Evaluation of Langual for coding foods: a trial by food scientists. Chulin Xie,[a] Heather Greenfield[b]* & John Hiller.[a] [a]*School of Computer Science.* [b]*Department of Food Science and Technology, The University of New South Wales, Sydney NSW 2052, Australia.*

Langual coding trials were performed on different foods by ten food scientists in order to evaluate reproducibility, correctness, completeness and speed of coding. The effects of English versus non-English mother tongue and sex of coder on coding variables were also analysed. Foods selected for coding were three simple foods (unprocessed or unprepared), five complex foods (processed foods) and five recipe foods (home- or restaurant-prepared). Real foods were provided and coded manually using the Langual manual. The results showed that different coders did not code the same food identically; that experience with the Langual system improved coding ability; that simple foods were more likely to be coded correctly than recipe foods; that recipe foods were more likely to be coded correctly than complex foods; that there was no significant influence of sex or mother tongue on coding quality; that Langual facet H (treatment applied) was the most difficult to code correctly; and that facets and foods which were easier to code correctly were also coded most quickly. Modifications to the Langual food processing factors would be needed before it could be used with ease. Its use in its present form would be most suited to food scientists.

*To whom correspondence should be addressed.

The IFDA Standard Product Data Exchange Format for nutrient and food product information. Ellen Chambers Hurley,[a] Joanne M. Holden[a] & Wayne Wolf.[b]

ARS, USDA, 4700 River Road, Unit #89, Riverdale, MD 20737, USA. [b]ARS, USDA, Bldg. 161, BARC-EAST, Beltsville, MD 20705, USA.

The demand by consumers, the health care industry and the food service industry for verified nutrient and food product information on brand name products has intensified in recent years. In addition, the advent of food labeling for retail products has emphasized the need for validated food composition information. In response, the International Food Distributors Association (IFDA), which is responsible for the distribution of nearly 80% of the food sold in the wholesale markets, established a committee in 1990 to determine how they could meet the demands of their customers for current nutrient and food product information. A task force under the IFDA Technical Committee was formed in September 1990 to create a standardized data exchange format. Members of the task force represent dietitians, manufacturers, software companies, trade associations, government, and distributors. The first version of the IFDA Standard Data Exchange Format (IFDA Standard) was approved in September 1991. With the release of version 2.0 in 1994, the IFDA Standard became a means of communication for the whole food industry. However, Version 2.0 did not contain quality control or

validation information for food product data. IFDA began working with the Nutrient Data Laboratory, Agricultural Research Service (ARS), USDA in the fall 1994. Three records were developed by the Quality Assurance Team at NDL and the IFDA Technical Committee for addition to Version 3.0 of the IFDA Standard which industry adopted in May 1995. This 'new' version contains added product information on quality control that includes: sampling, sample handling. methods, procedures, use of reference materials and laboratory information. There will be a five year development and implementation plan for the quality control and validation process. But there will be no changes in IFDA Standard, Version 3.0 for the next 2 years. The IFDA Standard will facilitate the electronic exchange of data and because of its wide acceptance, NDL may use the IFDA Standard for future electronic releases of the USDA Nutrient Data Base for Standard Reference. There are now over 20000 products in the IFDA Standard format from major food manufacturers. Please support this effort to standardize the exchange of validated nutrient and food product information through use of the IFDA Standard.

A simplified system for describing foods consumed in developing countries. Suzanne P. Murphy* & Doris H. Calloway.

Department of Nutritional Sciences, 119 Morgan Hall, University of California, Berkeley, CA 94720-3014, USA.

A food description system is a key component of any food database. One that allows users to search for foods using well-defined descriptors can greatly enhance the accuracy and efficiency of both database maintenance and dietary data entry.

Food lists from dietary surveys in six developing country populations (Egypt, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Mexico, and Senegal) were used to devise a simplified food description system. The descriptors are a subset of those proposed by both the Langual system and the INFOODS system, and include the following:

Local Name
Name in English
Scientific Name
Food Group (12 possible groups)
Maturity
Color
Part Consumed
Weighed Form (raw, cooked, with or without refuse)
Processing and Preparation
Other Notes

Descriptors for 2000 foods were entered into electronic form using a database management program for personal computers (FoxPro). Using the facilities of this program, foods can be located and/or sorted using any one descriptor (e.g., all cooked foods) or a combination of descriptors (e.g., all cooked vegetables).

The food descriptors are incorporated into the UCB

WorldFood Dietary Assessment System, and have greatly enhanced the usefulness of the system by unambiguously specifying the form and type of foods on the nutrient database.

*To whom correspondence should be addressed.