

**Proficiency Testing Program Committee Report**  
2022 AAFCO Midyear Meeting (Hybrid)  
Mobile, AL  
Tuesday, January 18, 2022, 1:15 PM to 4:45 PM CST

**Committee Recommendations**

None

**Board Recommendations**

None

**Association Actions**

None

**Committee Participants**

**Members Present (Voting):**

Brenda Snodgrass – PT Program (Program Manager), Life Member (OK); Heidi Phillips – PT Program (QA Manager); Sally Flowers – (Chair) – KS; Teresa Rygiel – (Vice Chair) – FL; Kristi McCallum – CO; Ametra Berry – GA; Michelle Swarbrick – MN; Tai Ha – NE; Quintin Muenks – MO; Patty Lucas – FL; Sharon Webb – KY; Deepika Curole – LA; Tom Phillips – MD (Ingredients Definitions Committee Liaison); Josh Arbaugh – WV (Board of Directors Liaison); Gale Swinford – FDA (Primary), Janna Hutchinson – FDA (Alternate), Sue Humphries- FDA (Alternate)

**Advisors Present:**

Bob Kieffer – PT Program, Able Laboratories; Mo Kieffer – PT Program, Able Laboratories; Andy Crawford – PT Program, Crawford Consulting Services; Lars Reimann – AFIA (Primary); Ken Riter – PFI (Primary)

**Committee Report**

**Committee Activities**

See Action Item Table

**Sub-Committee Activities**

None

**Committee Minutes**

- 1) Welcome and Agenda Review
  - a. No vote was taken to approve agenda due to hybrid meeting format.
  
- 2) Program Leadership and Administrative Update
  - a) Committee Chair - Brenda introduced new committee chair, Sally Flowers.
  - b) Vice Chair(s) -Teresa Rygiel is our new Vice Chair
  - c) Note Taker -Teresa took notes and took the member roster from Zoom. Kristi took notes in Mobile.
  - d) QA Manager – The committee welcomed Heidi Phillips as the new PTP QA Manager. She joined AAFCO in late December 2021. She is an assessor with A2LA and also does ISO trainings. She was formerly the QA Manager of the Colorado Department of Agriculture. Though Louise Ogden retired from AAFCO in December 2021, she is working with Heidi to transfer QA duties during January 2022.
  - e) ANAB Assessment - ANAB assessment was in December 2021. It was a desk audit and not onsite. There were no findings from the audit! The next one will be on-site this December.
  
- 3) Scheme Discussion – A. Crawford and B. Snodgrass
  - a) 2021 Program Participation Report

Andy gave a presentation. Refer to presentation for details. Animal Feed Scheme had more samples than previous years with canned and dry pet food. 252 labs submitted data for this scheme.

    - Pet Food Ingredient Scheme
      - Participation has grown.

