

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: September 26, 2017**

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**AOAC Honors Kombucha Working Group  
Confers Prestigious 'Expert Review Panel of the Year' Award**

**Los Angeles, CA** - In the pursuit of accurate, repeatable, easy-to-use methods designed for the unique needs of the kombucha industry, Kombucha Brewers International's Panel with The Association of Organic Analytical Chemists (AOAC) has been honored as the recipient of The Expert Review Panel of the Year Award.

Presented to KBI President and Co-Founder Hannah Crum at the 131st AOAC INTERNATIONAL Annual Meeting in Atlanta, GA on Monday September 25th, the award recognizes "the completion and achievement of significant milestones, such as innovative technology or application, breadth of applicability, critical need, difficult analysis, or timeliness," and is a reflection of the high levels of interest and participation from scientists around the world.

*The Stakeholder Panel on Strategic Food Analytical Methods (SPSFAM) Expert Review Panel (ERP) for Ethanol Testing in Kombucha*, to give it its full name, was initiated in September 2015 by KBI and five member breweries: GT's, Health-Ade, High Country, Humm, and Live Soda. Their goal is to develop new, internationally approved testing methods for ethanol present in kombucha that can meet the requirements of small margin of error, accuracy, and repeatability, hopefully at a low cost and easily done in-house by each kombucha producer, to help aid in brewing a consistent and compliant product. The panel has continued to meet every year to vet new methods, as well as to examine new data from the methods submitted.

Last year in Dallas, the panel moved one method that employs Gas Chromatography with Flame Ionization Detection (GC-FID) to First Action status. At this year's meeting in Atlanta, six methods were up for review, including two re-submissions. A lively discussion of the data and methodologies resulted in one Enzymatic method being moved to First Action status, while two other Gas Chromatography with Mass Spectrometry(GC-MS) methods, along with a second Enzymatic method, came very close to passing this first hurdle. The panel expects those three methods will also move to First Action status later this year, once additional data is submitted.

The promising Enzymatic method now in First Action status was submitted by R-Biopharm AG, a German based developer of test solutions for clinical diagnostics and food & feed analysis. All methods are validated in the field for a period of two years, after which time the authors submit additional data to confirm that it has performed as expected. Once a method has been fully vetted, it then moves to Final Action status and is included in the AOAC canon of verified methods.

Led by KBI, the global kombucha industry continues to implement best practices and new industry standards for self regulation. Designating accurate testing methods for the trace amounts of ethanol in kombucha is a vital component of that collective evolution. Additional updates can be found on the KBI Website [here](#).

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Kombucha Brewers International (KBI) is the international, non-profit trade association for the kombucha brewing industry. To learn more about the kombucha industry, or for more information on membership, please contact KBI President Hannah Crum at [info@kombuchabrewers.org](mailto:info@kombuchabrewers.org) or visit [kombuchabrewers.org](http://kombuchabrewers.org).

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**AOAC Honors Kombucha Working Group  
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**Los Angeles, CA** - Marking a significant milestone in the pursuit of new testing methods designed for the unique needs of the kombucha industry, the Expert Review Panel for Ethanol Testing in Kombucha has been honored by The Association of Organic Analytical Chemists (AOAC).

After a lengthy review process, the AOAC selected the panel as the recipient of the Expert Review Panel of the Year award, presented on Monday September 25th at the 131<sup>st</sup> AOAC INTERNATIONAL Annual Meeting in Atlanta, GA. It recognizes the completion and achievement of significant milestones, such as innovative technology or application, breadth of applicability, critical need, difficult analysis, or timeliness.

The Stakeholder Panel on Strategic Food Analytical Methods (SPSFAM) Expert Review Panel (ERP) for Ethanol Testing in Kombucha, to give it its full name, was initiated two years ago by Kombucha Brewers International (KBI) and five member breweries: GT's, Health-Ade, High Country, Humm, and Live Soda. Their goal is to develop a new, internationally approved testing method for ethanol present in kombucha. The panel has continued to meet every year to vet new methods, as well as to examine new data from the methods submitted. Last year, the panel also moved a GC-FID method to First Action status.

