

ANNOUNCEMENT

Electronic counting of somatic cells in milk

A recommended procedure for milk sample preparation and cell counting with a Coulter counter

(Received 1 July 1970)

To assist in the quality control of milk supplies and in monitoring the extent of mastitis in dairy herds, a test for the somatic cell content of milk is of considerable value. During the past few years electronic methods of counting somatic cells in milk have received a great deal of attention, but there is an urgent need for the standardization of procedures for milk sample preparation and the performance of the test.

Accordingly, on 10 September 1969, a group of workers in the United Kingdom and an observer from the Republic of Ireland met in Belfast, Northern Ireland, to consider the various techniques available. It was concluded that a technique based on the chemical method of preparing milk samples described by Tolle, Zeidler & Heeschen (1966) and Zeidler, Tolle & Heeschen (1968) was the most suitable at the present time, and a modification of their procedure has been agreed. In reaching this conclusion, the findings in the accompanying paper (Pearson, Wright & Greer, 1970) were taken into account. A leaflet describing the full procedure for determining the somatic cell content of milk has now been prepared and is available on request from any of the following laboratories which, with others, took part in the collaborative study.

Government of Northern Ireland, Ministry of Agriculture, Veterinary Research Laboratories, Stormont, Belfast, Northern Ireland.

National Institute for Research in Dairying, Shinfield, Reading, Berkshire.

Milk Marketing Board of England and Wales, Mastitis Research Unit, School Lane, Bamber Bridge, Preston, Lancashire.

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