

**ICAR WORKING GROUP ON MILK TESTING LABORATORIES**  
**Meeting on 31<sup>st</sup> of May 2004 in Sousse (Tunisia)**

**-Draft minutes -**

**Attending members:**

Olivier Leray (FR, chairman), Christian Baumgartner (DE), Ugo Paggi (IT), Harrie van den Bijgaart (NL), George Psathas (CY).

**Observers:**

Luca Lattanzi (IT).

**Apologies:**

John Rhoads (USA), Egil Brenne (NO).

**Minutes kept by:**

George Psathas (CY)

**Opening of the meeting**

The chairman opened the meeting at 15:30 hours.

**1. Approval of the tentative agenda :**

All members approved the agenda.

**2. Composition of ICAR MTL WG :**

The interest of Marina Gips to be member of the Group was discussed as decided at last meeting of Parma.

From a contact of O. Leray with the Secretary General, broadening the group membership is possible up to nine members if the working group needs so.

It was emphasized that new nominee apart from specific and defined needs of the Group should be specialized and active. The members indicated to be in favor of her membership. According to ICAR rules, members are to be appointed by ICAR Board on the proposal of the working group. Possibly a nomination by her country is still required. The chairman will communicate with her and inform the ICAR Board.

Further on, the geographical representative-ness was discussed. Input from South America, South Africa and the Oceanian area is wanted. Especially for the Oceanian area Since the resignation of D. Johnston in 2003, the chairman has asked Mr. Mark Jeffries to help for the appointment of one person from this area and will take benefit of ICAR Session to have some contacts with New Zealand representatives.

**3. ICAR web site (new home page: reviewing the content of MTL WG space) :**

The chairman made specific remarks on the following issues:

- Point 3: The periodical report will be renewed after every meeting of the Group.
- Point 5: In the technical document "Guidelines for Quality Assurance on DHI analyses" – Annex II, the listing of instruments will be updated.
- Point 6: In the list of routine methods, formally approved methods/instruments should be listed separately.
- Point 7: A list of potential centers for evaluation of analyzers will be prepared by the chairman. They will be sent the protocol and feedback on their interest will be requested. Ch. Baumgartner advises for the addition of a disclaimer.

The members agreed with these observations and plans for further action by the chairman.

#### **4. Current activities :**

##### **4.1 Approval of the report of the last meeting :**

Some corrections have been proposed by Chr. Baumgartner and Harrie van den Bijgaart concerning mainly editorial mistakes. The report was approved.

##### **4.2 Progress in current works:**

###### **a) – Implementation of the protocol for the evaluation of milk analyzers :**

The chairman contacted Secretary General of ICAR, Andrea Rosati, about the group will for a next implementation of the approval system for milk analysers and the need for the endorsement of ICAR Board to do so.

He was invited to present the issue to the Board at the closure of ICAR sessions (Thursday 3 June) where the decision will be taken officially. (*note: ICAR Board decided accordingly*).

Ugo Paggi asked if those instruments used for milk recording not nominated according to the protocol could be accepted to be in operation. As these analyzers have been subject to, generally more fold, national evaluations, they can be kept in use as indicated before. The new ICAR protocol concerns new analyzers and is aiming at harmonizing evaluation protocols and reduce duplication of work.

###### **b) - ICAR reference laboratories network :**

###### **➤ ICAR INDRL meeting 2004: Evaluation/conclusion and prospect for 2006 :**

In considering the morning session the presentation of the Reference Laboratories performance as presented by O. Leray was specifically acknowledged. Chr. Baumgartner suggested to monitor the further development in the results in order if there is progress.

A broad discussion followed concerning the laboratories performance, where it was shown there were significant proportions of outliers. G. Psathas proposed a training program to be organized. The other members suggested the circulation of a questionnaire where the existing situation will be stated, asking them if they are willing to participate a training program. It was mentioned that prior we need a communication with an expert laboratory to undertake this job.

Ugo Paggi mentioned the difficulties for a center to organize a training program if we take into account that in the standard methods we might have different versions of application that the labs might implement. He proposed the organization of a workshop instead of a training program. It was unanimously accepted.

Candidate centers for this workshop were listed including Steins labs/Denmark, Cecalait/France, Muva/Germany, COKZ&MCS/Nederland and A.I.A./Italy.

The workshop will be addressed to analytical persons.

