

## **REDLAT DAIRY LABORATORY NETWORK OF IBEROAMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN**

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### **Abstract**

REDLAT, an initiative promoted by the ex Technical Director of the Center for Technological Research of the Dairy Industry, Lic. Roberto Castañeda, was created in the framework of the Ibero-American Science and Technology for Development - CYTED - forming a network of institutions with dairy laboratories that contribute to the optimization and promotion of dairy in their respective countries.

The main objective of the REDLAT is the organization of a network of dairy laboratories whose area of operation is the Iberoamerican and Caribbean countries to strengthen their analytical capabilities and quality management, for purposes of differentiated payment for milk quality, dairy control cow by cow, veterinary control -brucellosis / tuberculosis disease - or control of dairy products.

The creation of this network aims to interconnect as many laboratories in the region, aiming at harmonizing analysis methodologies, comparability and traceability of analytical measurements, exchange of experiences from the technical field, planning training and technical assistance related to the improvement of compositional, hygienic and sanitary quality of milk.

The Network has a web site - [www.redlat-cyted.com](http://www.redlat-cyted.com) - for technical inquiries, technical meetings, organization of interlaboratory tests, distribution of dairy reference materials and other activities that favor the regional dairy theme, quality management and communication between the member countries.

Strategic network actions have been established through a work plan to 4 years, including training, dissemination activities, such as presentation of research papers at conferences and congresses and workshops related to the dairy theme, as well as representation activities of the Network in regional fairs.

*Keywords: redlat, dairy, milk quality, laboratories, network*

## **GENERAL OBJECTIVE**

The overall objective of this project is the creation of a network of dairy laboratories REDLAT that interact with each other to strengthen their analytical capabilities and quality management, and whose area of operation is the Latin American and Caribbean region. It is defined by dairy laboratory to those conducting analysis and related compositional, sanitary and hygienic quality of milk, for purposes of differentiated payment for quality, milk control, veterinary control (brucellosis / tuberculosis / aftose) or control tests for processed dairy products. Also they included associations and / or national or private institutions that interact with these laboratories, companies providers of analytical equipment, supplies or other, and Spanish dairy laboratories that can facilitate obtaining this overall objective.

## **SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES**

1. Create a form of communication between dairy laboratories of Latin America and the Caribbean.
2. Provide technical assistance and consultation in analytical methodologies and quality management.
3. Dictate training courses, virtual or in person, about sampling, methodologies and quality assurance of results.
4. Harmonize analysis methodologies for sampling and analysis of milk and dairy products.
5. Identify and promote reference laboratories in each of the participating countries.
6. Create and maintain a system of national and international traceability of results among member countries.
7. Establish periodic technical meetings (in person and via the Internet) among member laboratories.
8. Promote the differential payment for milk according to its compositional, sanitary and hygienic quality milk control in the region.
9. Organize a Latin American Dairy Laboratories Workshop every 2-3 years, with venues alternating privileging the regional problematic in aspects of technical training, quality management and harmonious development of the regions.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The methodology used is that of networking to promote the exchange of professionals of laboratory members, incorporating new laboratories and interacting with "experts" laboratories. This allows the active exchange of capabilities under the cooperative network concept and laboratories that form it. It is a solidarity mechanism whereby laboratories have greater capabilities support others, using different mechanisms and tools that will be made available.

INTI will have the role of coordinator of the network, through its Management of International Cooperation, carrying out overall coordination, and, through the Technology Research Center of Dairy Industry – INTI Lacteos -, the technical coordination. INTI Lacteos will be responsible for disseminating all activities carried out within the framework of the REDLAT, as well as to

generate, manage, disseminate, relieve opportunities of cooperation among member laboratories and to track the actions planned in the annual master plan.

Exchanges between participants will be made through virtual and in person tools. INTI will host and provide resources for the maintenance of the website to be developed.

Assistance activities, counseling and exchange between laboratories in the region that are part of the REDLAT, will be permanent transfer activities. The main objective of the REDLAT, is to strengthen the analytical capabilities of the laboratories that compose and improving their performance. For this purpose, they will be scheduled annually, training, exchanges of specialists with virtual tools and remote assistance. Human resources for performing these different activities will be provided by the members themselves of the Network, especially those with more experience.

## **RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS**

The target countries that the project proposes to incorporate the REDLAT includes Latin America and the Caribbean. In that context, this is a network open to the participation of all dairy laboratories. They also may join other national or private institutions, in contact with these laboratories and analytical equipment providers companies, supplies or other, that can facilitate the achievement of the objectives.

The main users of the REDLAT are dairy laboratories, as defined above. Your benefits will be strengthening its technical capacity and quality analytical management.

An intermediate beneficiary will be the milk producer, who, being installed culture of differentiated payment for quality, will receive a price commensurate with the effort made to improve milk production, livestock health, etc. and will see an improvement in the transparency of its trade transactions with industrial that buys their milk.

Another intermediate beneficiary of the project will be the processing milk industry in dairy products, who, through standardization and improvement of the quality of milk, will establish more standardized procedures, improvements in yields of processes and final products of better quality.

The final beneficiary of the project is the Latin American and Caribbean consumer, who will have milk and milk products of better quality.

Finally a major beneficiary are national states through their governments (ministries), technical institutions and technical chambers, who will see increased productivity and efficiency of dairy chains themselves.

Laboratory Network Dairy Latin American REDLAT seeks to position itself as an important metrological reference in the analysis of milk matrices at regional level, with a metrological anchor in Latin America, dissemination of traceability and international transfer of knowledge for all network laboratories.

The implementation of quality systems, use of quality tools, equivalence of results and reliability of measurements between Latin American countries will allow a strengthening of trade with the rest of the world.

An important objective of this network is the training and assistance to members of dairy laboratories and other members of the food chain of milk, such as national organizations, milk producers and industries.

This requires a plan of annual training that addresses the needs of each of the regions, with their varying stages of development in dairy, and their particular problems, to be issued by the institutions participating in the network with good capacities for this purpose. These courses will be conducted electronically or will be in person. The funding requested the CYTED is for the organization of these courses and the participation of members of the network in such training.

In this context it is also interesting to note the participation of experts laboratories that contribute with their experience to the strengthening of the members of the different countries of the Latin American region.

Another important tool for training activities is to implement system responses ONLINE via the Internet and conducting a Dairy Laboratories Workshop every two years, with rotating headquarters where can meet members of dairy laboratories. In this context, will enhance exchange activities between member laboratories.

The benefit of all these training activities is to promote the exchange of professionals and consultants from member laboratories under REDLAT activities and allow the active exchange of capabilities under the cooperative network concept.

