

Journal of Food Composition and Analysis

Ten guidelines to help your paper survive preliminary JFCA review

1. The manuscript fits the Aims and Scope of the journal (<http://www.journals.elsevier.com/journal-of-food-composition-and-analysis>). **Important note concerning antioxidant methods:** Each antioxidant method measures a different aspect of the sample chemistry and all are non-specific and subject to numerous interferences. More importantly, an antioxidant value cannot be related to a specific nutritional or health outcome. Methods for total phenolic content are equally non-specific and subject to interferences. As a consequence, the *Journal of Food Composition and Analysis* is no longer accepting papers for review that feature either of these methods.
2. The type of paper is clearly indicated on the Title page: Original research paper; Short Communication; Commentary. When uploading into EES, use the drop-down tab labeled **SI:IFDC 2017** on the page “Choose Article Type” to identify your paper type.
3. The manuscript has been prepared according to the instructions in the Guide for Authors specifically designed for the papers and presentations at the 12th IFDC (included as a PDF file with this letter).¹ It is original and innovative and does not overlap with other published and uncited papers by the same or other authors.
4. The paper is written in standard formal English and has been checked for correct grammar, vocabulary, spelling, punctuation; and typographical errors have been corrected.
5. A Cover Letter accompanies your submission, briefly explaining the basic purpose and innovation of your study, report, commentary or original research, and it includes the statement, “This paper was a Poster/Oral Presentation/Report [*keep only one appropriate type*] at the 12th IFDC, 11–13 October 2017, Buenos Aires, Argentina”. Disclaimers/conflict of interest statements/animal or human experimentation ethics statements should be included after the Conclusion at the end of the manuscript, along with Acknowledgements, placed just before the list of References. On the Title page, a brief footnote attached to the title identifies the conference at which the paper was presented.
6. The Title is concise and fits the content of the paper, and it is not unnecessarily narrow relative to the applicability of the findings; it contains the words “Preliminary Study” when the paper is a Short Communication.
7. The Abstract summarizes major findings and conclusions; for original research studies, it also contains actual data from results or the results of a new method.
8. There are 8-10 keywords and 3–5 concise and informative Highlights that describe the work.
9. Author/date format is used for text citations (example: Martin et al., 2015), not numbers in square brackets. Reference list is alphabetical. References are recent and relevant.
10. The manuscript is double-spaced with 2-2.5 cm (1”) margins throughout the document, and typed in 12 pt font, preferably Times Roman. There is continuous line numbering and pagination throughout. Tables, Figures and other files need not have line numbering. The file is submitted in editable word-processing format (.doc/.docx, .rtf, .txt, .odt, etc., or LaTeX .tex files); do not submit manuscripts as PDF files (note that, in certain cases, a figure may be submitted in PDF format).

¹ These guidelines and the Guide for Authors of papers from the 12th IFDC 2017 special issue take precedence over the online JFCA Guide for Authors on the Elsevier website (<https://www.elsevier.com/journals/journal-of-food-composition-and-analysis/0889-1575/guide-for-authors>). Please contact the Editorial Office, jfca.elsevier@gmail.com, for any questions, including “12th IFDC 2017” in the Subject line of your email.

Guide for Authors²

Checklist before submitting your paper

It is anticipated that submissions for the special issue of JFCA presenting proceedings from the 12th IFDC will be primarily manuscripts of original research, short communications, poster presentation, reviews or reports.

