



Application Note AN-RS-016

# Trace Detection of Potassium Ferrocyanide in Table Salt

## Protecting consumer safety with Misa

Potassium ferrocyanide (KFC) is an anti-caking compound added to table salt. Although KFC is a common non-toxic food additive, its spectroscopic response is representative of analogous cyanide compounds. Trace detection of other cyanides in food products is essential to the safety of consumers, as they can be toxic at

oral consumption levels as low as 20  $\mu\text{g/g}$ . This application demonstrates rapid trace analysis of potassium ferrocyanide in table salt with Misa (Metrohm Instant SERS Analyzer), in a simple assay format with minimal use of laboratory reagents.

## INTRODUCTION

Federal guidelines state that KFC levels may not exceed 13  $\mu\text{g/g}$  as an additive to table salt. This application note describes detection of trace

amounts of potassium ferrocyanate in table salt with Misa and Metrohm Raman's silver nanoparticle (Ag NP) solution.

## CYANIDE IN THE SERS SPECTRUM

A standard SERS reference spectrum (Figure 1) for KFC (100  $\mu\text{g/g}$ , Ag NPs) is dominated by a prominent peak at  $2133\text{ cm}^{-1}$  corresponding to the  $\text{C}\equiv\text{N}$  stretching mode. The  $\text{C}\equiv\text{N}$  cyanide stretch is distinctive, as it is one of very few Raman peaks which appear above  $1800\text{ cm}^{-1}$ . In

a y-corrected spectrum, this strong, distinct cyanide peak appears for any cyanide moiety, whether benign KFC or toxic hydrogen cyanide gas, making SERS an excellent technology for cyanide detection.

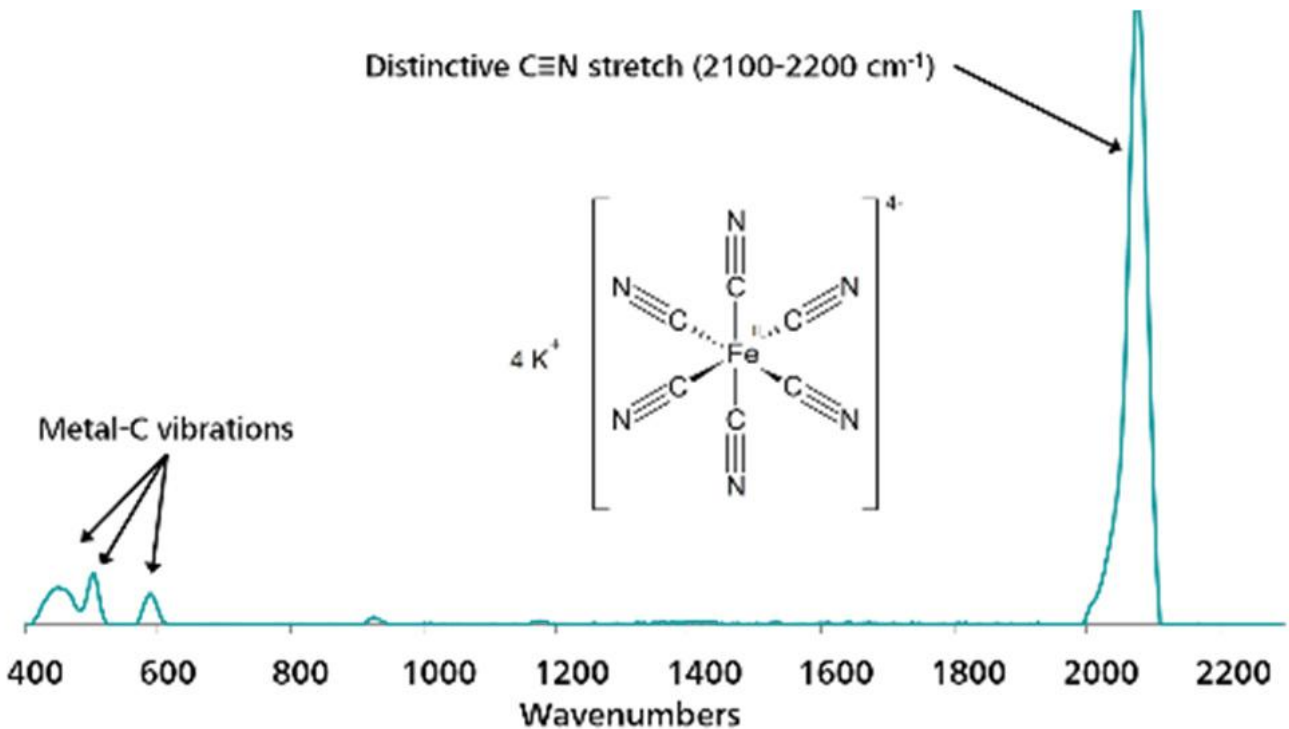


Figure 1. Representative SERS spectrum of cyanide.

