

**Meeting of ICAR MTL WG on 10th of November 2005 (9.30-12.30, 14.30-17.30)
in Nicosia –Cyprus**

-Draft minutes-

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

Absent members: Ugo Paggi (IT), John Rhoads (USA).

Observers: Chrysa Matara (GR), Silvia Orlandini (IT), Luca Lattanzi (IT), Ernst-Heinrich Ubben (DE), Pierre Broutin (FR)

Chaired by: Olivier Leray

Minutes taken by: George Psathas

Opening.

At 9:25 the chairman welcomed all participants and gave the floor to the president of CMIO Board, Mr. Iacovos Fesas. The president welcomed the participants in CMIO premises and wished them a pleasant stay in Cyprus as well as a fruitful work at the meetings of both working groups. The chairman thanked the CMIO president and opened the meeting at 9:30.

A round table presentation enabled every attending person to introduce oneself and one's own interests in the meeting.

1- Approval of the tentative agenda

All present members approved the tentative agenda.

2- Composition of ICAR MTL WG

Marina Gips and Gavin Scott were welcomed as new members of the Group.

The chairman reminded the aim of the group to expand its representativeness to areas not yet covered and the former decision taken with regard to South Africa and Latin America. For the latter, the group expressed its interest for a membership from Argentina of which the reference laboratory is a member of the ICAR network.

As to complement the worldwide representativeness, it was also proposed to get an representation from Asia. M. Gips mentioned that the event of the IDF Dairy Congress and the World Dairy Summit in Shanghai-China could be the opportunity for attending group members to contact Chinese and other Asian dairy communities to identify a possible new member to represent Asia. The idea is felt relevant.

The chairman reminded that group members should be representatives from ICAR countries, such as Korea and Japan. China's membership in ICAR should be verified. He agreed to get the appropriate contacts and to identify the possible future members. He indicated that a further expanding is foreseen in relation to the future activities of the group in regard to the analytical strategy as implemented within ICAR.

3- ICAR

3.1 Change of status of MTL WG

The Board of ICAR has confirmed the significance of the work by the Group. During the meeting of the Board last June in Uppsala, it was proposed to turn the status of MTL working group into that of a Subcommittee. The members have discussed the prospect and expressed their appreciation for such a step. The change of status should be proposed for endorsement by the General Assembly at the 35th ICAR Session in June 2006 (Kuopio-Finland).

3.2 Website: Last updates and new information

Updates of the evaluation protocol, the AQA guidelines to laboratories, the list of analytical methods in milk recording and the list of evaluation centres are already posted in the ICAR Website.

- Evaluation protocol for milk analysers: A complementation of the paragraphs dealing with carry over and linearity with regard to the necessary numbers of samples and statistical significance was discussed.

- The list of centers for evaluation of analytical methods was discussed. It was stressed that the overview only lists centres operating for countries within ICAR, as established from inquiries and the list of ICAR network members. It does not constitute a list of centres approved by ICAR. It was agreed that these centres should assess their performance in the reference methods used in milk analyser evaluation by participating in the half-yearly ICAR proficiency studies. At present, It is the responsibility of national ICAR member bodies to ensure the competence and qualification of these centres for their own interest. In the future it would be worthwhile to replace this first list by one with the centres that work in conformity with the ICAR evaluation protocol. This can be produced from a questionnaire after implementing the ICAR approval system for milk analysers in 2006.

- List of methods of analysis: Again this is a list of methods used by countries of ICAR established from inquiries. Part IV does not constitute a list of routine methods approved by ICAR. Part 1, dealing with reference methods, includes references to ISO standards, mentioning (where existing) equivalence with IDF/ISO. Since AOAC is no longer associated with ISO/IDF in the international standardisation, it is unknown whether those AOAC standards are updated concurrently. Therefore it may be necessary to withdraw the mentioning of equivalence from the document. A decision on this is postponed awaiting the opinion of the US representative.

