



National Institute of Standards & Technology

Report of Investigation

Reference Material 8437

Hard Red Spring Wheat Flour

Agriculture Canada

Distributed by the National Institute of Standards and Technology

This Reference Material (RM) is intended for use in evaluating analytical methods and instruments used for the determination of major, minor, and trace constituent elements in flour and other similar food, agricultural, and biological materials. This material can also be used for quality assurance when assigning values to in-house control materials. RM 8437 consists of 50 g of flour packaged in two glass bottles containing 25 g each.

Reference Concentration Values: Reference concentration values for major, minor, and trace constituent elements are provided in Table 1. These reference values were derived from results reported in an interlaboratory comparison exercise. Reference values are noncertified values that are the best estimates of the true values; however, the values do not meet NIST criteria for certification and are provided with associated uncertainties that may reflect only measurement precision, may not include all sources of uncertainty, or may reflect a lack of sufficient statistical agreement among multiple analytical methods.

Information Concentration Values: Information concentration values for additional elements are provided in Table 2. These are noncertified values with no reported uncertainties as there is insufficient information to assess uncertainties. The information values are given to provide additional characterization of the material. Use of this RM to quantitatively monitor method performance for analytes other than those with reference concentration values in Table 1 is not warranted.

Expiration of Report: The Report of Investigation of RM 8437 is valid, within the measurement uncertainty specified, until **31 August 2011**, provided the RM is handled in accordance with instructions given in this report (see "Instructions for Use"). This report is nullified if the RM is damaged, contaminated, or otherwise modified.

Maintenance of RM Value Assignment: NIST will monitor this RM over the period of its value assignment. If substantive technical changes occur that affect the value assignment before the expiration of this report, NIST will notify the purchaser. Registration (see attached sheet) will facilitate notification.

The material was prepared at Agriculture Canada under the direction of M. Ihnat, Centre for Land and Biological Resources Research (CLBRR), who also coordinated the interlaboratory analytical campaign to characterize the material. Statistical support was provided by M.S. Wolynetz, Statistical Research Section, Research Program Service, Agriculture Canada.

Support aspects involved in the issuance of this RM were coordinated through the NIST Measurement Services Division.

Stephen A. Wise, Chief
Analytical Chemistry Division

Robert L. Watters, Jr., Chief
Measurement Services Division

Gaithersburg, MD 20899
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NOTICE AND WARNING TO USERS

Storage: Until required for use, RM 8437 should be stored at room temperature in its original bottle, tightly capped, and **NOT** exposed to intense direct light or ultraviolet radiation.

Warning: For laboratory use only. **NOT** for human consumption.

Instructions for Use: Prior to each use, contents of the bottle should be well mixed by gentle shaking and rolling of the container. A recommended minimum subsample mass of 0.5 g should be taken for analysis. Moisture content should be determined on a separate subsample for conversion of analytical results to a dry-mass basis. The recommended method of drying to relate analytical results to the reference values listed in Table 1 is drying for 4 hours in an air oven at 85 °C. Values reported in Tables 1 and 2 represent total concentrations of elements in this RM. Dissolution procedures should be capable of rendering a completely dissolved sample appropriate to the method and should be designed to avoid losses of elements by volatilization or by retention on decomposition and processing containers and measuring equipment. Analytical methods should be capable of measuring total levels of analytes for comparison with reference values.

PREPARATION AND ANALYSIS¹

Preparation: The material used for preparation of RM 8437 was enriched hard red spring wheat flour (Western Canadian bread wheat flour) obtained from Maple Leaf Mills, Almonte, Ontario, Canada. All preparatory work following acquisition of the commercial product was performed at the facilities of Agriculture Canada, Ottawa [1]. The dry bulk powder was sterilized with ⁶⁰Co gamma radiation to 2.0 megarads by Atomic Energy of Canada Ltd. All subsequent processing was performed using plastic equipment. The material was sieved through nylon monofilament sieve cloths supported in high density white polyethylene holders. Pairs of sieves with openings of approximately 150 µm and 50 µm were used to yield suitable narrow middle cuts constituting the RM. This fraction was blended in a polymethylmethacrylate V-configuration blender and packaged into clean 70 mL brim capacity, colorless glass bottles with triseal (polyethylene)-lined black polypropylene screw caps.

