

**Meeting of ICAR MTL WG on 24th of May 2005 (8.30-11.00)
in Magaliesburg (South Africa)**

- Draft minutes -

Present members : Olivier Leray (Chair-FR), Harrie van den Bijgaart (NL), Christian Baumgartner (DE), John Rhoads (USA), Egil Brenne (NO), Marina Gips (IL), George Psathas (CY).

Absent members: Ugo Paggi (IT), Gavin Scott (NZ).

Observers: Silvia Orlandini (IT), Luca Lattanzi (IT), Philippe Trossat (FR).

Chaired by : Olivier Leray

Minutes taken by : George Psathas

- **Opening the meeting.**

1. Approval of the tentative agenda:

All present members approved the tentative agenda.

2. Composition of ICAR MTL WG:

The chairman welcomed new memberships of Gavin Scott and Marina Gips. Marina Gips thanked for the acceptance in the working group although she said she might not be able to participate in all the meetings.

3. ICAR web site: reviewing the content of MTL WG space (updates and new information):

From this reviewing it was found that some items were ready, some others not. Member list was updated; new terms of reference, although ready, are not yet endorsed by the Board; technical documents were not yet updated; the list of methods is not yet updated nor posted; the list of evaluation centres was prepared but not yet posted; the proceedings of ICAR Ref Lab Network meeting in Sousse were posted and ICAR Ref Lab Network list and PT programs updated.

Considering the issue on milk analyser evaluation centres, Silvia Orlandini mentioned that the address of A.I.A. on the list should be replaced by the address of L.S.L.

Ch. Baumgartner mentioned Kiel as reference laboratory for Germany with regard to somatic cells. He will clarify that point and inform the group. As well he corrected the information that the laboratory of Kirchheim newly nominated is not an additional member but replaces the laboratory of Güstrow.

4. Current activities:

4.1 Approval of the report of the last meeting:

All present members approved the report of the last meeting.

4.2 Progress in current works:

a. Implementation of the approval process for the evaluation of milk analysers by ICAR:

A broad discussion between the members took place with regard to necessary improvements in the assessment of linearity and the need for consistency with ISO 8196-3/IDF 128-3. O. Leray will make appropriate updates and keep attention to consistency, since the final intent of ICAR should be to refer to an international standard.

Questions were raised about the requirement of evaluations by three different centres. This might be very expensive to the manufacturers of instruments. It is reminded that the new situation proposed in the protocol is less expensive and more reliable than performing evaluations in every country where new methods are intended to be used according possibly different protocols. The application for an ICAR approval as described may follow a step-by-step progression (subsequent evaluations in different countries) that provides subsequent authorisations for use. The final ICAR approval is the conclusion on the basis of the results obtained.

Then, it was decided to prepare and launch the announcement to ICAR organisations and manufacturers. (action: O. Leray with ICAR secretariat)

b. ICAR reference laboratory network and international PTs :

There is stable participation in cow's milk PT trials, but the little participation in sheep's and goat's milk PT trials brings the need to adopt a new strategy for small ruminants. Silvia Orlandini proposed to include some other laboratories in Italy in the round trials.

After discussion, the group decided to continue the support for the PT trials by A.I.A. and that a letter will be sent to ICAR national organisations to stress the relevance of participation in A.I.A. PT trials for sheep's and goat's milk by National Reference Laboratories.

c. Workshop on (reference) analytical methods: Replies to the questionnaire:

Until now, two centres are volunteers to host this workshop i.e. MUVA (Kempen, DE) and COKZ/MCS (NL). CECALAIT and LSL might be interested in the future.

Only a few laboratories replied to the issued questionnaire (4 positive replies out of 20-22 regular participants in PT). After a broad discussion on how to deal with reference laboratories not responding, it was decided that the MTL WG would undertake another effort by renewing the questionnaire to member-countries' labs with target date next September and focusing action on technical lab managers. National organisations will be contacted too.

The chairman will bring the whole issue to discussion at the Board of ICAR in next June.

d. ICAR INDRL meeting: (prospect for ICAR Session 2006 in Finland)

The limited attendance by network members in 2004 is noted whereby the effectiveness of the action for laboratory members might be questionable. Nevertheless, it is decided to continue with the specific meetings devoted to the network during ICAR Session 2006 in Kuopio (Finland). The chairman raised the issue of analytical strategies around the analytical sector and the aim of ICAR to strengthen the ICAR AQA system for milk recording. He emphasised the need of briefing the ICAR national organisations. This could be the theme of the next network meeting and other group contributions in the ICAR Sessions in Finland 2006. Ch. Baumgartner volunteered for a presentation on analytical

strategies in the analytical sector. Any subject/speaker proposal is to be addressed by Autumn for discussion at the next meeting. (action: all members)

e. IDF standardization of milk analysis: (F, P, L, Urea, and SCC, for cow, sheep and goat milk)

It is noted that progress was made in this issue in IDF/ISO that should be discussed in respective Joint Action Teams of IDF during the Analytical Week.

4.3 Provision of information:

a. Databases on RMs available for milk recording purposes (last news):

The databases of AFEMA and VIRM were discussed. It was mentioned that they do not yet contain a complete information on existing RM suppliers and types of materials. Database operators are to be supplied with further information. Ch. Baumgartner said that the AFEMA website is expected to be ready in June. O. Leray mentioned that VIRM requests annual fees (about 100 Euros) to cover costs of implementation and maintenance. Registration is to be made on-line by RM suppliers themselves.

b. Milk testing on farm:

The chairman made a briefing concerning the issue from last meeting in Sousse and then made a presentation of the Project of Lodi's Dairy Research Institute (ILC, Istituto Lattiero Caseario) on in-line milk analysis.

The discussion which followed lead to conclude that accuracy figures were quite satisfactory for in-farm applications and resulted in the decision to move forward (as a new work item) to define the minimum requirements (guidelines) in the matter of analytical characteristics for on-farm milk testing so as to get acceptable quality for official milk recording and make prospects for the definition of a protocol for the evaluation of milk measurement system on-farm.

5. Other items in connection with other ICAR bodies :

Harrie van den Bijgaart provided a status report on the draft document with ICAR recommendations for sampling and lactation calculation with AMS. The members agreed with the present contents. The document will be presented in the next meeting of the Board of ICAR.

6. Next meeting:

George Psathas renewed his invitation for hosting the next meeting in Cyprus in between October and November of 2005. He undertook to prepare a brief venue program of the meeting as proposal under approval of the group.

The Chairman thanked the participants for their attendance and contribution to the discussions

Closing the meeting at 11:30