

FAPAS® News

My z-score is greater than 2, what should I do?

A guide to interpreting z-scores can be found on the FAPAS® website:-

www.fapas.com/pdfpub/brief11.pdf

A z-score outside the range -2 to +2 indicates your result is at the extreme of the distribution of results submitted. You should consider if there is any obvious reason for this.

If you are an accredited laboratory, your assessor may ask for evidence that you are carrying out remedial action.

However, it must be remembered that z-scores are statistics; they depend on probabilities. There is about a 1 in 20 chance that even a 'well behaved' result will get a z-score of $2 < |z| < 3$ and about a 1 in 300 chance of $|z| > 3$.

When you have implemented your corrective procedures, make sure you are registered for the next appropriate proficiency test to make sure that you have the problem under control.

We wish you a very Happy New Year for 2009

Thank you for your continued support during the past year.

Our 2009/10 programmes are now available, please request a copy or have a look at our website.

Whilst we welcome your order at any time during the year, orders must be with us by 10 March to guarantee inclusion in April's tests. You should also note that some tests have limited test material availability and may therefore fill up well before the test starts. To avoid disappointment, please register as early as possible.

Linda Owen — Head, Proficiency Testing Group

**The registration deadline for April tests is
10 March 2009
(subject to availability after this date)**

New Tests for 2009/10

New FAPAS® tests include Melamine in chocolate, smoked fish for PAHs and allergen screens. Pesticide tests are now available in fruit juice and smoothies, pasta and orange oil.

FEPAS® has introduced a selection of tests in Gelatin Hydrolysate and salmonella test materials have been expanded to include chocolate, parsley and animal feed.

The GeMMA Scheme programme continues to expand, with the introduction of additional proficiency tests for MON88017 maize and A2704-12 soya.

LEAP™ Potable Water Chemistry now includes Metahdehyde and Free Residual Chlorine.

We have also increased the number of tests in our PHYTOPAS plant health programme.

Proficiency testing is also offered for Pesticides and GM material in Tobacco, Butterfat in Milk (UK & Ireland only) and Dry Matter (Brix) and Sucrose (Polarisation) in Sugar. Please contact us for more information on these tests.



FAPAS® Open Meeting 17 June 2008

Participants in FAPAS® proficiency testing schemes attended an Open Meeting at CSL on 17 June 2008.

The one day event was chaired by Dr Roger Wood of the UK Food Standards Agency, who encouraged delegate interaction during the meeting.

CSL Quality Manager, David Galsworthy, gave an opening talk on the popular topic of accreditation of proficiency testing schemes. This was followed by presentations given by CSL scientists, demonstrating expertise in a range of areas, including statistics, food microbiology, water and environmental proficiency testing.

The keynote speaker, Barbara Hirst (RSSL, UK), gave an overview of molecular methods in GMO and allergen analysis in food.

The discussion session at the end of the day included questions submitted in advance by delegates. This proved popular and visitors made the most of the opportunity to meet with FAPAS® staff face to face.

**Overall
customer
satisfaction
rating
of 98.7%**

This year we set up a **Customer Satisfaction Survey** to obtain your feedback on how well we are delivering the service you need. We use this feedback to make improvements in the way we work with you.

We would like to thank the 394 people who filled in the satisfaction survey questionnaire. We are pleased to report that the responses that our customers gave resulted in an overall customer satisfaction rating of 98.7%.

Suggest a Test

If you cannot find a proficiency test to suit your requirements in our current programmes please let us know via our **Suggest a Test** facility (see link under 'News' on the FAPAS® website).

You can also register an interest in tests previously suggested (see table below). If we have enough interest in these tests, consideration will be given to their inclusion in future programmes.

Matrix	Analyte
Margarine	Sorbic Acid
Honey	Lead / Cadmium
Artichoke, Tomato	Cimoxanil / Ciproconazole
Cottonseed and Cottonseed Oilcake	Free Gossypol
Soft drink	Benzene
Biscuit	Coumarin
Sauce	Saccharin / Acesulfame-K / Aspartame
Tomato Sauce	Formol number (EN 1133)
Frying oil / fat	Polar compounds
Fish	Dioxins
Bivalve molluscs	Salmonella spp. / Faecal coliforms (E.coli)
Milk powder	Pantothenic acid



CSL/FAPAS Training Skills Development for Scientists



The 2009 Training Programme includes the following courses:-

Pesticide Residues in Food (June 2009)

Malachite Green and Crystal Violet (October 2009)

Veterinary Drug Residues in Food (November 2009)

Spaces on these training courses are limited. It is therefore important to register your interest as soon as possible to avoid disappointment.