Assessment of Homogeneity: Homogeneity testing was performed on duplicate samples taken from four randomly selected units by one laboratory. No statistically significant heterogeneity was found for calcium, copper, iron, potassium, magnesium, manganese, sodium, or zinc in 2 g samples [2,3]. Data for all analytes have been treated as though they are homogeneous, although the homogeneity of other analytes has not been investigated.

Value Assignment: Reference concentrations of elements were determined using results from the homogeneity assessment described above and an interlaboratory comparison exercise involving laboratories shown in Appendix A [4]. Analytical methods are provided in Table 3. In the interlaboratory comparison exercise, analyses were performed by each participant on duplicate subsamples from randomly selected (usually four) units of material using subsample masses and methods left to the discretion of the analyst. Subsample sizes ranged from 0.001 g to 5 g, typically 1 g. Elemental determinations were performed on “as received” material, with conversion of results to a dry-mass basis using moisture values determined on separate 2 g subsamples dried by the procedure specified in this report. Reference values provided in Table 1 are based on results generally obtained by at least two, but typically several, independent analytical methods. Concentration estimates for additional elements are provided in Table 2 as information values only, as they are based on results of limited determinations or only one analytical method, or may lack sufficient statistical agreement among multiple analytical methods

¹Certain commercial equipment, instruments or materials are identified in this certificate to adequately specify the experimental procedure. Such identification does not imply recommendation or endorsement by the National Institute of Standards and Technology, nor does it imply that the materials or equipment identified are necessarily the best available for the purpose.

Table 1. Reference Concentrations of Constituent Elements

Element	Mass Fraction (%) ^(a)	Methods ^(b)
Nitrogen	2.690 ± 0.070	I01, J01, J02
Phosphorus	0.137 ± 0.007	B02, F01, F02
Potassium	0.115 ± 0.012	A01, B02, D01
Sulfur	0.183 ± 0.024	B02, J02, J04, M02

Element	Mass Fraction (mg/kg) ^(a)	Methods ^(b)
Calcium	143 ± 16	A01, B02, D01
Chlorine	500 ± 90	D01, F02, K03
Iron	31 ± 6	A01, A03, B02
Magnesium	365 ± 30	A01, A03, B02, D01
Manganese	4.50 ± 0.44	A01, B02, D01
Selenium	0.56 ± 0.04	C01, C04, G01
Zinc	10.6 ± 1.4	A01, A03, B02

^(a) Reference values, expressed as mass fractions on a dry-mass basis, are equally weighted means of results from at least two, but typically several, different analytical methods applied by analysts in different laboratories. Uncertainties are imprecision estimates expressed either as a 95 % confidence interval or occasionally (chlorine) as an interval based on the entire range of accepted results for a single future determination, based on a sample mass of at least 0.5 g. These uncertainties, based on between-method, between-laboratory, between-unit, and within-unit estimates of variances, include measures of analytical method and laboratory imprecisions and biases and material inhomogeneity. (NIST has replaced the previously used term “best estimate” with “reference value.”)

^(b) Analytical method codes and descriptions are provided in Table 3.

Table 2. Information Concentrations of Constituent Elements

Element	Mass Fraction (mg/kg) ^(a)	Methods ^(b)
Aluminum	2.1	B02, D01
Barium	0.4	B02
Boron	0.2	B02
Cadmium	0.02	A06
Chromium	0.026	A06, C05
Copper	2.01	A01, B02, C06, D01
Fluorine	0.02	H04
Mercury	0.004	A09
Molybdenum	0.55	B02, C06, C07, F01, H06
Nickel	0.2	A14
Sodium	7	A01, B02, D01
Strontium	4	B02
Tungsten	0.01	C07, H06
Vanadium	0.02	B02, D01

^(a) These analytical values, on a dry-mass basis, are estimates given strictly for information as they are based on results of limited determinations or only one method, or may lack sufficient statistical agreement among multiple analytical methods; no uncertainties are provided. Use of this RM to quantitatively monitor method performance for elements other than those with reference concentration values in Table 1 is **NOT** warranted.