At this year's meeting in Atlanta, six methods were up for review, including two re-submissions. A lively discussion of the data and methodologies presented resulted in an enzymatic method being moved to First Action status, while two other GC-MS methods, along with a second enzymatic method, came very close to passing this first hurdle. It is expected that those three methods will move to First Action status later this year, once additional data demonstrates that they meet the standard requirements.

The promising enzymatic method was submitted by R-Biopharm AG, a German based developer of test solutions for clinical diagnostics and food & feed analysis. Their test kits offer high precision and accuracy which will provide the kombucha industry with a low cost solution for in-house quality assurance. All methods are validated in the field for a period of two years, after which time the authors submit additional data to confirm that it has performed as expected. Once a method has been fully vetted, it then moves to Final Action status and is included in the AOAC canon of verified methods.

Led by KBI, the global kombucha industry continues to implement best practices and new industry standards for self regulation. Designating accurate testing methods for the trace amounts of ethanol in kombucha is a vital component of that collective evolution. Additional updates can be found on the KBI Website [here](#).

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## EXTRAS/UNUSED

highlighted by some unique or particularly noteworthy aspect of a review panel report,

### OLD PRESS RELEASE

Los Angeles, CA - September 16, 2015 - Kombucha Brewers International (KBI) and five member breweries - GT's, Health-Ade, High Country, Humm, and Live Soda - have joined the Association of Organic Analytical Chemists (AOAC) to develop a new internationally approved testing method that can accurately, consistently and repeatably measure the trace amounts of ethanol present in Kombucha, a process that begins Sept 27th at the annual AOAC Annual Meeting & Expo in Los Angeles.

The initiative was spearheaded on behalf of KBI by the Legislative and Government Outreach Committee, led by Daina Trout of Health-Ade, Susan Fink of Karma and Mike Beshore of Humm, and stemming from work on the new KBI Verification Program, currently scheduled to debut next year. "Product compliance is top priority for stabilizing the industry and building the KBI Verification program," said Trout. The development of a new standard that will take into account the organic acid profile, high sedimentation, and low LOQ (level of quantitation) unique to the popular health beverage is critical for a growing industry to build trust with customers, retailers and distributors. "There is no current AOAC INTERNATIONAL standard method performance requirement (SMPR®) for an analytical method to measure the low levels of ethanol in Kombucha. AOAC is pleased to be working with the Kombucha industry, regulatory bodies, and other stakeholders to develop such a standard," stated E. James Bradford, Ph.D., Executive Director of AOAC INTERNATIONAL.

According to the AOAC website, partnering is an opportunity to work closely with scientists, academics, as well as government agencies to "find appropriate science-based solutions through the development of microbiological and chemical standards. AOAC standards are used globally to promote trade and to facilitate public health and safety." To that end, KBI actively recruited the TTB (Alcohol Tax and Trade Bureau) to join the voting Stakeholder Panel for AOAC process and is

pleased to announce that Cathy Halverson, Chief of the TTB's Beverage Alcohol Laboratory, has been named to the panel.

Additionally, in March KBI published a new Approved Testing Method for Ethanol in Kombucha, developed by KBI member Live Soda in conjunction with Cornerstone Labs, that has been shown to produce more accurate results than any currently developed AOAC method. Since its inception 18 months ago, KBI has striven to develop Best Practices and standards in order to ensure compliant and safe Kombucha products are on the shelves. "This step forward is the next logical progression for an industry that is proactively self-regulating," said Hannah Crum, President and Co-Founder of KBI.

While the entire process may require 1 - 2 years before a method is fully vetted and accepted by the AOAC, KBI members and the industry in general are committed to seeking viable solutions to any and all potential issues that would also be accepted by Federal regulatory agencies such as the TTB.

