



INTERNATIONAL COTTON ADVISORY COMMITTEE

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Invitation to Participate in CSITC Round Trials

The ICAC Task Force on Commercial Standardization of Instrument Testing of Cotton (CSITC) is conducting the third official CSITC Round Trials in 2009. The round trials consist of quarterly tests. Laboratories that miss an earlier trial can participate in the remaining ones. All cotton fiber testing laboratories capable of measuring cotton samples with rapid testing instruments, often referred to as high volume instruments (HVI), and based on the Universal Calibration Cotton Standards for Micronaire, Upper-half mean length, Length uniformity index, Strength, Rd color, and +b color are encouraged to participate. Participation in a CSITC Round Trial is not limited to test centers using Uster HVI equipment. CSITC evaluations are based on test results and are not dependent on the manufacturer, model or kind of testing instruments used.

Benefits of Participation

Participants will benefit by receiving detailed diagnostic feedback that can be utilized to demonstrate measurement performance to customers and to address measurement related problems. Results will confirm the participant's ability to provide reproducible test measurements that are based on the established international standards. Participation is a recommended practice for fulfilling quality management requirements in laboratories (e.g. ISO 17025).

Round Trial Cost & Sign-Up

Participation in the CSITC Round Trials is being sponsored. Only a nominal fee of US\$400.00 per year for four trials/US\$100 per trial is charged to cover expenses. To enroll in the CSITC Round Trials, please fill out the Word participation form and return it to ICAC as a pdf file if you prefer.

Sample Distribution and Testing

Participants in the trials receive five samples four times per round-trial-year (April/RT-1, July/RT-2, October/RT-3, and January/RT-4). Four of the samples are used for evaluation of instrument accuracy. The fifth sample is used for evaluating performance of various cotton types (e.g. roller ginned cotton). Each sample is tested 30 times (5 days, 6 tests per day). One set of samples can be split for use on a maximum of two instruments.

Data Handling

Participants record their results in an Excel spreadsheet provided on a CD that is shipped with the samples. Participants e-mail the completed spreadsheet file to cotton.standards@usda.gov. The evaluation is done for each instrument separately. Participants submitting results will receive:

- An official recognition of their participation.
- A numeric score indicating the level of performance relative to the average of all participant results, a) combining all properties, and b) for each of the 6 properties
- A detailed analysis by instrument regarding accuracy and precision to analyze measurement related problems.

The Bremen Fibre Institute in Bremen, Germany, and the USDA AMS Cotton Program in Memphis, Tennessee, USA, will distribute the round trial samples and provide data analyses. Participating lab names will be listed without results, if there is no demand from the lab to keep the participation anonymous. Individual results are given only to the individual participant. The ICAC publishes only the overall combined results for all participating labs together.

Disclaimer: The ICAC accepts no responsibility for errors or omissions, which in the unlikely event might occur with shipment of samples, return and analysis of the results, and the conclusions drawn or implied by the results. The evaluation and/or grading based on the results offers no commercial guarantees as to the current and future standing of the participating laboratory.

Technical Questions about the Round Trials

For technical questions about participation in the CSITC Round Trials, please contact:

- Mr. Axel Drieling, Faserinstitut Bremen e.V. (Bremen Fibre Institute), <drieling@faserinstitut.de>
- Mr. James L. Knowlton, USDA, <james.knowlton@usda.gov>