^(b) Analytical method codes and descriptions are provided in Table 3.

Table 3. Analytical Methods Used to Determine Reference and Information Concentration Values^(a)

Analytical Method	Code	Elements Determined
Acid digestion flame atomic absorption spectrometry	A01	Ca, (Cu), Fe, K, Mg, Mn, (Na), Zn
Dry ashing flame atomic absorption spectrometry	A03	Fe, Mg, Zn
Dry ashing electrothermal atomic absorption spectrometry	A06	(Cd), (Cr)
Acid digestion cold vapour atomic absorption spectrometry	A09	(Hg)
Acid digestion solvent ex-traction flame atomic absorption spectrometry	A14	(Ni)
Acid digestion inductively coupled plasma atomic emission spectrometry	B02	(Al), (B), (Ba), Ca, (Cu), Fe, K, Mg, Mn, (Mo), (Na), P, S, (Sr) (V), Zn
Acid digestion isotope dilution mass spectrometry	C01	Se
Acid digestion dry ashing hydride generation isotope dilution inductively coupled plasma mass spectrometry	C04	Se
Dry ashing acid digestion isotope dilution mass spectrometry	C05	(Cr)
Acid digestion isotope dilution inductively coupled plasma mass spectrometry	C06	Cu, (Mo)
Dry ashing inductively coupled plasma mass spectrometry	C07	(Mo), (W)
Instrumental neutron activation analysis	D01	(Al), Ca, Cl, (Cu), K, Mg, Mn, (Na), (V)
Acid digestion light absorption spectrometry	F01	(Mo), P
Dry ashing light absorption spectrometry	F02	Cl, P
Acid digestion fluorometry	G01	Se

Extraction ion selective electrode	H04	(F)
Dry ashing catalytic adsorption polarography	H06	(Mo), (W)
Kjeldahl method for nitrogen -volumetry	I01	N
Combustion elemental analysis -thermal conductivity	J01	N
Combustion elemental analysis with chromatographic separation -thermal conductivity	J02	N, S
Combustion elemental analysis -fluorometry	J04	S
Combustion volumetry	K03	Cl
Dry ashing gravimetry	M02	S

^(a) Letter codes refer to classes of similar methods; number codes refer to specific variants. Elements in parentheses have only information values in this RM.

REFERENCES

- [1] Ilnat M.; *Preparation of Twelve Candidate Agricultural Reference Materials*; Fresenius' J. Anal. Chem., Vol. 332, pp. 539–545 (1988).
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- [3] Ilnat, M.; *Reliable Measurement of Major, Minor, and Trace Elemental Nutrients*; J. Res. Nat. Bur. Stds. Vol. 93, pp. 354–358 (1988).
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Users of this RM should ensure that the report in their possession is current. This can be accomplished by contacting the SRM Program at: telephone (301) 975-6776; fax (301) 926-4751; e-mail srminfo@nist.gov; or via the Internet at <http://www.nist.gov/srm>.

APPENDIX A

Collaborating Analysts

G. Alftan, National Public Health Institute, Helsinki, Finland.

R. Beine, D.E. Lichtenberg, E. Denniston, and M. Peralta, Division of Regulatory Services, University of Kentucky, Lexington, KY, USA.

W.T. Buckley, G. Wilson, and D. Godfrey, Agassiz Research Station, Agriculture Canada, Agassiz, BC, Canada.

W.C. Cunningham, Division of Contaminants Chemistry, Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition, US Food and Drug Administration, Washington, DC, USA.

A. Farina Mazzeo, R. Piergallini, E.P. Salsano, and F. Abballe, Laboratory of Pharmaceutical Chemistry, Istituto Superiore di Sanita, Rome, Italy.

C.T. Figueiredo and W.B. McGill, Department of Soil Science, University of Alberta, Edmonton, AB, Canada.