- *Original research articles* are complete reports of original, scientifically sound research that contribute new knowledge.
- *Short communications* are brief reports of scientifically sound research, but of limited scope (for example, limited number of samples analyzed), that contribute new knowledge. They may be a smaller part of a larger study, or preliminary reports of new findings, in which case the author is expected to publish complete findings later in an article.
- *Reports* are papers presenting the results of an expert consultation, or a scientific or regional committee, in the field of food composition and analysis.
- *Reviews* are papers that provide an analysis of a scientific or applied field, which include all-important findings and bring together reports from a number of sources. Critical reviews provide a comprehensive, extensive examination of a topic and thoroughly reference the relevant literature. Study reviews examine a selected number of published or unpublished studies.
- *Keynote address: please contact the Editorial Office (jfca.elsevier@gmail.com; use Subject line: "Keynote 12th IFDC").*

GENERAL COMMENTS

1. **SCIENTIFIC MERIT AND ORIGINALITY:** It is expected that papers submitted to the *Journal of Food Composition and Analysis* will offer new data or scientific information of high-enough quality relative to the existing body of literature, demonstrate originality and innovation, and make a meaningful scientific contribution to the literature with a well-designed hypothesis (i.e. research articles do not merely present data resulting from the availability of testing methods or substances). It is expected that data for new species or foods will be accompanied by an appropriate sampling plan, which means that the samples analyzed are representative with respect to the goal of the study. New methods must be accompanied by adequate method validation and appropriate QC. Authors should be aware that all papers submitted in EES are automatically evaluated for similarity by iThenticate online document-checking software against over 37 million online articles (see <http://www.ithenticate.com/products/crosscheck> for more details; see also instructions concerning citing other authors, paraphrasing and plagiarism on p. 4-5, point # 11).
2. Important note on Elsevier policy concerning **CHANGES TO AUTHORSHIP** after initial submission: Requests to add or remove an author, or to rearrange the author names, must include: (a) the reason the name should be added or removed, or the author names rearranged, and (b) written confirmation (this can be a scanned signed statement) from all authors that they agree with the addition, removal or rearrangement. In the case of addition or removal of authors, this includes confirmation from the author being added or removed.

² This Guide for Authors of papers from the 12th IFDC 2017 special issue takes precedence over the online JFCA Guide for Authors on the Elsevier website (<https://www.elsevier.com/journals/journal-of-food-composition-and-analysis/0889-1575/guide-for-authors>). For any technical queries, contact the Editorial Office, jfca.elsevier@gmail.com.

3. **ONLINE SUBMISSION:** All manuscripts for *Journal of Food Composition and Analysis* must be submitted online via the Elsevier Editorial System (<http://ees.elsevier.com/jfca>). The first page of EES submission will ask for an optional “ORCID NUMBER”; use the “Cancel” button to proceed to the next page if you do not have an ORCID NUMBER (you may fill in this information later; it is not required for submitting a paper to JFCA). When prompted with “Choose Article Type” use the drop-down tab labelled “**SI: IFDC 2017**” to identify your paper, regardless of content type. Please note the **order in which files must be uploaded** (this list is also available on the page on which you upload the files, for your convenience): Cover Letter; Detailed Response to Reviewers [*applies only to a revised paper after peer review*]; Manuscript; Tables (if any) collected into one single file; Figures (if any; either collected into one single Word file; or presented as separate image files, with a separate Word file listing all figure captions); Supplementary Material (optional); Highlights; Graphical Abstract (optional). Note that tables and figures are not embedded in the text of the manuscript; make sure that any tables and figures are cited within the text (e.g. “Fig. 1” or “see Fig. 2b” or “Table 3 here”). Supplementary tables and figures are to be cited as “Table S1”, “Fig. S2b”, etc.).

