A special collection of papers on all aspects of food and feed safety sampling—to be used in risk assessment, process control in a food/feed manufacturing environment, foodborne disease outbreaks, and regulatory compliance—is now available as an open access publication on the Journal of AOAC International’s (JAOAC’s) website. Visit http://aoac.publisher.ingentaconnect.com/content/aoac/aoac for 11 fully refereed papers in the March/April 2015 issue.

These papers are the result of a ground-breaking trans-Atlantic collaboration between researchers, samplers and regulators from Europe and the United States, a true first within the sampling world. The authors gathered for a week in Windsor, Colorado in October 2014 to collaborate and write.

The papers in this Special Guest Editor Issue introduce the Theory of Sampling (TOS) as relevant for all aspects of food and feed safety sampling—the principles governing representative sampling apply universally. The papers are written and composed to interact with each other, providing a comprehensive, yet compact overview of the criteria that must be followed to ensure representative sampling.

The guest editors were: Kim H. Esbensen, Geological Survey of Denmark and Greenland, and Aalborg University, Denmark; Claudia Paoletti, European Food Safety Authority Parma, Italy; and Nancy Thiex, Thiex Laboratory Solutions, and Agricultural Materials section editor for the Journal.

The target audience includes all food/feed protection personnel: field sampling operators, academic and industrial scientists, laboratory personnel, companies, organisations, regulatory bodies and agencies that are responsible for sampling, as well as their project leaders, project managers, quality managers, supervisors and directors. In the United States alone, there are an estimated 45,000 federal, state and local food/feed regulatory personnel, not including industry or laboratory personnel.

“We hope to trigger a long overdue discussion and awareness regarding the need for global harmonization of representative sampling approaches for food and feed commodities”, it is stated in the section’s introduction. “As a collection, these papers represent a leap forward with respect to a valid sampling-plus-analysis approach for the entire food and feed area. A highpoint concerns the extended framework in which TOS remain the essential tool, the formal system definition, revolving around the concept of Decision Units (a new issue not often considered in TOS).”

The SGE issue includes the following contributions:

- “Food and Feed Safety Assessment: The Importance of Proper Sampling” by Harry Kuiper and Claudia Paoletti.
- “A Systematic Approach to Representative Sampling” by Charles Ramsey and Claas Wagner.
- “Sample Quality Criteria” by Charles Ramsey and Claas Wagner.
- “Quality Control of Sampling Processes—A First Foray, From Field to Test Portion” by Kim H. Esbensen and Charles Ramsey.
- “Considerations for Inference to Decision Units” by Charles Ramsey.
- “Critical Practicalities in Sampling For Mycotoxins in Feed” by Claas Wagner.
- “Considerations for Sampling Contaminants in Agricultural Soils” by Charles Ramsey.

- “Considerations for Sampling of Water” by Charles Ramsey.

The open access Special Guest Editor Issue is available online at http://aoac.publisher.ingentaconnect.com/content/aoac/aoac.

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