

## **Points arising from the Central Mastitis Review Group Meeting held at VLA Weybridge on 8 November 2007**

### **National milk quality statistics**

The average GB milk quality statistics published on The Milk Development Council website on 31 October 2007 and the Northern Ireland milk quality statistics for January to June 2007 were discussed. The MDC rolling annual average count is still 196,000 cells/ml confirming a plateauing out of national cell count. However, due to retention of cows in herds, national cell count might start to increase in the near future. Increasing replacement costs and less farmer concern about cell count penalties may contribute to an increase in national cell count.

### **Quality assurance of milk somatic cell counting**

Samples for the next International Dairy Federation international ring trial on somatic cell counting will be sent out on 30 November; four GB laboratories will participate in the trial.

Three GB laboratories are now participating in the Ceca-Lait proficiency testing scheme. This proficiency testing includes butterfat and protein as well as somatic cell count.

### **Research**

The multiplexing potential of microarrays to detect major causes of mastitis in a single operation was discussed. This technology may have a number of advantages over traditional culture techniques.

### **Education**

The NMC 47<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting will be held 20-23 January 2008 in New Orleans.

The IDF International Conference on Mastitis Control 2008: From Science to Practice will be held 30 September to 2 October 2008 at The Hague in the Netherlands.

A poster with the title 'Practical Guide to Avoiding Milk Antibiotic Residues' is now being distributed to producers.

### **Other points of interest**

A Daily Mail article on extended-spectrum beta-lactamase (ESBL) - producing *E. coli* was noted. The VLA has been carrying out surveillance for ESBL-producing *E. coli*. Up to the second quarter of 2007, the VLA had identified 32 farms with ESBL-producing *E. coli*. A HPA press statement on infections caused by ESBL-producing *E. coli* and a Defra Q&A on ESBLs in *E. coli* associated with animals are available. The importance of clean milk production, effective pasteurisation and responsible prescribing were noted.

The Food Standards Agency's draft guidance on the testing of milk for antibiotic residues has been circulated for public consultation. Any significant issues raised will be considered by the Antibiotics Expert Group set up by the FSA.

There is a need to consider the mastitis implications of the environmental agenda. It is reported that some environmentalists have suggested that to reduce the environmental impact of dairy farms producers should be aiming for more milk from fewer cows.

### **Date of next meeting**

Wednesday 21 May 2008