

NIRS Forage and Feed Testing Consortium

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

NIRS Consortium Membership NEWS

August, 2000

Instrument Standardization

Instrument Standardization is in progress. At the Annual Meeting in April, the Consortium agreed to begin instrument standardization with the alfalfa breeders and evaluate the use of 2 separate standardization sets, used in tandem. Paolo has visited all of the alfalfa breeders and all instruments have been standardized to the Master Instrument in Madison.

Please see the attached document, *First Evaluation of the Instrument Standardization Procedure* for details of Paolo's assessment of instrument standardization using 2 standardization sets.

This 2-set method is being extended to the remaining consortium members. Routing of the 2 standardization sets is beginning. The standardization sets may be delivered by a visit from Paolo, they may be hand routed by other Consortium members, or they may be delivered by shipment.

Check Cell Replacement

Paolo has ordered and shipped new ISI soybean check cells to the alfalfa breeders. When these check cells arrive to each alfalfa breeder, each will send in their old check cell to Paolo. Paolo will repack this old cell with a new forage check sample and return it to each lab.

New check cells for Commercial labs will be ordered and distributed as labs get standardized. Commercial labs will also send

their old check cell to Paolo, who will repack it with a forage check sample. In this way, each

lab will have an ISI check cell as well as a Consortium Network forage cell.

All labs will be charged \$200 from the Consortium for the new check cells.

Instrument Monitoring/ Diagnostics

At this time we have established an email reporting system for instrument diagnostics and check cell results. Each lab will be contacted weekly and asked to reply to Patty Laskowski, filling in results directly in the email message. Paolo will respond to each lab with his evaluation. So far we are having good response with this reporting system. However we need 100% participation to be able to accumulate a database of member instrument performance. With the database, we will be able to build the web-based reporting system.

RUP Projects

The Alfalfa Breeders fresh cut RUP calibration is underway. Samples have been selected and sent to the UW Soil and Forage Lab for in situ assay. Currently the in situ step is complete and samples are being prepared for NIR analysis. The amount of protein before and after rumen digestion will be measured and applied to an NIR calibration. The result will be an equation that will predict RUP from fresh clipped and dried alfalfa samples.

The Consortium is also participating in a second RUP project: hay and haylage RUP

updates. Sample selection for updates of the hay and haylage RUP equations is currently taking place as labs that run RUP collect the appropriate samples.

Hay RUP, Digestibility, Energy Package Release

The hay and haylage RUP equations developed by Pat Hoffman, along with ruminal degraded NDF (allowing for TDN predictions) developed by Dave Combs, and calculations of NEL at 4X maintenance will be offered as a package. This package will be offered via license through WARF, with the current haylage RUP license, at no additional charges for at least one year. The release date will be September 15, 2000. For further information on how to get this package, please contact Patty Laskowski. We will have specifics after September 15.

NIRS White Paper

The white paper brainstorm that consortium members and nutritionists developed in April, 2000 was reviewed by the NIRS Consortium Nutrition Advisory Committee, in conjunction with the ADSA meeting in Baltimore, MD (July, 2000). The committee recommended that the paper take the focus of instrument calibrations and future offerings that are possible with NIRS, especially within the Consortium. With this will also be a report of how the Consortium and its members are performing and what new innovations have been developed.

NIRS Consortium Projects

From one consortium annual meeting to the next, much activity takes place. Since Paolo Berzaghi's arrival, activity has taken off at a great pace. To keep members informed of progress of projects, a project list has been developed that itemizes what Paolo and the Consortium are currently working on, and what is expected to be accomplished by our next annual meeting. Please review carefully the attached document entitled *NIRS Consortium*

Project List. Your lab may have questions about new calibrations or the status of a project. This list of projects lets members know what is in progress and what is already available to you. Please contact Paolo or Patty if you have any questions about projects.

NIRS Consortium Homepage Website

We are currently developing a website/homepage so that members will have access to news and information. The purpose of the website is also to provide information to interested parties who are not members. **We would like to include links to each member's own website. Please provide this information to Patty as soon as possible.**

Report of NIRS Consortium Nutrition Advisory Committee

Please see the attached document *Minutes of NIRS Consortium Nutrition Advisory Committee* describing discussions of the NIRS Consortium Nutrition Advisory Committee. While at the ADSA Annual Meeting held in Baltimore, MD on July 27, 2000, this committee met to discuss various topics related to Consortium activities.

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

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