K. Frank, J. Denning, and L. Hayne, Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources, Department of Agronomy, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Lincoln, NE, USA.

F.L. Fricke, C. Gaston, and K.A. Wolnik, National Forensic Chemistry Center, US Food and Drug Administration, Cincinnati, OH, USA.

E.S. Gladney and E.M. Hodge, Health and Environmental Chemistry Group, Los Alamos National Laboratory, Los Alamos, NM, USA.

R.D. Hauck and R.H. Scheib, Office of Agricultural and Chemical Development, Tennessee Valley Authority, Muscle Shoals, AL, USA.

G.U. Hesselius, Mikro Kemi AB, Uppsala, Sweden.

M. Ihnat, Centre for Land and Biological Resources Research, Agriculture Canada, Ottawa, ON, Canada.

D.L. Jeffress and S. Allison, Feed Control Laboratory, Missouri Department of Agriculture, Jefferson City, MO, USA.

L. Jorhem, E. Ericsson, and C.A. Yates, National Food Administration, Uppsala, Sweden.

F.J. Kasler, Department of Chemistry, University of Maryland, College Park, MD, USA.

J. Kumpulainen, Central Laboratory, Agricultural Research Center of Finland, Jokioinen, Finland.

G.W. Latimer Jr., W. Iglar, L. Park, H. Hinojosa, C. Upton, and D. Arvelo, Agricultural Analytical Services, Office of the Texas State Chemist, College Station, TX, USA.

B. Magyar, B. Aeschlimann, and H.R. Elsener, Institute of Inorganic Chemistry, Swiss Federal Institute of Technology, Zurich, Switzerland.

H. Mauss, R.U. Haak, G. Haarman, and H. W. Oehmen, Zentrale Forschung und Entwicklung, Zentrale Analytik, Bayer AG, Leverkusen, Federal Republic of Germany.

T.P. Mawhinney, R. Boles, R. Cathey, and P. Eggeman, Experimental Station Laboratories, College of Agriculture, University of Missouri-Columbia, Columbia, MO, USA.

N.J. Miller-Ihli and F.E. Greene, Nutrient Composition Laboratory, Beltsville Human Nutrition Research Center, US Department of Agriculture, Beltsville, MD, USA.

J.S. Morris, V. Spate, C.K. Baskett, and D.E. Trockey, Research Reactor Facility, University of Missouri-Columbia, Columbia, MO, USA.

I.S. Palmer, O.E. Olson Biochemistry Laboratories, Chemistry Department, South Dakota State University, Brookings, SD, USA.

L.J. Schmidt and U. Soni, Mass Spectrometry and Elemental Analysis Department, Shell Development Company, West Hollow Research Center, Houston, TX, USA.

J. Schoenau, Department of Soil Science, University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, SK, Canada.

T.R. Shuler and F.H. Nielsen, Grand Forks Human Nutrition Research Center, US Department of Agriculture, Grand Forks, ND, USA.

R.J. Stevens and A. Beattie, Food and Agricultural Chemistry Research Division, Department of Agriculture (Northern Ireland), Belfast, Northern Ireland.

J.T. Tanner and K.K. Cook, Nutrient Surveillance Branch, Division of Nutrition, US Food and Drug Administration, Washington, DC, USA.

C. Veillon, K.Y. Patterson, and N. Hardison, Vitamin and Mineral Nutrition Laboratory, Beltsville Human Nutrition Research Center, US Department of Agriculture, Beltsville, MD, USA.

R.F. Walker, K. J. Thurlow, and G. Holcombe, Laboratory of the Government Chemist, Teddington, Great Britain.

J.H. Watkinson and A.A. Judge, MAFTech Ruakura, Ruakura Agriculture Centre, Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, Hamilton, New Zealand.

G.M. Whitford, School of Dentistry, Department of Oral Biology - Physiology, Medical College of Georgia, Augusta, GA, USA.

P.C. Williams, Grain Research Laboratory, Canadian Grain Commission, Winnipeg, MB, Canada.

W. Yuen, Saskatchewan Research Council, Saskatoon, SK, Canada.