3.3 ICAR policy

- Quality certificate by ICAR: The chairman commented the document about the decision of the ICAR Board to grant quality certificate to member-countries through an auditing system with regard to the application of the ICAR Guidelines. He especially pointed out that also laboratory and analytical aspects could be considered subject for audit. Conversely to laboratory accreditation, related to one laboratory at the time, this type of audit could focus on organisational aspects of working with several laboratories.

- EU regulation: The chairman informs about ICAR contacts with EU officials in regard to the European regulation(s) for Animal Breeding and for consultation of SCs, WGs and TFs chairpersons. Roughly, the later is still to be implemented and EU does not intend to reinvent what exists yet. Thus the accepted approach is to use ICAR guidelines and standards. The proposal of the ICAR General Secretary for the future is to produce standards for regulation of common interest in a form also usable to EU. The group considers the approach already in place for analytical matters with working with ISO|IDF Standards, when available.

4- Current activities

4.1 Approval of the report of the last meeting

All present members approved the report of the last meeting in Magaliesburg (SA).

4.2 Progress in current work

a) Milk analyser approval/validation according to the ICAR protocol

The procedure for the approval request to ICAR and the announcement letter are ready for use. The objective is to make the announcement of the implementation of the approval system by the end of 2005.

The last decision needed is on the version of the protocol to be presented, the first version or an updated version. Since the updated version needs further work, it is decided to dispatch the first version formerly approved and post it on the ICAR website. The strategy agreed upon is to incorporate any new developments in the draft IDF 128-3 that once published as an ISO International Standard will also apply to ICAR.

b) ICAR reference laboratory network: International PT programme for 2006

- Cow milk analysis : The program for cow's milk will be renewed with necessary adaptation in regard to dates and fees adjustments.

- Sheep and goat milk analysis: S. Orlandini presented a short questionnaire concerning proficiency testing for sheep & goat milk in ICAR milk recording. The respective numbers of replies appeared both low and, for the time being, insufficient to decide positively for a new PT programme in 2006. As the questionnaire was recent, S. Orlandini will send a reminder to the network members and the ICAR organisation to get the last replies. The chairman proposes to announce only the annual programme for cow milk analysis and to inform about the situation for sheep and goat milk analysis, leaving open the door to international proficiency studies in case more interest would be expressed in the future.

A broad discussion was made concerning the interest of laboratories. Small ruminants milk analysis is still in development in most countries except in a limited number of developed countries where an organisation similar as for cow can find its justification. It is considered important to preserve the possibility for further programmes. S. Orlandini and G. Psathas committed themselves to take action within next 2 months to reactivate the interest of network laboratories and national organisations in PT programmes.

c) Workshops and meetings

- Workshop on (reference) analytical methods: Ch. Baumgartner reports MUVA's proposal (Michael Carl): A first step should be the provision of information on participants performance in reference method analysis. This can be achieved through a kind of preliminary trial by addressing samples for testing and questionnaires. This would help in developing diagnostics and have concrete matter to discuss. A discussion about the results and individual steps of the method is then to follow. Concerning several aspects, it is necessary to leave room to the organiser how to prepare the training.

Ch. Baumgartner emphasized the importance of such a stepwise organising. It is also mentioned that with regard to the amount of work and cost of the whole organisation, it is important to have the commitment (order) of participants for the full programme (including ring testing and workshop) prior to implementing the operation.

- ICAR INDRL meeting in Kuopio: The tentative agenda was discussed. The theme on Reference systems for milk analysis approved in Magaliesburg is proposed to be incorporated in a global theme on quality assurance strategy since the forthcoming new status of sub-committee implies a now permanent mission for the group then the need to define a further strategy :

- In an introductory speech the chairman will present the strategy developed the past 10 years (first period of the ICAR AQA system) and what could be developed from 2006. 35th ICAR Session would mark the beginning of a second period of a strengthened AQA policy with the development of harmonised tools for national levels.
- The viewpoint of the ICAR Board on the analytical policy foreseen would be provided by one of its member, expectedly Jarmo Juga or Andrea Rosati.
- Ch. Baumgartner would make a presentation on Reference system principle and practical application.
- O. Leray would make a presentation on choice criteria for a centralised calibration system and cautions to be respected in regard to routine methods and milk composition.
- Two other speeches could provide examples of actual application in ICAR countries.

