

## ***NIRS Forage and Feed Testing Consortium***

**“Dedicated to increasing the accuracy and knowledge of NIRS testing.”**

# **NIRS Consortium Membership NEWS**

March/ April/ May, 2002

## **2002 Annual Conference Recap**

With the 2002 Annual Conference 3 months behind us, a recap of projects that we agreed to work on as a group includes:

1. Continue updates to 105° C DM equation
2. Updates of Consortium hay equation will proceed after differences between lab performance is resolved
3. A sample handling ring test to determine effect of variation in sample handling between labs
4. Update of wet chemistry dNDF for legume/grass hays and haylages for microwave dried samples
5. Release of corn silage dNDF equation

As projects progress, Consortium members will be contacted for participation. Thanks to everyone's input at the Annual Conference this year!

## **Coors/Lauer Unfermented Corn Silage Equation**

The Consortium is working to get an equation developed by Jim Coors and Joe Lauer from the University of Wisconsin available to Consortium members. At this time, licensing with WARF is being pursued. This equation is a quality assessment for unfermented corn silage and includes predictions for DM, CP, ADF, NDF, NDFD, and Starch.

## **Updated Membership List**

Please see the updated [member list](#) below for information on contacting other Consortium members. A document with full listings of members, Consortium board, and members' websites is attached separately with this newsletter. Let us know if there are any further updates.

## **Sample Handling/Grinding Survey**

We conducted a survey of Consortium labs to collect information on sample handling and grinding before NIR scanning. The following [table](#) summarizes the similarities and differences in method between our labs. The next step will be to conduct a sample exchange or sample evaluation to compare the effect of variation in sample handling between labs.

During summer of 2000 the Consortium conducted a particle size evaluation with the alfalfa breeders. The results of this test showed that by standardizing sample handling and preparation, the alfalfa breeders were able to improve repeatability within their own lab and were better able to detect smaller differences between samples.

## Summary of Sample Handling Survey

Number of labs in survey: 11

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Labs reporting method of drying used:

Oven alone:	4
Microwave alone:	4
Mic. & Oven:	3

Range in residual moisture:	2 to 12%
Range in time before scanning:	0.5 to 24 hr

Labs reporting method of sample splitting used:

Mix then manual:	4
Mix then quarter or slice:	4
None/ whole sample dried	1

Labs reporting method of splitting the dry subsample:

All subsample ground	5
Mechanical separator:	2
Manual:	3

Labs reporting grinder type:

Cyclone-type (primary )	6
Other (primary)	1
Wiley or other followed by cyclone	4

Range in screen change schedule:	½ to 5 mos.
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Range in blade sharpening schedule:	1 to 5 mos.
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## Welcome to New Consortium Instrument Specialist

Since our annual conference when most of us met Susan Selman, our new instrument specialist, and many members have had the opportunity to work with her or ask her questions. Here's what Susan would like to share with you about herself:

"I grew up on a small farm in eastern South Dakota. I earned a BS in Horticulture and Biology at South Dakota State University. Then I went to work in Kansas as a Nursery Manager in Salina before moving to Manhattan to work as an agricultural chemist. After this, I went back to South Dakota State to pursue a Masters in Agronomy while working full time in the Plant Science Department with Forages and Grasses. My masters thesis contained work

using a hand held FieldSpec-FR for a non-destructive method of quick analysis. This included collecting spectra from the hand held instrument and converting those spectra to NIRS compatible spectra. Equations were developed for nondestructive intact plants, dried whole plants and dried ground plants. After receiving my Masters, I took a job with W-L Research in Evansville, WI. I was the forage lab manager until January 2002, when the parent company closed the location. I have worked with NIRS for about 10 years at SDSU and W-L Research.

I have a wonderful husband and two daughters and reside in Evansville, WI.

I play woman and coed softball during the summer."

For further information on any of these topics, please contact Patty Laskowski.

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