

Expert Science Panel

Closed Session Summary

April 11, 2023

The Expert Science Panel (Panel) met from 8:00 AM – 11:00 AM remotely via zoom. The goal of the day was four-fold: (a) Debriefing from the laboratory roundtable workshop, (b) review and develop a recommendation of the draft Workplan for the second intercalibration for presentation at the Stakeholder Committee on Thursday April 13, 2023, (c) review the laboratory training materials, (d) review and make a recommendation on the CASA proposal for additional samples in the second intercalibration.

The panel members discussed the laboratory roundtable workshop held March 23 and 24. Not all panel members attended both workshops. The Panel discussed attendance, laboratory interaction, success of the format, ability to focus on important aspects, and limitations of lab capabilities. Ultimately, the Panel members present agreed the labs generated a list of meaningful techniques to standardize.

The Panel next addressed the proposal for additional samples provided by the California Association of Sanitation Agencies (CASA). The written proposal focused on testing samples with soft water and hard water, varying in hardness from the current intercalibration. The Panel discussed the hypothesis to be tested, the ability of the study design to accommodate intended samples, laboratory feasibility for testing, laboratory capacity, existing data on this topic, amongst other issues. The Panel unanimously voted to not recommend the CASA proposal for the second intercalibration.

The Panel reviewed the draft Workplan/Quality Assurance Plan provided before the meeting, particularly focusing on the list of standardized items. The Panel recommended the adoption of the Workplan with the following modifications:

- A single batch of YCT should be used for an entire test round (i.e., ≤ 7 days after thawing)
- Food should be quantified in the final stock solution, then document volumes delivered to test cups so final food quantities can be calculated
- Organisms should be out of mass culture for at least 2 weeks prior to starting brood boards for testing
- Renewals or test terminations should occur within a 2-hour window (+/- 1 hour from test start time)
- An additional requirement for documenting vendors for reagents and that all reagents should be stored in a desiccator for one week.
- Minor language edits

The Panel also evaluated the schedule describing it as tight, but achievable.

The Panel next discussed the training materials to be used with labs prior to testing to ensure standardization. The training materials reviewed included randomization, brood board health descriptions and codes, split brood guidance, and water treatment checklists. SCCWRP was asked to facilitate the training with Panel members available for advice.