- 75 labs submitted data for this scheme.
  - More labs are purchasing samples.
  - Analytes
    - Most labs participate in protein followed by ash.
    - Calcium, phosphorus, copper, magnesium, manganese and zinc have the most participation.
    - Vitamin A and E have the most participants.
    - Around 50 labs participate in amino acids with Methionine, Lysine and Taurine being most popular.
    - Numbers of participants in vet drugs are down.
    - Fatty acid participation and interest is low.
    - Mineral scheme has 42 labs participating with the most interest on arsenic, copper, cadmium, lead, chromium.
    - Committee needs to discuss putting heavy metal results in minerals scheme instead of animal feed scheme.
    - 77 labs participate in mycotoxin scheme.
  - Z-score indications
    - There are very low warning and action percentages across schemes. Compliance for all schemes is 82% or above. Minerals is the lowest at 82.3% but Z-score is analyzed differently; other schemes are 90% or above. Andy discussed the best way to calculate the true Z-score.
    - Josh Arbaugh asked if there were “problem” minerals and Andy noted that mercury seemed troublesome to labs. Aluminum (Al) and Boron (B) were also troublesome with lower Z-scores and wide dispersion which could be methodology or difficulty in performing method. Tom Phillips asked if committee has looked at prep vs. instrument issues between the labs. Michele Swarbrick added that B is extremely sticky, Al is everywhere in our labs and presents a contamination issue. Mercury is sticky and volatile, too. Sharon reported that B is very sticky and therefore use of proper glassware is crucial. Acid wash also helps remove background. She also reported that a study was done in fertilizers to show the issues with digestion of boron.
  - Monthly scheme comprises 13 samples. Quarterly is 12 samples across the year.
    - Most labs do 13 samples per year (mode); Max was 26 samples; median was 11.
    - 273 labs submitted 38,806 duplicate analyses.
    - 273 labs submitted data for 2,803 samples.
    - There are 1251 individual method analyses in PTP.
  - Andy - COVID had very little impact on the PTP overall.
  - Josh - Have you noticed a trend over time in the reporting of some analytes, either increases or decreases?
  - Andy - Fewer veterinary drug results were reported in 2021 than in 2020.
  - Sharon - Is no one using the new metals speciation method codes?
  - Brenda – Participation is low because labs aren’t doing the methods
  - Melanie Titley from CFIA mentioned interest in a fish feed PT for arsenic speciation as this is being rolled out in Canada.
- b) 2021 Demographics Report
- a. Andy gave this presentation. Refer to his presentation for details.
    - 447 individual mailings were sent out (not sure if these are individual labs). Some labs get more than one sample.
    - About 4,000 samples shipped in 2021, which does not account for indirect mailings.
    - Sample breakdown by geographical region: 2,015 North America, 26 Central America, 65 South America, 65 Africa, 260 Europe, 650 Asia and 52 Australia
    - Thirty-one countries participated. Program no longer send samples to China. Since 2021, every shipment to China has to be logged with Homeland Security.
- c) 2022 Subscription Status
- a. Brenda gave a presentation. Refer to her presentation for details.

- i. Brenda – The committee needs to discuss before the 2022 annual meeting the need to move toxic metals (not the nutritional metals) out of the animal scheme and moving them to the mineral scheme.
  - b. Questions/Comments
    - i. Sharon suggests reaching out to labs completing heavy metals in the animal scheme to let them know of the move of elements to the minerals scheme. Also, these labs would have to subscribe to the mineral scheme to continue heavy metals PTs. Affected labs could be emailed of the change, once effective, rather than all PT participants.
    - ii. New AAFCO logo -Brenda has asked for a copy of the logo so Andy can add it to the PT reports.  
Note: Andy has the new logo and will start including it on 2022 Final Reports.
- d) Customer Feedback
  - a. From the survey, Nicarbazin & Urea were being requested by customers
    - i. Nicarbazin will not be added because it cannot be found in the marketplace. Also, there does not seem to be enough labs interested to warrant adding it.
    - ii. Urea was added in 2021 but only three labs reported data. The results were so wide that statistical analysis was difficult. NPN was reported by seven labs with a very wide range of results
    - iii. Sharon: Can we have the mineral scheme twice a year instead of once? Also, she is interested in seeing formulated levels for Monensin, Lasalocid, and CTC at formulated levels twice per year for accreditation needs. CTC could be by itself while lasalocid and monensin can be together.
    - iv. Brenda noted that the vet drugs continue to be very difficult to acquire. VFD drugs are shifting to water-based drugs rather than being mixed in feeds. PTP is going directly to medicated feed mills to purchase PT sample inputs. If State Program managers know of where PTP can acquire these products, Brenda would like to know.
    - v. Tom Phillips will talk to Elanco to see what product they have (CTC, other vet drug feeds). He tried to reach out to Southern States Farmers Coop about CTC but wasn't successful. The minimum order is along the lines of half-tons or semi loads rather than purchasing by the bag.
    - vi. Rebecca Moseley would also like to see more Monensin samples in the PT program.
    - vii. Brenda: Some labs want to participate in selected individual PT rounds rather than sign up for the entire year. Historically, this was a logistical nightmare for sales, invoicing, payments, and shipping. PTP is not likely to provide partial scheme subscriptions because of lack of resources to manage it.
    - viii. Melanie Titley: Is it possible to get a schedule of what is coming so we know which vet drugs would be included? It will help labs decide if they want to participate.
    - ix. Brenda: PTP has not been able to produce a schedule of upcoming PT samples due to fluidity in the market availability of input materials. Because of this ongoing procurement issue, it is very difficult to provide a prescribed PT schedule ahead of time. There is a list available of feeds that have been used before on the PTP website. Shipping issues also continue to make it difficult to fulfill this request for publishing a schedule.
    - x. Alexis Huyghues-Despointes (JM Smucker): What was the issue with canned pet food PT?
    - xi. Brenda: By the time we collected materials, prepared the canned samples and were ready to distribute, the number of labs that wanted to participate went way down. Thanks again to JM Smucker R&D for assistance with this canned pet food PT. Canned pet food can only be shipped in the US and is very expensive to put together.
    - xii. Sharon praised the PT program management team for continuing to provide service to participants throughout the pandemic.