## EXPERIMENT

To prepare spiked samples, regular table salt was doped with potassium hexacyanoferrate(II) trihydrate dissolved in water to generate a concentration range of test samples: 10,000, 1,000, 100, 10, 1  $\mu\text{g/g}$ , and 100  $\text{ng/g}$ . Following the addition of analyte, samples were air-dried. For SERS analysis, 100 mg of each sample was dissolved in 0.5 mL water. A 100  $\mu\text{L}$  aliquot of the sample was mixed thoroughly with 800  $\mu\text{L}$  Ag NPs and 50  $\mu\text{L}$  50 mmol/L NaCl in a glass vial. The sample vial was inserted into the vial attachment on Misa for testing.



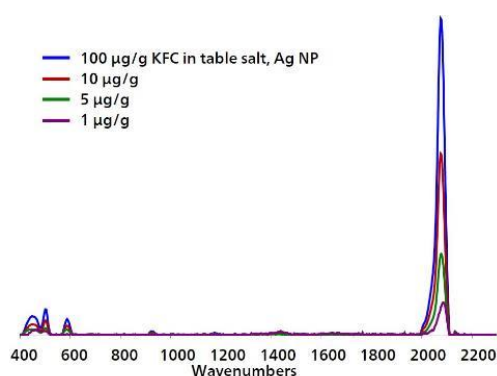
**Table 1.** Experimental Parameters

Instrument		Acquisition	
Firmware	0.9.33	Laser Power	5
Software	Misa Cal V1.0.15	Int. Time	1 s
Misa Vial Attachment	6.07505.040	Averages	10
ID Kit - Ag NP	6.07506.450	Raster	ON

## RESULTS

Figure 2 displays overlaid Ag NP SERS spectra acquired for different concentrations of KFC,

demonstrating detection down to 1  $\mu\text{g/g}$ .



**Figure 2.** Overlaid, baselined, background-subtracted SERS spectra of KFC in table salt with Misa and Ag NPs.

## FIELD TEST PROTOCOL

### Detection of potassium ferrocyanide in the field

Using the large end of the scoop, add 3–4 scoops of sample to a 2 mL vial. Add water to the vial until ~1/4 full. Cap and shake the vial gently to dissolve solids, then let the sample rest for 2 minutes. Fill a clean vial halfway full with Ag NPs.

Using pipettes, add 2 drops of sample solution and 1 drop of NaCl solution to Ag NPs, then cap and shake the vial gently to mix. Insert into vial attachment on Misa for measurement.

**Table 2.** Requirements for Field Test Protocol

ID Kit - Ag NP	6.07506.450
includes:	Silver nanoparticles (Ag NP)
	Scoop
	Disposable pipettes
	2 mL glass vials
Reagents	
Water	
NaCl solution	3 g NaCl in 100 mL water
Test settings	Use ID Kit OP on Misa

## CONCLUSION

Misa's rapid, facile trace detection of potassium ferrocyanide in table salt down to 1  $\mu\text{g/g}$  is an order of magnitude below permissible levels. The simple procedure described herein requires minimal sample preparation and is ideally suited

for on-site testing.

Given the similarity of SERS cyanide spectra, the results of this study suggest that Misa may be used as a robust cyanide sensor.

## CONTACT

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## CONFIGURATION



### MISA Advanced

Metrohm Instant SERS Analyzer (MISA) 是一款高性能、便携式分析系,可快速/定非法物、食品添加和微量食品染料。MISA 的特点是配了 Metrohm 独特的道光栅描 (ORS) 技的高效光。其空需求最小和并且池寿命有所延,是或移室用的理想。MISA 提供各 1 激光附件,可活取。分析可通 BlueTooth 或 USB 接行。MISA Advanced 套件是一个完整套件,其作用是用能用 Metrohms 米粒溶液和 P-SERS 条行 SERS 分析。MISA Advanced 套件包含了一个 MISA 小管附件、一个 P-SERS-附件、一个 ASTM 校正准件、一个 USB 迷、一个 USB 供元和用于行 MISA 器的 MISA Cal 件。随供了一个用来安全保管器和附件的固保箱。



### ID - (Ag NP)

ID 套件 - Ag NP 包含了 Mira/Misa 用使用体溶液行 SERS 分析所需的件。套件包含了一个一次性抹刀、一个移液管、品小瓶和一个含体的瓶子。