**Charter of Good Practices – to guide the establishment of cooperations through FoodComEx**

This document contains recommendations to facilitate the establishment of partnerships via FoodComEx. These cooperations are to be held between groups that are willing to share compounds of interest for food metabolome research (here called **PROVIDERS**) and those interested on obtaining such compounds (herein called **RECIPIENTS**). For the sake of nomenclature, we define **COMPOUNDS** as purified (or semi-purified) molecules present in food items or derived from their metabolism, obtained after synthesis or extraction from biological samples. Extracts from food items and biological samples (obtained *in vitro* or *in vivo*) thought to contain specific compounds or their metabolites are here called **REFERENCE MATERIALS**.

FoodComEx is merely a platform to make the connections between scientist that are interested on sharing/obtaining compounds and reference materials to be used in research. FoodComEx cannot be made responsible for the actions of the people involved in the agreements established via this platform if these agreements are not satisfactory fulfilled.

Ethics and common sense should be the guiding principles of any partnership established via FoodComEx. In every cooperation established, both parts are free to create its specific terms and must abide to them. These should always be in accordance to the laws of the countries involved and the practices in the respective institutions/ research consortiums. To facilitate these negotiations, we created some rules that must be observed at all times:

**1 – SHARING PURE COMPOUNDS AND REFERENCE MATERIALS WITHIN FOODCOMEX**

Scientists that produce or collect compounds or reference materials of interest for the food metabolome community are welcome to use this platform to share:

* Compounds synthesized chemically or enzymatically
* Compounds isolated from food items or biological samples. The compounds can be shared regardless of purity degree (that must be stated) and can be presented pure or in stock solutions.
* Extracts of food items (in solution or lyophilized).
* Samples from animal/human tissues or biofluids that were exposed to a given food item or expected to contain specific metabolites.

**2 – REGISTRATION**

Providers that are willing to share compounds or reference materials produced in their laboratories must fill the **registration form** to be able to upload a new compound in the database.

Browsing the library of compounds/reference materials does not require registration, but recipients must be registered in order to contact the providers to share compounds or reference materials.

**3 – TERMS OF AGREEMENT**

Depending on bilateral agreements, compounds or reference materials can be shared in exchange of the payment of production costs, free of charge or in exchange for goods or services (e.g., analyses, consumables), or co-authorships. This point should be made clear at the beginning of the negotiations.

We recommend that the recipient of the compounds or reference material should bear the costs of shipment. This is however to be decided between the two parts and made clear from the beginning.

**4 – COMMUNICATION BETWEEN THE PROVIDER AND RECIPIENT**

Once scientists are interested on a compound or reference material from the compound library, they must contact the group offering the compound using the link « **contact provider** » in the Metabocard. All communications should be made in this way to ensure transparency and traceability of the agreement between both parts.

**5 – RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PROVIDER**

The provider has to make sure that the compound or reference material sent to the recipient meets the characteristics described in the metabocard. If there are changes not yet updated in the online version of the metabocard, these must be made clear to the recipient prior the shipment.

The provider must send a report (model below) with the shipment of the product, confirming its characteristics. These can include:

* + Production method (chemical or enzymatic synthesis, extraction etc.)
  + Appearance of the product (color, texture…)
  + Recommended storage conditions (temperature, light)
  + Data on possible contaminants (if available)
  + Date of isolation/synthesis or execution of the experiment that generated the compound/reference material as well as stability data (if available)
  + Recommended solubilisation conditions (if known)
  + Information on hazards associated with the product (flammability in case of solutions containing organic solvents, etc.)
  + If the product is an extract or whole biological sample, state which are the expected metabolites of interest in the sample.
  + Full taxonomic identification if the product was isolated from a biological sample.
  + In case of pure compounds and if available, spectral information (MS, MS/MS, UV or NMR).

**6 – RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE RECIPIENT**

The recipient must abide to the agreement made with the provider. Even if a co-authorship is not agreed, acknowledgement to the provider should be made in every publication that benefits from the cooperation, unless clearly stated otherwise by the provider.

The recipient must also acknowledge FoodComEx for making the cooperation possible.