

## **Abstract by Silvia Orlandini - International Survey on the Situation of Lab Networks Regarding Somatic Cell Counting: Organization and Practices**

The parameter of somatic cell count in milk (SCC) is one of the most important indicators for udder health of cows and therefore for milk quality. More than 500 million analyses are estimated to be performed each year worldwide. Due to the great importance of this parameter the ICAR/IDF project on "Reference System for Somatic Cell Counting" ("RefSysSCC") has the aim to enhance and secure analytical equivalence on a global scale.

The project group "RefSysSCC" agreed from the beginning to develop the project in a way as to start from the present analytical situation and to consider all the various analytical solutions adopted for anchoring somatic cell counting in the different countries. To gather these practice information two international surveys were dispatched:

- a first questionnaire was outlined for reference material producers,
- while the second was addressed to the routine laboratories.

14 different reference material providers sent information to the project group on the nature, range and shelf life of their products and 215 routine laboratories from 36 countries of all five continents described the use of reference materials and calibration procedures used to check the automated analytical systems.

After analyzing the large number of answers received, interesting interlinks between different systems and countries could be shown. ICAR Reference Laboratory Network appears to have a strategic role there. Based on this information the project group would like to propose an international analytical architecture, where these connections will be harmonized and used to build up a system for securing traceability in the measurements and to obtain better analytical equivalence worldwide together with all participating stakeholders.