Checklist for the MANUSCRIPT FILE

4. **BEFORE YOU BEGIN:** Please read the Elsevier information pages on **Ethics in publishing** (<http://www.elsevier.com/publishingethics>) and **Ethical guidelines for journal publication** (<http://www.elsevier.com/journal-authors/ethics>). You are invited to read the section “Before you begin” on the official JFCA website under Guide for authors to familiarize yourself with all issues pertaining to Declarations of interest, Submission declaration and verification, Changes to authorship, Copyrights and so on (<https://www.elsevier.com/journals/journal-of-food-composition-and-analysis/0889-1575/guide-for-authors>, scroll to “Before you Begin” or click the active link at the top of the page). **IMPORTANT NOTE:** JFCA discourages the piecemeal publication of data from one study or a series of related studies, unless there is substantial new methodology reported or extensive interpretation of a particular subset of the results in the context of existing literature. Likewise, if a new method has been developed and published and there is an ongoing study to apply it to different related foods, those results should be published as a group if the point is to generate a data set, not to investigate a particular food from a unique angle. The extent to which a manuscript overlaps with other published papers that are not cited is a determining factor for rejection.
5. **ABOUT FORMATTING:** Submit only editable word-processing or LaTeX files (**not PDF**), such as .doc/.docx, .odt, .txt, .rtf, .tex. Format the paper as simply as possible, including italics and bold font when appropriate; however, complicated formatting is not necessary. Accepted papers are completely stripped of author formatting during proof production and typesetting; the typesetters use professional software to format references, so authors do not need to worry about this detail. The following guidelines are recommended to help the editors and reviewers read your paper more easily: **margins, 2–2.5 cm/1” throughout; double space the text; use 12-pt font, preferably Times Roman. Activate continuous line numbering throughout the manuscript so that line numbers appear in the left-hand margin. Pages must be numbered.** Tables, Figures, Highlights and other files, separate from the manuscript itself, do not require line numbers.
6. **TITLE PAGE:** The paper must include a title page (this is page 1 of the manuscript file, not a separate file) that indicates the type of paper (Original Research Article, Short Communication, Report, Commentary, Keynote Address); the full title; authors’ names in the order agreed upon by all authors (*any changes after submission must be accompanied by a statement signed by all authors*); correct affiliation information for each author (an email for each author is optional, not required); and the contact information for the Corresponding Author (minimum requirement, a valid email address). NB: Disclaimers and acknowledgments should be placed between the Conclusion and References at the end of the manuscript. **Note for 12th IFDC Conference papers:** a brief footnote to the Title must appear on the Title Page and include the name, place and date of the

conference, e.g. “This paper was originally submitted as an [oral presentation/poster/Keynote Address] at the 12th International Food Data Conference held from 11-13 October 2017 in Buenos Aires, Argentina”.

7. **ABSTRACT:** A concise and factual Abstract is required; it must be presented as ONE PARAGRAPH. The Abstract must state the purpose of the research, and briefly summarize the principal results and major conclusions. It must be written as one paragraph and contain actual data about your results (data requirement applies mainly to original research or short communications of research experiments or development of new methods), particularly the most significant components being analysed or the results of a new method. The Abstract must be able to stand on its own, and the reader (particularly the editor reviewing your paper) should be able to understand the purpose and results of the study without having to read the entire manuscript. While *JFCA* does not impose a word limit, about 200 words is a good rule of thumb to follow. Note that there should be no reference citations in the Abstract.
8. **KEYWORDS:** 8–10 keywords, including the terms “Food analysis” and “Food composition”, must be listed immediately after the Abstract. A keyword may contain more than one word, e.g. “Reference daily intake”. Well-chosen keywords will help other researchers find and eventually cite your paper. Latin names (botanical, zoological) must be included at least in the keywords where appropriate to ensure proper identification (in general they should also be included in the Abstract and Sampling section of the paper as well).
9. **OPTIONAL PUBCHEM CHEMICAL COMPOUNDS LIST:** You may enrich your article, if you so choose, by including the names of up to 10 chemical compounds studied in the manuscript in a list positioned directly under the Keywords. The list of compounds will be used to extract relevant information from the NCBI PubChem Compound database and display it next to the online version of the article on Science Direct, should your paper be accepted. For more information and for formatting details please refer to the “Chemical compounds” section of the *JFCA* Guide for Authors, or visit <http://www.elsevier.com/about/content-innovation/pubchem-compounds>.
10. **STRUCTURE AND CONTENT OF THE MANUSCRIPT:** After completing the first parts of the manuscript listed in points 5–8, original research papers (and Short communications) must include the following numbered sections: Introduction; Materials and Methods; Results; Discussion (NB: Results and Discussion may be combined into one section); Conclusion. In other types of papers (Commentaries), clearly numbered sections should be adapted to the content of the paper.

