Preparing Food and Feed Laboratories for ISO 17025 Accreditation

The Associations Cooperative Agreement with FDA

Specific Aim #6: Provide educational opportunities, resources, tools and mentoring for laboratories seeking to achieve, maintain and enhance the scope of their ISO/IEC 17025:2005 accreditation
Preparing Food and Feed Laboratories for ISO 17025 Accreditation

Through a cooperative agreement with FDA’s Office of Partnerships, APHL, AFDO and AAFCO are preparing food and feed regulatory testing laboratories seeking to achieve, maintain and enhance accreditation to the ISO/IEC 17025:2005 standard. Objectives of the work include:

• developing laboratory training programs around accreditation
• building a mentoring program for laboratories at various stages of accreditation
• reaching national consensus on data acceptance
• enabling direct electronic sharing of analytical data
• improving communication among federal, state, and local testing laboratories and with their associated regulatory and public health programs
• building a framework for unified laboratory response to food/feed safety emergencies
• expanding a proficiency testing program for feed laboratories
• improving the rapid submission of isolates to the public health system
Specific Aim #6: Provide educational opportunities, resources, tools and mentoring for laboratories seeking to achieve, maintain and enhance the scope of their ISO/IEC 17025:2005 accreditation.

Assess laboratory needs, develop course content, and conduct laboratory training using a multitude of in-person and distance learning activities for ISO/IEC 17025:2005 accreditation of food and animal feed regulatory laboratories.

- Guide development and delivery of training and education materials under the direction of the Accreditation Training Steering Committee, led by professional education specialists from APHL, AFDO, AAFCO, IFPTI and FDA.

- Perform a Training Needs Assessment including data collected by the Accreditation Steering Committee on ISO/IEC 17025:2005 training needs specifically in governmental food and feed testing laboratories.

- Assess the current accreditation status of food and feed laboratories to identify topics relevant to the technical and quality needs of laboratory.

- Contribute to a national work plan designed to move all laboratories further along the accreditation continuum, making the best use of available resources.
Member Involvement

• The Accreditation Training Steering Committee is comprised of 28 members from APHL, GFPI, FDA, AAFCO, IFPTI, AFDO and nine State Laboratories.

• Accreditation Training Steering Committee members also comprise four workgroups dedicated to webinar development, TNA analysis, in-person training courses and maintenance of the ISO/IEC available training document.

• Groups meet periodically depending on project scope and member goals.

Accreditation Training Steering Committee Upcoming Activities

• In conjunction with the June 2014 AFDO Educational Conference in Denver, the committee will offer a Quality Manual Workshop.

• The Quality Manual workshop in Denver will be preceded by a pre-workshop webinar on June 12, 2014.

• Additional webinars on topics such as document control and control charting are being developed.

• The subcommittee is designing a toolkit to support laboratories in their mentor/mentee engagement activities.

• Using the Training Needs Assessment that is being developed, the workgroup will outline the education activities calendar for the next two years.
Charges of the Accreditation Training Steering Committee

• Gather data that has been collected by groups such as IFPTI or the PFP on ISO/IEC 17025:2005 training needs specifically in governmental food and feed testing laboratories.

• Perform a Training Needs Assessment if such information is unavailable and based on assessment findings, identify, prioritize and develop a training schedule.

• Identify short, medium and long-term training needs and suggest courses to be developed and delivered under this CAP.

Accomplishments

• Creation of a Web page to support Food and Animal Feed Testing Laboratories seeking Accreditation, including a list of available training for ISO/IEC 17025:2005 accreditation and list of free webinars.

• Development and delivery of two pre-recorded webinars: “ISO/IEC 17025 Road to Accreditation: Where to Start and What to Consider” and “ISO/IEC 17025 Road to Accreditation: The Journey Continues...”

• Development of a document that contains currently available ISO/IEC training offerings from a variety of sources. Available on the Food and Animal Feed Laboratory Accreditation Web page.
Impact

• Improved technical skills applied in the development of plans to achieve ISO/IEC 17025 accreditation.

• Application of training and knowledge to support implementation of quality management systems in the laboratory.

• Laboratories are supported in their accreditation efforts through mentoring and education.

• Development of a network of accredited laboratories to support Food and Feed Laboratories missions.

This project was 100% funded with federal funds from a federal program of $750,000.