

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

January 2007

**Dedicated to Increasing the Accuracy and Knowledge of NIRS Testing.**



<http://www.uwex.edu/ces/forage/NIRS/home-page.htm>

## **Looking Back at the 2006 NIRSC Annual Conference**

Looking back at the February 2006 annual conference, let's summarize the goals and outcomes of that conference. First, we wanted to have the opportunity to connect with the Southwest Nutrition Conference as well as integrate some of the southwestern perspective into our agenda. Second, members wanted a warmer location that would make it easier for some of our western members to attend.

Our average attendance in Madison from 2003-2005 was 52. In Phoenix in 2006,

our attendance was a little bit down, with 44 people attending. However, we had 4 western members attend that are not able to attend every year in Madison, 6 western members say that the location was easier to get to than Madison, and 2 western non-members attend that would not have attended in Madison. On our agenda, we were able to include the Southwest's highlights and discuss nutrition and management from that perspective.

Overall, from evaluation



forms that attendees filled out, the location was a good break from the Midwest. The majority of attendees commenting about the location said that 2 of 3 years should be a Midwest location and the 3<sup>rd</sup> year a warmer location possibly coordinated with one of our members.

The agenda was well received and good feedback was given with suggestions that NIRSC is headed in the right direction.

## **Looking Ahead to the 2007 NIRSC Annual Conference**

This year we have received comments and inquiries from quite a few of our members. Our members want to know about new research and analyses that affect the whole forage and feed industry, including

their testing laboratories.

Fiber digestion is still a big topic and we will discuss what research is going on as well as any advances. With the rolling out of Milk2006\*, a whole new set of options

exist for input that in turn affect lab analysis and the need for rapid NIR testing. Starch is big on the scene as the demand for this parameter expands.

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Another big topic is NIRSC instrumentation. Our members want to learn all they can about various platforms on which NIRSC calibrations could be placed. We look forward to good discussion from our guest speaker on this topic as well as instrument manufacturers and attendees.

We will also be hearing the progress of our committees. We formed several new committees in 2005 to research and address several issues that were affecting the NIRSC. In 2006 we either continued or reshaped them to meet the sustained needs of our members.

This year we will hear about achievement from the Quality Assurance Committee in preparation of a document on guidelines for sample handling in the NIR lab.

Our Intellectual Property Committee has also established several standards that were approved by the Board, implemented into the NIRSC Bylaws, and are being put into practice now.

The Membership Committee will outline the 5 membership categories approved by the Board of Directors.

The committee with the longest list of tasks or inquiries is the Calibration & Standardization Committee.

This group has worked on putting into service a starch equation for fermented corn silage. You will hear about the status of that effort. The group has also addressed the development of a sugar equation, primarily for grasses, but other products are candidates as well.

We will also hear about revisions and the final NIRSC White Paper as well as plans for publication.

Finally, we will hear about the financial status and plans for the NIRSC.

We look forward to discussing all of this committee work as we work together to advance the NIRSC mission.

\*see <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/crops/uwforage/uwforage.htm> for more information

## 2006-2007 Board & Officers

The Officers and Board of Directors for the NIRSC 2006-2007 fiscal year are:

<u><i>President</i></u> David Johnson Cal/West Seeds	<u><i>Vice President</i></u> Chuck Kahl Mycogen Seeds/Dow AgroSciences	<u><i>Treasurer</i></u> Jesse Sanders Dairy Tech Labs
Sam Stratton FFR Cooperative	Seth Willis Weld Laboratories, Inc.	Kelli Conway Servi-Tech Laboratories
Jerry Dekan Dairyland Laboratories, Inc.	Paul Peterson Univ. of Minnesota- Agronomy & Plant Genetics	Paul Vendrell Univ. of Georgia- Feed & Environmental Water Lab
David Hannaway Oregon State University- Dept. of Crop & Soil Science	Lauren Johnson Cal/West Seeds	Neal Martin ( <i>Ex Officio</i> ) US Dairy Forage Research Center
Dan Undersander ( <i>Ex Officio</i> ) UW Agronomy		

## A Note from Our Outgoing President

Thank-you for the opportunity to serve you in the many capacities I have had since 1993. The tour of duty has been fruitful, educational and enjoyable. The Consortium has changed a great deal since that day in 1993, when in Kansas City, I met you and what was soon to become a corporation and move from Minnesota to Wisconsin.

Best of luck to the new Board as we move forward into the next years of progress,  
Donald Sapienza

## Board Decisions on NIRSC Intellectual Property



The NIRSC Board has approved the following language and plans of implementation for member & NIRSC intellectual property.

1. "AGGREGATE SPECTRA, CHEMISTRY, AND SAMPLES" are the spectra, chemistry, and samples pooled by NIRSC submitted from NIRSC members and/or collaborators or any form there of.

Please note member submitted spectra is not donated to or owned by the NIRSC. It was agreed by the Board that it is aggregate material and that NIRSC controls the use of aggregate material. Members do not donate or transfer ownership of their spectra. Safeguards for this material is outlined in the NIRSC revised bylaws (see the NIRSC website to review).

2. The Board has approved the following definition of an NIRSC Equation:

An NIRSC equation is defined as- an NIRS equation (calibration) derived from NIRSC aggregate spectra and chemical data submitted to the NIRSC. The equation (calibration) cannot be biased or modified in any way.

3. The Board approved 2 logo concepts that would both represent support for the forage/feed and agriculture industry, but differentiate level of NIRSC participation.

The first logo represents that an entity is a participating NIRSC member. Under the logo is stated, "Working for better forage analysis."

The second logo represents that an entity uses NIRSC equations. Under the logo is stated, "Proudly using NIRSC equations." With this option, the member's analysis or results sheet would need to

footnote which equations are being used and sign an agreement to this effect. "Using" NIRSC equations means doing work for a 2<sup>nd</sup> party or doing some kind of reporting for a 2<sup>nd</sup> party.

Footnoting method is flexible as long as members report on which NIRSC equations are being used.

4. NIRSC will charge 20% of each for-fee package to members that miss a sign up, do not receive the equation update, but then request the next update.

5. The Board approved that all NIRSC calibrations expire 1 year from the time of member receipt. A statement of this policy and a signature line on the annual equation sign up sheet will document this.

## NIRSC Personnel Update

The NIRSC Board is working on some innovative ways to fill our staffing needs so that NIRSC continues to do high quality work for our members. NIRSC will continue to rely on Paolo Berzagli and Patty Laskowski for technical and business tasks respectively. The Board is currently looking at other types of staffing such as consulting, student help, and professional services to help us fulfill all of the tasks that are required to keep us going. We will keep members posted.

## Describing NIRSC Equation Samples

In an effort to better describe our equations we will be requesting additional information from members submitting samples that have been selected for equation updates. This will form part of an effort to catalog our equations more effectively so that we can address questions from current and prospective members regarding the origins of our calibrations.

The diversity of sample sources is one of the great strengths of our organization, and an important reason why all members are encouraged to submit spectra for equation updates.

With this in mind, please provide the following information for equation update samples:

1. The state of origin
2. Was the crop drought-stressed? on a scale of 0-9, with 0=no to 9=severe drought
3. Description of the variety or type of the sample, e.g. variety name or number, warm season, high oil, BMR corn, etc.

These data will be captured in our database when you submit your samples.

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

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