Introduction. State the objectives of the work and provide an adequate background, avoiding a summary of the results. The Introduction must be written to focus on one problem; what is the specific purpose of the study? A research paper should be hypothesis-driven; what is the problem? How are you solving it? What you are trying to prove should be clear to the reader immediately. Relevant and recent literature should be cited to situate the study, and highlight and distinguish the innovative aspects of the current paper.

Materials and Methods. In this section, describe and cite (where applicable³) sampling protocols, sample handling/preparation, and all experimental conditions and procedures (including quality control/quality assurance procedures), with sufficient clarity to permit qualified researchers to repeat the work. This section must include the number of samples collected, the number of sub-samples prepared, and the number of technical replicates per sub-sample. The statistical procedures/programs used to assess the work must be cited. A minimum of three individual samples must be analysed for each reported mean value, along with an indication of variability. When only one or two samples have been analysed, notwithstanding the number of subsamples and technical replicates, authors must present the normal precision of their assays and then report the mean (without a standard deviation). Data must be reported to the appropriate number of significant digits for that precision and

³ Certain food composition database development papers will not include sampling descriptions, for example.

instrumental sensitivity. Please comply with *JFCA* requirements concerning identification of all equipment, reagents and software used in the Methods section (see p. 6, point 19, below).

Note the following specific instructions for the Methods and Materials section of all original research papers:

- **Sampling:** It is necessary to specify details of when, where and the number of independent samples collected, sample amounts, sample storage, handling, preparation, and any sub-sampling prior to analysis. Details of any of these aspects might affect the food composition. How many independent samples of each item were analyzed? One pooled sample analyzed in triplicate does not constitute an adequate sample design (refer to Greenfield, H., Southgate, D.A.T., 2003. *Food Composition Data: Production, Management and Use*. 2nd Edition. FAO Rome. This book may be downloaded free of charge here: http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/food_composition/images/FCD.pdf
- While *JFCA* is interested in publishing data on biodiversity, these studies must present a reasonable premise and a higher level of quality control when reporting data for a food whose composition has already been widely investigated; in addition, the sampling plan must take into consideration the natural biological variability within cultivars, species, etc., and this biological variability must be distinguished from analytical variability.
- Tables must also reflect the number of independent samples; if only 1–2 samples were analysed, then citing standard deviation is an error; *n* must be equal to or greater than 3 in this case. The expression “*n* = 3” should not be used to mean that a sample was analyzed in triplicate; it means there were three independent (not pooled) samples; and the use of “standard deviation” means that each of the three independent samples was analysed three times. Be sure that this represents the actual experimental design presented in your paper.
- Use of published references does not guarantee accurate and precise results in another’s hands, or even in every run within a person’s laboratory if a new method is being developed. It is necessary to validate that the results are accurate for the matrix being analyzed, and also to include a control sample in every batch to account for possible aberrations in assay performance in any particular run. It is well known that even in the most carefully controlled laboratories, batch-specific errors can occur that are undetectable in the absence of a control sample. Without appropriate QC, such differences would be falsely attributed to samples, not analytical error.

Results. Actual analytical data should be reported. For example, report nitrogen in addition to a calculated protein value, or define the nitrogen-to-protein ratio clearly under Materials and Methods and thereafter use protein. All factors used in calculations (e.g. energy), and all components used in aggregations (e.g. retinol equivalents), should be specified. Under certain circumstances, carbohydrate reported as “total carbohydrate by difference” is not acceptable in Results or in tables; however, it may be used in discussions. Use of “crude fibre” is discouraged.

