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Kombucha Brewers International Announces AOAC Update

Testing Methods for Kombucha Take a Step Forward

Los Angeles, CA: Kombucha Brewers International (KBI) is pleased to announce further progress towards an official method of analysis for ethanol (alcohol) testing for kombucha tea.

On September 19 the Expert Review Panel for SPSFAM (Stakeholder Panel on Strategic Food Analytical Methods) Ethanol in Kombucha Tea, held at the AOAC 130th Annual Meeting in Dallas, met to review five methods garnered through the submission process. Through consensus, one of the five was moved to First Action status, with two other strong options that will be reviewed at the AOAC Mid-Year meeting in March 2017. The method moving forward utilizes GC-FID (Gas Chromatography with Flame Ionization Detection) and the other two include an enzymatic method as well as a GC-MS method, similar to the one currently recommended by KBI.

Speaking after the panel adjourned, Hannah Crum, President of KBI, who was selected to participate as a non-voting subject matter expert on kombucha commented, "Today's deliberation and decision represents a significant next step. Whichever method(s) come

out of this process will still require up to two years further testing in the field before voted into Official Method status. While the TTB (Alcohol Tax and Trade Bureau) is a voting member of the panel, that does not guarantee they will use the method, even if it is approved. However, AOAC approval is extremely significant and we remain hopeful for a positive solution for all parties.”

Justin Trout of Health-Ade Kombucha who was also in attendance stated, “There were a couple of other options that appear promising. The enzymatic method shows potential for an inexpensive, in-house solution that would help brewers affordably monitor the quality of their products. We’re eager to see additional data and will be doing our own exploration of different testing methods in the meantime.”

More details regarding the methods will be posted to the KBI website as they become available.

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

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