

ICAR/IDF project “Reference System for Somatic Cell Counting” - On the Road to Better Global Equivalence -

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Abstract

The determination of somatic cell in milk is a relevant parameter in farm management and breeding program, in food legislation and in payment of ex-farm milk as well. Due to its importance to guarantee the correct decisions and fair trading the analytical data have to be traceable and equivalent.

Reference System for Somatic Cell Counting (RSSCC) is a ICAR/IDF joint project started in 2009 to collect information and to describe the analytical determination of somatic cell counting in the different continents. It is clear that the individual animals and in herd bulk milk samples are nowadays merely executed with high-capacity flow cytometers instruments. The reference materials used are different in range, matrix and characterization as proficiency testing schemes proposed to accreditate this method.

The heterogeneity of this scenario is because the reference method is not widely applied and shows a poor precision. To overcome this problem it is necessary to organize an operating neutral international organization with the function to coordinate the characterization of reference materials, to promote the communication between the stakeholders involved in the dairy sector.

The RSSCC project, can provide several information useful to organize such architecture, it proposes modern statistical approaches beside the traditional calibration schemes with the aim to facilitate the standardization and to create a better safeguarded equivalence in somatic cell counting world-wide.

Keywords: somatic cell counting, quality assurance, traceability, reference system