Discussion. The purpose of the Discussion is to interpret the data and answer the questions set up in the Introduction of the paper in the hypothesis. Opinions are expressed; results explained; and, eventually, directions for future research are suggested. It is highly recommended to situate the results within the context of the most recent and relevant literature and theory on the topic.

Conclusion. The main conclusions of the study are presented in a short, separate final section of the paper. There should be no literature references in the Conclusion.

11. **REFERENCES:** Authors must demonstrate sufficient justification for the work in the context of the existing literature and have referenced the most relevant publications to introduce and support their work. It is up to the authors to ensure that all references are the most recent and relevant to the arguments in the paper. *JFCA* uses the Author/date format for citations within the text (e.g. “Martinez et al., 2017”; do not use numbered citation style). “In press” will be queried by the typesetters should your paper be accepted. The Bibliography (a non-numbered list of titles in alphabetical order by first author last name/surname/family name) does not need to be formatted in any particular way, as typesetters handle all such details; but all citations within the manuscript, and all Bibliography references should be accurate and complete (avoid citing articles “in press”). There are no strict guidelines for the word-processing formatting of references; authors need not worry about italics, bold, or any other technical formatting of their references. Reference citations must be accurate; be sure to check that the spelling of the authors’ names in text citations of references corresponds to every reference listed at the end of the paper. Also ensure that there is a text citation for every reference listed at the end of your paper. Check for accuracy of dates, article titles, and source titles. Use of reference-management software is highly recommended for simplifying and organizing references. **IMPORTANT NOTE CONCERNING CITATIONS OF LITERATURE REFERENCES, PARAPHRASING AND PLAGIARISM:** In-text citations are placed within sentences and paragraphs so that it is clear what information is being quoted or paraphrased and whose information is being cited. It is very important that authors either use quotation marks for direct, word-for-word re-use of another author’s words, or their own words from another published paper, or that they paraphrase another author’s words using their own. Paraphrasing means that you include information or ideas from an original source (which is then also correctly listed in the bibliographical references at the end of the paper) by rephrasing those ideas or that information using your own words and expressions. There are many online university writing labs that provide help on this issue (e.g. University of Wisconsin (USA) Writer’s Handbook: https://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/QPA_paraphrase.html; there are many others).
12. **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS, CONFLICTS OF INTEREST/ DISCLAIMERS, ETHICAL STATEMENTS:** These items are to be inserted between the Conclusion and the References; not all of these items are always required, but they may be necessary under certain circumstances. Acknowledgments recognize individuals who assisted with the work but who did not contribute to the paper as authors; or they recognize funding sources, etc. Conflict of interest statements or Disclaimers are required by some national government agencies, or they may be personal statements giving any necessary details the authors feel should be made explicit, e.g. “Brand products used or donated during this study are not an endorsement”, etc. Ethical statements are required for experiments involving humans or animals, usually in the form of certificates provided by the university or institution where the research was carried out, or ethical compliance forms signed by Department chairs or equivalent institutional authorities.

Checklist for OTHER FILES to be uploaded

13. **TABLE AND FIGURE FILES (optional):** Check that all tables and figures are cited within the manuscript; ensure that each table and figure includes a caption. All tables must be **collected together** into one file (these must be editable word-processing or spreadsheet files; **do not submit tables in “image format”**); and any figures that are submitted as word-processing files (.doc, .txt, .rtf) must be collected together as another separate file. High-resolution figures produced in image-software formats (JPG, TIFF, EPS, etc.) may be presented as separate files, e.g. 1 figure per file. Important note concerning artwork/figures: For basic details concerning digital artwork (size, format) please refer to the online *JFCA* Guide for Authors, <http://www.elsevier.com/journals/journal-of-food-composition-and-analysis/0889-1575/guide-for-authors-57200>, under “Artwork”; for more detailed information (e.g. meaning of “low/high resolution”, image formats, etc.) please visit: <http://www.elsevier.com/author-schemas/artwork-and-media-instructions>

