

ICAR WORKING GROUP ON MILK TESTING LABORATORIES

Meeting on 19 May 2003 in Holstebro (Denmark)

- Provisional report -

Attending members:

Olivier Leray (FR, chairman), George Psathas (CY), Christian Baumgartner (DE), Ugo Paggi (IT), Harrie van den Bijgaart (NL), Egil Brenne (NO).

Observers:

Jean-Marie van Crombrugge (BE), Jean Laloux (BE), Philippe Trossat (FR), Chrysa Matara (GR), Marina Gips (IL), Luca Lattanzi (IT), Silvia Orlandini (IT), Inger Andersson (SE), Slavica Golc Teger (SLV).

Apologies:

John Rhoads (USA).

1. Opening, approval of the tentative agenda

The chairman opened the meeting at 14.00 hours. The tentative agenda was approved.

2. ICAR News

The next ICAR General Assembly will be held on 24 May 2003 in Paris. The earlier distributed report of Olivier Leray about the recent MTL WG activities, dated 29-01-2003, was approved to serve as the basis for the communication to the General Assembly. Olivier Leray will attend the meeting on behalf of MTL WG.

Action: Leray

Mark Jeffries has changed his position with LIC in New Zealand and now works with Meat New Zealand. He will retain his position as ICAR president.

The MTL WG webspace on www.icar.org has been updated since the last meeting. The addition of the updated terms of reference must still be done.

Action: Leray

A new issue of the ICAR Newsletter was published in April 2003 and can be obtained through the ICAR secretariat.

3. Composition of ICAR MTL WG

Des Johnston has resigned from his position at LIC and as a consequence also has withdrawn as a member from the ICAR MTL WG. The New Zealand ICAR member body will be contacted about eventual replacement.

Action: Leray

4. Current Activities

4.1 Report of the last meeting

The provisional report of the meeting on 26 October 2002 in Palencia was approved.

4.2 Progress in current works

4.2a Protocol for the evaluation of milk analysers for milk recording.

In addition to the earlier observations (see minutes of meeting in Palencia), the participants in the meeting made the following observations with regard to the received comments:

Comment 1 (FR): Demands should not only be set with laboratory analysers in mind but leave room for alternative means of analysis.

Observation: The growing number of examples of on-farm analysis is noted. It is however felt that in the framework of official milk recording the same demands should apply as for laboratory analysers. However, in-line analysers might need to be handled separately. For the time being, the text will be kept as it is.

Comment 6 (Foss Electric): What is the validity of an approval with regard to technology changes in the instrument?

Observation: Changes are inherently meant to bring improvement, i.e. to make the instrument performance better and/or to make its operation easier. Improvements for once approved instrumentation, with or without the introduction of new technology, should not be hindered. It is essential, that manufacturers provide proper information with each change. Routine analytical quality assurance will very likely detect eventual problems. ICAR must be left the option to withdraw an earlier given approval. Alignment with the procedure for milk meters will be sought.

Comment 9: (Foss Electric): Provided information on additional information should partly be included in the compulsory part. The rest should be taken out.

Observation: Foss still to be asked for clarification on the concerned points.

Action: Leray

Conformation of the amended protocol will be sought from the ICAR meetings at the occasion of the General Assembly coming Saturday.

Action: Leray

MTL WG activities with regard to this work item will now cease as the item has also been introduced on the Working Programme of IDF and will there further be treated in JAT Automated methods.

4.2b ICAR reference laboratory network

The broadening of the reference laboratory network to milk of small ruminants (sheep, goat) was introduced in 2002. Activities in the area of small ruminant analysis are operated by AIA – Laboratoria Standard Latte, Maccaresse (IT).

4.2c International interlaboratory proficiency studies

Cow milk analysis. It is noted that since the beginning of 2002 the average results per parameter of the participants do serve as reference value instead of the Cecalait values.

Sheep and goat milk analysis. An overview was provided of the results of the first two interlaboratory studies with sheep and goat milk. Ugo Paggi acknowledged the help of Olivier Leray with the elaboration of the first reports.

The number of participants varies between 6 and 12. The results indicate the potentially valuable role of these studies. To promote the participation, a further reminder will be sent to countries where sheep and goat milk analysis is executed.

Action: Paggi

It was stated as essential that for fat, protein and urea only reference method results are compared. For somatic cell count the situation is more diffuse as the reference method is barely executed. Further samples can be sent to laboratories that want to perform additional analysis with routine methods. In that case, results of additional series would be treated beside in specific statistical treatment devoted to open trials of AIA-LSL. Indeed, like Cecalait is doing, also AIA-LSL can use the option to make different presentations out of once obtained results.

It was however stressed to keep proficiency studies clearly separated from interlaboratory collaborative trials that are specifically meant for the establishment of method precision figures.

The planning of interlaboratory proficiency studies for cow, sheep and goat milk should be better aligned in order to leave better opportunities for members to participate in all. **Action: Leray/Paggi**

4.2d IDF standardization for small ruminant milk analysis

The produced data on the standardization of the reference methods for fat, protein and freezing point will be discussed during the course of the week in the concerned IDF/ISO/AOAC JAT meetings.

4.2e Vials and containers

A report on the results of the questionnaire has been prepared and is available in the MTL WG webspace. Further actions will be initiated in co-operation with SC Meters & Jars (Uffe Lauritsen).

Action: Van den Bijgaart

4.3 New work items

Further information on on-farm/in-line analysers to be forwarded to Christian Baumgartner.

5. Other items

5.1 ICAR Session Tunisia

A second meeting of the ICAR Reference Laboratory Network will be organised. The central theme for this meeting could be the analysis of milk from small ruminants.

Possible other contributions in the sessions are:

the protocol for the evaluation of milk analysers;

the ICAR Reference Laboratory Network and the development in the results of the interlaboratory proficiency studies;

harmonization of sample vials and containers.

Further ideas are invited. Further preparation during the course of this year by communication via phone and e-mail.

Action: all

6. Next meeting

The next meeting of the MTL WG will be scheduled during the ICAR Sessions in Sousse (TN) in May 2004.

7. Closure of the meeting

Harrie van den Bijgaart
Zutphen, 18 June 2003