#### 4) Lab and Enforcement Issues Committee AV Workgroups Update

- a. Brenda: Analytical Variances are of great interest. A joint workgroup was formed with lab & Enforcement members. That work is ongoing. There has been a kickoff call.
- b. Brenda: A change was made to example AV calculation in the OP, 2022 (page 305). The change was to replace the guarantee value (based on AAFCO historical check sample data) with the lab result value.
- c. Mary and Sharon asked if this change in the OP was voted on. It was not.
- d. A lot of discussion on this topic.
  - i. Kristi: Labs should not be calculating the analytical variation and deciding what is passing or failing for all of AAFCO.
  - ii. Josh: This is why we are bringing in the regulators to find a way to find something they can use that is helpful and isn't contradictory to what we do in the lab. Many states use the AV in the OP which is not what we want.
  - iii. Brenda: AAFCO wants industry to understand and is trying to get the labs, the regulators and industry on the same page.
  - iv. Ken Riter (Nestle Purina): Expressed concerns about changes in interpretation of AV and its use along with industry participation in the workgroup.
  - v. Lars Reimann (Eurofins): We started a workgroup like this before which included industry.
  - vi. Brenda: Right now the recommendation is labs report uncertainty but leave the decision to regulators. Lars' concern is about including industry at some point in the discussion on AV.
  - vii. Brenda shared the AAFCO Analytical Variations (AV) definition from the 2021 OP and recommends everyone read the Good Samples and Good Test Portions documents.

Post hoc note: The changes to the AV Table in the OP were rescinded after the PTP Committee meeting. Members were notified via email.

- e. Future Committee Action
  - i. Mycotoxin PT price will need to go up due to increasing material and shipping costs. Increasing the price of this scheme will require a committee vote. Brenda can update Finance Committee.
  - ii. The committee needs to discuss taking toxic metals (not the nutritional metals) out of the animal scheme and moving them to the mineral scheme. Affected labs will be notified once the change is official.

## 5) Other Business

- a. Status updates on Sampling Study: Inspection & Sampling Committee is to provide an update during the Midyear meeting.
- b. Questions/Comments
  - i. Ken - Will the field sampling study design be shared? Sharon gave a brief description.
  - ii. Matt Nichols (Neogen) asked about availability of Hemp PT providers. Committee members mentioned University of Kentucky and along with other hemp PT providers.
  - iii. Brenda met with Frank Sikora to discuss how the Magruder program can approach FASS for assistance with shipping and other management/administrative needs.
  - iv. Kristi recommends Sally send a message out to the AgLabs listserv or another group to ask for another volunteer for a second Vice Chair of this PTP committee.
  - v. Brenda elaborated on Heidi's QA Manager role, which includes internal audits, document control, review of reports, and management of the accreditation process. Brenda will continue to be the PTP Program Manager. Again, committee chair duties have moved from Brenda to Sally and Teresa as new chairpersons.
  - vi. Quintin Muenks: Can we consider doing a freeze-dried product (e.g., raw pet food product)? Brenda will investigate it.

## 6) Adjournment

- a. Vote to Adjourn the meeting - 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> - Josh/ Sharon, ayes - all

**Action Item Table**

Responsible	Item	Action	Timing/Status
Program Manager & AV Workgroup Volunteers	Analytical Variations from Official Publication	Internal Report on AV misuse, obsolescence, and proposed replacement/guidance.	2022 Annual Meeting
Program Manager & Joint EIC-PTP Working Group	Analytical Variations from Official Publication	Awaiting Board Charge	Pending