<http://kombuchabrewers.org/press-room/>

Kombucha is naturally sparkling fermented tea. For more information about the testing protocols or to learn more about the Kombucha industry, please contact KBI President Hannah Crum at [info@kombuchabrewers.org](mailto:info@kombuchabrewers.org).

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## **KeVita-Backed Testing Methodology For Alcohol Levels In Kombucha Approved By AOAC**

SOURCE KeVita

**Single-lab validation for Gas Chromatography with Flame Ionization Detection (GC-FID) achieves Official Method (SM) for ethanol in kombucha status**  
OXNARD, Calif., Nov. 3, 2016 /PRNewswire/ -- In a victory for consumers seeking transparency and accuracy in food and beverage labeling, there is now an approved single-lab validation process for testing alcohol levels in kombucha tea. The Gas Chromatography with Flame Ionization Detection (GC-FID) method achieved a unanimous vote for adoption of first action Official Method status (AOAC 2016.12) at the 130th Annual Meeting of AOAC International, September 18-21, 2016.

KeVita, a leader in probiotic and kombucha drinks, launched its Truth in Labeling initiative one year ago, to help advance a standardized process for the kombucha and fermented beverages category to test and report alcohol, sugar and calories in their products. The brand was one of the first to notice that the previously used Gas Chromatography/Mass Spectrometry (GC/MS) method was not providing accurate and reliable results. This moved KeVita, given its commitment to Truth in Labeling, to partner with NaturPro Scientific to find a consistent and dependable method to ensure accurate labeling for consumers.

"The goals of our Truth in Labeling initiative are to provide consumers with accurate, clear information so they can make the right choices for their beverage needs," said Bill Moses, CEO, KeVita. "Now manufacturers, distributors and retailers have a validated alcohol testing method at Covance Laboratories and we encourage the industry to utilize it to ensure accurate and consistent labeling."

The single-lab validation of the GF-CID was conducted at Covance Labs, and is the first and only testing methodology approved by the AOAC standardizing body. It was the only one out of five proposed methods that was moved to First Action Status at the AOAC's September meeting.

The method met the Standard Method Performance Requirements (SMPR) determined by a working group comprised of number of industry stakeholders, including KBI, as part of an industry-wide effort to standardize the information on labels.

Additionally, during the initial testing for ethanol levels, NaturPro Scientific discovered discrepancies in the amount of sugar in kombucha samples versus what was reported on labels. Given accurate sugar content is also a critical component of KeVita's Truth in Labeling initiative, KeVita subsequently funded an independent analysis of 8 leading kombucha brands including KeVita. That study, published on October 31, found that the majority of the kombucha products tested contained sugars content greater than 20% more than what was stated on the brand's label. Samples from 2 brands contained an average of 291% and 311% over their stated sugar content. KeVita's sugar content met their stated values, with an average of -4% of what was stated on the label.

For the full report please see

<http://naturproscientific.com/portfolio/sugars-in-kombucha-tea/>

Prior to this, in March 2016, KBI had published a new Approved Testing Method for Ethanol in Kombucha. Developed by KBI member Live Soda in conjunction with Cornerstone Labs, it was the most accurate testing method available at the time. However, acceptance by the greater scientific community was needed.

such as the in-development KBI Verification Program, which in turn will serve consumers by...

under the Resources menu →

<https://kombuchabrewers.org/resources/approved-alcohol-testing-methods/>

Having accurate testing methods in place is crucial to creating a level playing field so that the trace amounts of ethanol in Kombucha can be accurately measured.

(e.g., Final Report, First Action Method, Final Action Method)

The report demonstrates significant merit as to the scope of the project, diversity of the panel, or an innovative approach to difficult analytical challenge. The report must have been submitted within the last 3 years.

This was necessary as there was no universally accepted method in existence at the time.