



Application Note AN-NIR-123

Flour analysis by near-infrared spectroscopy (NIRS)

NIR flour analysis determines moisture, protein, ash, gluten, starch, and rheological properties within seconds

Monitoring ash content, along with key quality parameters such as protein and moisture content, can significantly enhance the milling yield of flour. Next to these chemical parameters, rheological parameters like baking strength or tenacity influence the product quality. Near-infrared (NIR) spectroscopy enables chemical-

free quality control of both chemical and rheological parameters, producing results within seconds. This simple, efficient, and rapid analysis method is ideal for continuous quality checks and can be implemented in laboratory settings or atline, requiring minimal training for effective use.

EXPERIMENTAL EQUIPMENT

A total of 237 flour samples, including wheat flour, spelt flour, and other types, were analyzed on a Metrohm OMNIS NIR Analyzer Solid (**Figure 1**) with the large cup OMNIS NIR, 100 mm and OMNIS software. The samples were filled into the sample cup and analyzed in diffuse reflection mode. To include sample variety, the sample cup rotated during measurement to collect spectra from different locations. The automatically averaged spectra were used for model development. Reference values for moisture, protein, and ash content were obtained with the respective primary methods: moisture analysis followed AOAC 953.10, protein according to AOAC 2001.11, and ash content followed AOAC 923.03.



Figure 1. OMNIS NIR Analyzer Solid

Table 1. Hardware and software equipment overview.

Equipment	Article number
OMNIS NIR Analyzer Solid	2.1071.0010
Large holder OMNIS NIR, 100 mm	6.07402.100
Large cup OMNIS NIR, 100 mm	6.07402.110
OMNIS Stand-Alone license	6.06003.010
Quant Development software license	6.06008.002

RESULT

The obtained NIR spectra (**Figure 2**) were used to create prediction models for the different reference parameters. Correlation diagrams which display the relation between the NIR

prediction and the reference values are shown in **Figures 3–5** together with the respective figures of merit (FOM).



Figure 2. Overlaid NIR spectra of flour samples. Data was obtained with an OMNIS NIR Analyzer Solid.

Result moisture in flour

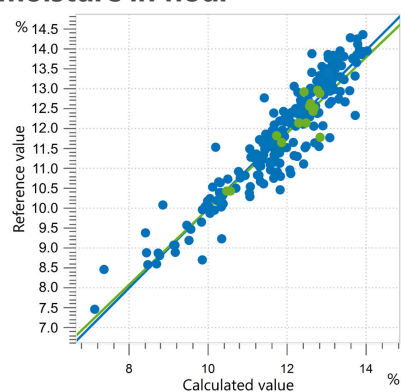


Figure 3. Correlation diagram and the respective FOMs for the prediction of moisture in flour. Blue dots represent calibration samples; green dots represent samples used to validate the model.

Figures of Merit	Value
R^2	0.827
Standard Error of Calibration	0.47%
Standard Error of Cross-Validation	0.48%

Result protein in flour

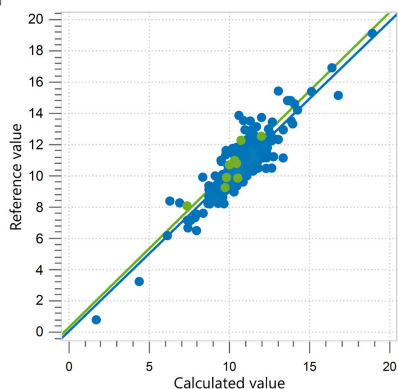


Figure 4. Correlation diagram and the respective FOMs for the prediction of protein in flour. Blue dots represent calibration samples; green dots represent samples used to validate the model.

Figures of Merit	Value
R^2	0.789
Standard Error of Calibration	1.89%
Standard Error of Cross-Validation	2.68%

Result ash in flour

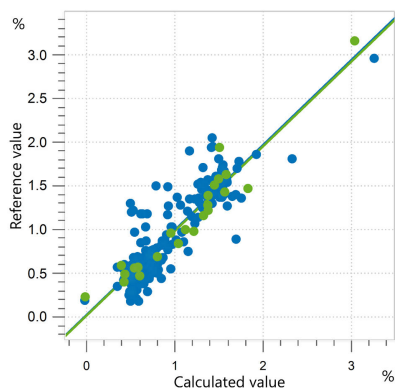


Figure 5. Correlation diagram and the respective FOMs for the prediction of ash in flour. Blue dots represent calibration samples; green dots represent samples used to validate the model.

Figures of Merit	Value
R^2	0.929

Standard Error of Calibration	0.221%
Standard Error of Cross-Validation	0.231%

Table 2. Aside from the key quality parameters, additional parameters can be determined in flour using near-infrared spectroscopy.

Parameter	Range	SEC	SECV	R2CV
Gluten	15–35%	1.39%	1.40%	0.918
Starch	15–26%	0.86%	0.97%	0.755
Baking strength	36–444	29.94	30.75	0.919
Elasticity index	30–65	2.32	2.67	0.906
Tenacity	43–382	20.00	21.69	0.910

CONCLUSION

This Application Note shows the feasibility of using NIR spectroscopy for the analysis of several quality parameters in flour. With no chemicals involved, near-infrared spectroscopy is an ideal way to avoid time-consuming sample

preparation and reduce costs. NIRS instruments from Metrohm allow users to not only to monitor the flour milling process, but also to predict the rheological properties of the dough the flour is produced with.

CONTACT

メトロームジャパン株式会社
143-0006 東京都大田区平和島6-1-1
null 東京流通センター アネックス9階

metrohm.jp@metrohm.jp

CONFIGURATION



OMNIS NIR Analyzer Solid

Near-infrared spectrometer for solid and viscous samples. Developed and produced in accordance with Swiss quality standards, the OMNIS NIR Analyzer is the near-infrared spectroscopy (NIRS) solution for routine analysis along the entire production chain. Its application of the latest technologies and its integration in the modern OMNIS Software are reflected in its speed, operability and flexible utilization of this NIR spectrometer. Overview of the advantages of the OMNIS NIR Analyzer Solid: Measurements of solids and viscous samples in less than 10 seconds; Automated multi-position measurements for reproducible results, even with nonhomogeneous samples; Simple integration in an automation system or link with additional analysis technologies (titration); Supports numerous sample vessels;



OMNIS NIR100 mm

Large holder for large sample vessel OMNIS NIR, 100 mm (6.07402.110). Permits unambiguous positioning of the sample vessel and the rotation of the sample vessel.



OMNIS NIR100 mm

様々なサンプル位置における反射中の粉末および顆粒のスペクトル記録のための大型サンプル容器。

次の製品と互換性があります:

- 大型ホルダー OMNIS NIR、100 mm (6.07402.100)

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- メトローム・ライセンシングポータルにて、アクティブ化する必要があります。

Quant Development

Software license for the creation and editing of quantification models in a stand-alone OMNIS Software installation.