Training places are confirmed only when payment has been received.

Further details are available from the CSL website:-

www.csl.gov.uk/training

Taking the time to complete the survey is important to us because knowing your preferences means that we are better placed to be able to improve the services offered to you.

If you have any particular points that you would like us to respond to, please feel free to raise them at any time, you can e-mail fapas@csl.gov.uk with your comments or suggestions, or just pick up the phone and tell us!

FAPAS® Agent Network

Our services are supported by a network of knowledgeable agents across the world, they provide a local point of contact to take orders and respond to enquiries. We encourage you to contact your local agent next time you need to place an order. A full list is available on our website.



In the last 12 months FAPAS® has appointed NEW AGENTS in Finland, China (Shanghai), Czech Republic, Romania, Russia and South Africa.

Finland

Labema OY is a Finnish company specialising in the import, marketing and delivery of quality products for both microbiology and clinical diagnostics.

China (Shanghai)

Shanghai Bioneer Science and Technology Co Ltd import new technologies and advanced instruments in the fields of food safety and life sciences in China.

Czech Republic

Qualifood has several years experience dealing with proficiency testing in the Czech Republic and Slovakia.

Romania

S C Redox Lab distributes laboratory equipment and instrumentation within Romania and has 13 years experience in the field.

South Africa

AEC-Amersham is a leading supplier to the Southern African market of products and services for Healthcare, Life Sciences and Quality and Safety Assurance.

Russia

Stylab has vast experience of dealing with laboratories in Russia. They also advise clients on food and feed safety.

Barry May—LEAP Scheme Manager



Workshop in Portugal

Our Portuguese Agent, Artur Melo e Castro of AMBIFOOD, LDA, recently organised a Workshop to increase awareness of proficiency testing in Portugal and to promote the LEAP™ Scheme.

The workshop proved to be an ideal platform to discuss the benefits of participating in a proficiency testing scheme as part of a laboratory's own quality system.

The Workshop was presented by LEAP™ Scheme Manager, Barry May, Artur Melo e Castro and Tish Shukla (FAPAS® Agent Manager).

Avoiding Customs Delays

Participants are responsible for the clearance of their test materials through Customs.

In some countries, your local agent will be able to handle this process for you. If you require us to include any documentation with your shipment (e.g. import permits), we will need to know at least 3 weeks before dispatch.

FAPAS® is not responsible for damage or non-delivery of materials due to problems with Customs. For frozen shipments it is especially important that Customs clearance is arranged quickly.

It is therefore advisable to check with Customs in your country well in advance of the programmed dispatch date.



FAPAS® Agents can help with Customs issues

FAPAS® Quality Control Test Materials

Analysts around the world have recognised the value of FAPAS® test materials for laboratory internal quality control.

FAPAS® QC test materials are an economical tool for staff training and appraisal, as well as assessing method performance. Combining their use with participation in FAPAS® proficiency tests provides evidence of internal and external quality control assessment, which may be required by accreditation bodies.

FAPAS® QC test materials are real food matrices with one or more

properties that have been sufficiently well established from the results of laboratories participating in a proficiency test. to be used as quality control materials.

The analyte concentration assigned values have been derived as the consensus of results submitted by participating laboratories, using a variety of methods. The satisfactory range indicates the values between which results would have been awarded a satisfactory z-score in the proficiency test.

To search for test materials on the FAPAS® website, enter either the matrix (food material) or analyte into the search box.

Specification sheets are available for each test material. These can be downloaded by clicking on the product reference number.

Download a full list of currently available test materials:-
www.fapas.com/tmsales.cfm
 CLICK 'GO'

'Available Until' Dates Explained

The 'available until' dates provided for FAPAS® quality control test materials are not expiry dates. These dates are provided as an estimate of the period during which it is considered that the test material will remain stable (which includes a short period for testing on receipt). Test materials are sold up to and including this date and are then removed from sale.



FAPAS® Dispatch



The FAPAS® Dispatch Team

sends out PT samples and QC test materials to approximately 100 countries around the world. They prepare and send out around 700 packages per week.

Airway Bill numbers are provided for consignments sent by courier. Customers are advised to track their shipments online:-

www.dhl.com