After discussion, it is agreed upon to replace one of the two last speeches by a speech on the precision needed in milk composition analysis and the effect of possible inaccuracy. An expert of Interbull will be identified through the Board and be contacted.

The programme is to be finalized very soon in respect of speakers and presentations. **(Action: O. Leray)**

- 35th ICAR Session in Kuopio-Finland, 2006:

- Report at the General Assembly: The report prepared by the Chairman of the Group will include a summary of actions and put emphasis on the needed ICAR strategy for AQA (i.e. stronger incentive/incitement or compulsory participation by rule in PTs and national structuring).
- Contributions to the Technical Parallel Session are left to the choice of every member. O.Leray has asked Roberto Giangiacomo and Tiziana Cataneo for a presentation on the outcomes of Lodi's project on NIR milk recording on-farm.

d) Provision of information

- Data bases on RMs available for milk recording purposes: The AFEMA data base is now complete and every new provider's materials for milk and milk products can be added on request. Today it is still only presented in German.

- Milk testing on farm (last news): We remain on existing Lodi's project. No recent news on the expected implementation at the milk parlour and on milking robots. The PowerPoint presentation of T. Cattaneo (Magaliesburg) was followed by a scientific publication.

4.3 New work items

a) Guidelines for on-farm analytical devices

An initial input is required to design a frame for evaluating on-farm milk (component) measurement devices and applying relevant analytical quality assurance. It could use parts of the presentation made in Interlaken 2002 (e.g. guidelines for quality control and a protocol for on-farm milk measurement system evaluation).

(Action : O. Leray and Ch. Baumgartner to propose a first draft, tentatively by Autumn 2006).

b) Revision of guidelines to milk testing laboratories

The last version of is to be reviewed and updated. The chairman incorporated ISO standard references where they were missing beside IDF references. The list of methods in annex will be replaced by the recently updated list posted on the web site.

(Action: Every member to return comments and possible proposals)

c) Other guidelines

A harmonized protocol on PT organization is to be proposed to national organisations and reference laboratories so as to develop similar PT schemes in ICAR countries that then enable to use standard figures for laboratory precision assessment. Such a harmonisation could open the way to further benchmarking.

(Action : O. Leray to propose a first draft, tentatively by the end of 2006).

d) Inquiry on situation of milk testing laboratories in ICAR countries

Renew the questionnaire of 2001 but then limited to national levels and general statistics (number of labs, activity, instruments, QA-QC, analytical criteria, etc). The former questionnaire can be used and updated appropriately.

(Action : G. Psathas to propose a draft questionnaire by June 2006).

5- Other items in connection with other international bodies

5.1 ICAR SC Recording Devices

- Recommendation for sampling and lactation calculation with AMS (draft guidelines): A briefing was been made by H.v.d.Bijgaart
- IDF Information on progress in method standardization for milk recording (F and P in sheep and goat milk):
S. Orlandini briefed the existing situation with fat and protein within IDF.

6- Next meeting

The next meeting will take place in Kuopio- Finland during the 35th ICAR Sessions and Interbull Meeting (4-10th of June 2006). If needed, an informal meeting could be organised to tackle the very last organisational details for Kuopio in the margin of the annual IDF/ISO Analytical Week in Vilnius-Lithuania (29th May – 2nd June 2006).

7- Close

The chairman thanked the attending persons for their participation and their contribution to the work of the group and closed the meeting at 17:30

Nicosia, 24 November 2005

George Psathas