstrate the value of local and traditional foods from biodiversity for more secure and healthful diets.

Fees

The workshop fee is US\$2500 and includes:

- accommodation, meals, tea, coffee
- lecture and workshop materials
- tuition fees
- local transportation
- administration charges

The fee does not cover medical insurance or travel costs.

A limited number of fellowships for travel and workshop fees will be available for participants from West and Central Africa. Successful applicants will be selected by Bioversity and the FAO in partnership with the donor.

How to Apply

Application forms can be found at http://www.bioversityinternational.org/News_and_Events/Training_Courses/default.asp.

Return both parts of the signed application form by email, fax or post to:

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The deadline for applications is:

For the workshop in French: 31 January 2009

For the workshop in English: 30 April 2009