H. van den Bijgaart analyzed the process to reach to a target date. Chr. Baumgartner proposed that a list of specific tasks should be done in order to reach to this workshop (contacts with laboratories, reaction of ICAR, choosing organizer etc). This target date could be reached by next spring.

A discussion was followed about the strategy of IDF and the possibility to include this workshop in the activities of IDF.

###### **➤ International PTs: Functioning; technical aspects :**

The interest was focused on sheep and goat milk PTs. Ugo Paggi and O. Leray will take action on inviting more laboratories to participate. The A.I.A. can combine the PTs of payment labs with milk recording labs but it should separate calculation statistics for each purpose.

###### **➤ Linkage with IDF INDRL :**

The linkage between IDF and ICAR WG MTL is well established with regard to standardization aspects. O. Leray mentions it is to be thought today how IDF ref lab network and ICAR ref lab network can co-operate in harmonisation. O. Leray refers to workshops formerly foreseen and establishing consensual values for RMs. It appears the organisations listed for workshops on analytical methods can constitute a specific information/teaching group within IDF INDRL which fits well to a theoretical structuring already described in IDF network project. He invites the group members to involve in the IDF network issue.

### **c) IDF standardization of milk analysis: F, P, L, Urea, SCC, for cow, sheep, and goat milk:**

- **Sheep, goat and buffalo milk :** G. Psathas and Ugo Paggi made a briefing on the proposals of reforming existing standards in IDF on Fat, Protein and Freezing Point for sheep and goat milk. On fat was mentioned that a new collaborative study (CS) will be conducted for cow's milk since the existing precision figures appeared to be invalid. Concerning the results of the CSs for sheep and goat milk, the decision taken in the respective JAT of IDF was to contact three research institutes specialized in fat extraction in order to study further the matrix of sheep and goat milk. On protein, the decision was to rescrutinize the labs and their results and according to the outcome in September decision to be taken by the respective JAT. On freezing point the CSs were successful and the results will be included in the existing standard, wherafter final approval will be sought.
- **Cow milk :** O. Leray referred to lactose by mentioning the progress made on two methods in the respective JAT, HPLC (reference method) and pH differential.
- Special remark was also made on the SCC reference routine and methods, for which revision of the concerned standard is underway in JAT Automated Methods. Ugo Paggi referred to the problems of counting in sheep and goat milk and especially with buffalo milk.

### **4.3 New work items: Inventory of RMs available for milk recording purposes and list of suppliers**

Chr. Baumgartner announced the creation of the new AFEMA website ([www.afema-ev.de](http://www.afema-ev.de)), which is expected to be ready by mid June 2004. There information can be found on RMs and- /or PTs programs.

O. Leray informs the group about a European programme for the setting up of a searchable data base for reference materials on the internet ([www.virm.net](http://www.virm.net)) in the same spirit of the internet data base for proficiency schemes ([www.eptis.bam.de](http://www.eptis.bam.de)). Those data bases are devoted to all the sectors of activities. The new data base can be filled by RMs suppliers of every partner countries of the programme. There is a representative indicated for every country on the web site that can be contacted.

The group will keep its attention on this issue and strive to favor the use of those internet data bases.

### **5. Other items:**

#### **a) Harmonization of sampling vials and containers in connection with SC Meters and Jars :**

It was announced that ICAR has linked the WG results with milking robots since they need guidelines for sampling strategy, milk volume, vials and containers to be used. The subject is to be presented in Session 5. It is aimed to have recommendations by May next year.

#### **b) Milk recording analysis in farm: Situation in 2004 – prospect :**

The discussion was turned around the presentation of Tove Asmussen with subject "Analysis in the farm". It was decided the discussions to be continued in next meeting, since the issue is crucial, especially concerning accuracy of analysis.

#### **c) The name of the Group :**

By broadening of the scope to the developments of milk analysis in the farm therefore not only dealing any longer with lab issues, the name of the group may indicate a too small field of activities today. H. Van den Bijgaart suggested it could be replaced by "Working Group on Milk Testing Methodologies".. It is left to further consideration by the group.

### **6. Next meeting**

George Psathas invited the rest of the members to have their next meeting in Cyprus. He suggested a small schedule on 4<sup>th</sup> up to 7<sup>th</sup> of November of this year (arrivals, meeting, touring and departure).

The invitation was welcomed by all. The dates were also accepted, but will be subject to scrutinization by all.

### **Closure of the meeting**

The meeting was closed at 17:30 hours