

## **Summary Report on the Workshop on Metrology of Agricultural Products and Foods**

Today huge amounts of goods are traded across borders in the Asia-Pacific region. Increasingly, people are becoming anxious about the quality and safety of primary products including agricultural products. On the other hand, agricultural products are among the most important exported goods for developing economies, and consequently it is a crucial issue for them to maintain higher quality of such products. Therefore, the reliance on quality data including a sound metrological infrastructure underpin and facilitate international trading. In this aspect, it would be quite beneficial for the APEC/APLMF member economies to learn more about the current situations and problems in the measurements / evaluations of agricultural products and foods and to share information with the experts in this region.

Based on such understandings, the first Workshop on Metrology of Agricultural Products and Foods was held from February 7 to 9, 2007 at the Central Duangtawan Hotel in Chiang Mai, Thailand organized by APLMF/APEC. The main topics for the Workshop were:

1. Present situations of international trade of agricultural products and foods among the APEC and other regions,
2. Metrology requirements for agricultural products and food safety, for example on contamination, stock temperature etc,
3. Metrology for Quality evaluation on grain protein, grain moisture, wine, sugar cane, etc,
4. Technical procedures for the verification of measuring instruments,
5. Discussion on the regional issues based on the result of the “Survey on Quality Measurement on Agricultural Products” conducted by APLMF, and
6. Others.

This workshop was also supported by the three organizations: (1) Department of Internal Trade (DIT), Ministry of Commerce, Thailand; (2) National Measurement Institute, Australia (NMIA); and (3) National Metrology Institute of Japan (NMIJ), AIST. A total of 87 participants including the speakers attended the workshop from the following 12 economies: Australia (3)\*, Cambodia (1), PR China (1), Hong Kong China (2), Indonesia (2), Japan (4), Malaysia (1), Mexico (1), Mongolia (1), Papua New Guinea (1), Thailand (69) and Vietnam (1). The attendance from Thailand also includes supporting staffs from the Weights and Measures Bureau, Department of Internal Trade (DIT), Ministry of Commerce. Some of the speakers from outside of Thailand were supported with travel fund by APEC or APLMF. The host economy and APLMF provided the venue, transportations, tours and meals. 24 speakers from 11 economies contributed topics.

On Wednesday the 7th, the workshop started off with the opening ceremony. Mr. Thongchai Wongrienthong of Deputy Chiang Mai Governor, Mr. Siripol Yodmuangcharoen and Mr. Songkold Ubolsing of the Department of Internal Trade welcomed all participants to Chiang Mai, the most historical and attractive city in Thailand. Then Dr. Akira Ooiwa, APLMF President welcomed participants on behalf of APLMF and set out the purpose of the workshop. After the opening ceremony, the following topics were presented by the speakers and discussed with all participants for three days until Friday the 9th.

\* ( ) indicates the number of participants from the economy.

At the end of the series of presentations, a summary session was arranged on Friday the 9<sup>th</sup>. Discussion was chaired by Dr. Ooiwa to summarize all topics and also to discuss future planning for the next workshop as well as other APLMF future activities. In the discussion, a lot of valuable suggestions and requests were proposed in regard to CRMs (Certified

Reference Materials), proficiency tests, mutual recognition agreement (MRA), metrological infrastructure including measurement standard, issues on packaging and labelling, cooperation with other regional organizations, follow-up seminars, etc. The summary of the discussion will be published within this year as a final APEC report.

On Friday, the workshop was concluded with a closing ceremony. Dr. Ooiwa gave a closing address after which he presented Certificates of Appreciation to all speakers with assistance by Mr. Veerasak Vissutthatham, Director of Weights and Measures Bureau, Department of Internal Trade.

Besides the presentations, the host economy kindly provided activities to encourage further discussion and to build friendship among the participants. A welcome dinner at the Khum Khantoke Restaurant in Chiang Mai was arranged on Wednesday with fantastic traditional attractions. On Friday, the participants visited the Northern Weights and Measures Center to see a demonstration measuring starch content in cassava, and the Bann Tawai Market (a well-known handicraft center). On departure, the host handed out the participants CD-ROMs that contain text books, reports from the participants and photos taken during the workshop.

At the end of this report, as the APLMF secretariat, we would like to give our sincere and deepest gratitude to the hard work and dedication provided by the staffs of the host economy represented by Mr. Siripol Yodmuangcharoen, Director General of Department of Internal Trade, Ministry of Commerce. We would like to also deeply appreciate the National Measurement Institute, Australia for their closer cooperation with the Secretariat in organizing the workshop. Of course we can not forget the tremendous support from the APLMF/APEC member economies for providing competent speakers in this field of measurement.

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