



6. Milk Analysis Workshop 1 Securing Value from Milk Analysis

Title presentation

Implementation of the new certified reference material for somatic cell counting in milk

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Abstract

This study is sought to provide an overview on the implementation of the new certified reference material for somatic cell counting in milk, which was launched in 2020.

Milk somatic cell count (SCC) is a widely used indicator for monitoring the udder health of several mammalian species and is relevant in food quality regulations, milk payment testing, farm management and breeding programmes. Joint efforts of International Dairy Federation (IDF), the International Committee for Animal Recording (ICAR) and EC JRC resulted in the development and release of a new certified reference material. The availability of this new material allows better global equivalence in somatic cell counting in milk, which is a challenge today.

The newly available reference material has been tested in numerous countries around the globe. In some cases, an adjustment/re-anchoring of current SCC level would not be necessary, whereas it would be in others. Examples for both scenarios including evaluation of the impact of the transition on the results will be demonstrated. Suggestions for handling of possible transition issues in case of re-anchoring the current SCC level will be discussed. Further details and examples will be given on other possible applications of the certified reference material such as verification/adjustment of calibration settings of routine methods, assigning reference values to secondary reference materials, and usage in proficiency tests.

In conclusion, seeking global equivalence in somatic cell counting first countries already re-anchored their SCC level with more countries/laboratories to follow. These real-life examples are highly valuable to further promote the usage of the new reference material and help to establish procedures for its application.