14. **HIGHLIGHTS (required):** Highlights are a short collection of bullet points (not a paragraph; not a duplicate of the Abstract) that convey the core findings and provide readers with a quick textual overview of the article. These 3–5 bullet points describe the essence of the research (e.g. results or conclusions) and state what is distinctive about it. Please see Elsevier instructions on how to write the Highlights (<http://www.elsevier.com/highlights>). **Note the length restrictions on Highlights:** 85 characters, including spaces, per Highlight.
15. **SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL (optional):** Voluminous tables and figures, or any other information that is suitable as an appendix to the paper (e.g. a national food composition database) may be included. Please note that supplementary material is available only online, and not in print copies of the published article. Authors are highly encouraged to submit the raw data from their study as supplementary material. Refer to Supplementary material within the manuscript as follows: Table S1, Figure S1, Supplementary Equation S1; etc. Please contact the Editorial Office at jfca.elsevier@gmail.com for the template to be used in formatting supplementary tables and figures.

CHECKLIST OF TECHNICAL DETAILS

16. *Abbreviations:* Any abbreviations used in the Abstract must be spelled out at first use within the Abstract. Any abbreviations used in text must be spelled out at first use within the text (independently of use in the Abstract). Any abbreviations used within Tables or Figures must be defined within the same Table or Figure; in other words, each table or figure contains definitions of abbreviations, even if they are used in more than one table. The use of a “List of Abbreviations” is optional, and is not recommended except in cases of very numerous and unusual abbreviations.
17. *The limit of detection (LOD)* must be given whenever “not detected” values are being reported; the LOD must be presented in the same units as those of sample data; and the LOD must be specified wherever “not detected” was cited in a data table (e.g. in a footnote).
18. If a *Certified Reference Material* is analysed, actual results must be reported. In addition, the name/matrix of the material must be specified, and the supplier and the certified range for each nutrient measured must be given.
19. *Supplier Details in Methods and Materials:* the purity and supplier for all standards, the supplier and grade of all chemical reagents, the manufacturer of all equipment, and the source of any statistical or other software programs must be specified (generally in the Methods section). Supplier and manufacturer location (city, state where applicable, country) must be included within parentheses after the first citation of a given supplier/manufacturer. Examples: “A Shimadzu ICPS-1000 (Shimadzu Corporation, Tokyo, Japan)...”; “a fluoride-selective electrode Cole-Parmer 27502-19 (Cole-Parmer, Vernon Hills, IL, USA)...”; “software Matlab[®] 2009b”... (<http://fr.mathworks.com/support/sysreq/release2009b/>).
20. *Statistical Significance* must be shown for all “differences” found in data.
21. *Significant Digits* in data reporting: Concentration values must be written to NOT MORE THAN three significant figures (data in text, tables and figures). Examples: the numbers 123, 12.3, 1.23, 0.123, and 0.0123 all have three significant digits. For more detailed explanations on conventions used for food composition data, see Greenfield, H. and D.A.T. Southgate, 2003; Food composition data: Production, Management and Use; Rome, FAO; see especially Chapter 9 and Table 9.1. (<http://www.fao.org/docrep/008/y4705e/y4705e00.htm>)
22. *n*, and statistical parameters must be clearly defined in Tables and Figures, and appropriate error bars must be shown in the Figures.

23. The *International System of Units* (SI, *Système International d'Unités*), or the SI-derived system, is to be used in reporting units of measurement. Decimal points (not commas) must be used. If other units are mentioned (quarts, pounds, ounces, miles, cups, teaspoons, etc.), please state the initial value in SI and give their equivalent in parenthesis (e.g. 1 kg (2.2 lb)). Energy is to be expressed as kJ or MJ (and not as calories; equivalent kcal or Mcal may be given in parentheses). The Celsius scale (°C) should be used for temperature. Please also note: L, mL, μ L (not l, ml, μ l). More information about SI units and abbreviations can be found here: <http://www.bipm.org/en/measurement-units/>