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ACTALIA CECALAIT, EXPERT LABORATORY FOR THE VALIDATION OF ALTERNATIVE ANALYSIS METHODS

At the beginning of 2014, ACTALIA Cecalait has obtained an extension of its qualification as Afnor Validation expert laboratory and an initial qualification as Micro Val expert laboratory.
Many systems exist at the international level, among which the NF Validation and the MicroVal validation systems.

REMINDER OF THE NF VALIDATION SYSTEM

Since 1989, Afnor Group set up a system for the certification of commercial methods used in the food industry in microbiology and for the detection of antibiotics. Initially called "Validation of alternative analysis methods", this certification has held today a community collective mark and an associated logo: the NF Validation mark.

The method validation study is carried out in 2 phases, according to the current technical protocol, based on EN ISO 16140:

- The objective of the first phase (preliminary study) is to characterise the method and evaluate its performance by comparing it to the standardised reference method. This phase is carried out by the expert laboratory.
- The objective of the second phase is to define the accuracy parameters of the alternative method on the basis of an interlaboratory study (with 8 to 10 laboratories).

On the basis of the 2 phases of the study results, it is possible to reach a decision on all of the performance criteria of the method as described in EN ISO 16140. If the response is positive, the NF VALIDATION certificate is granted for a 4-years-period.

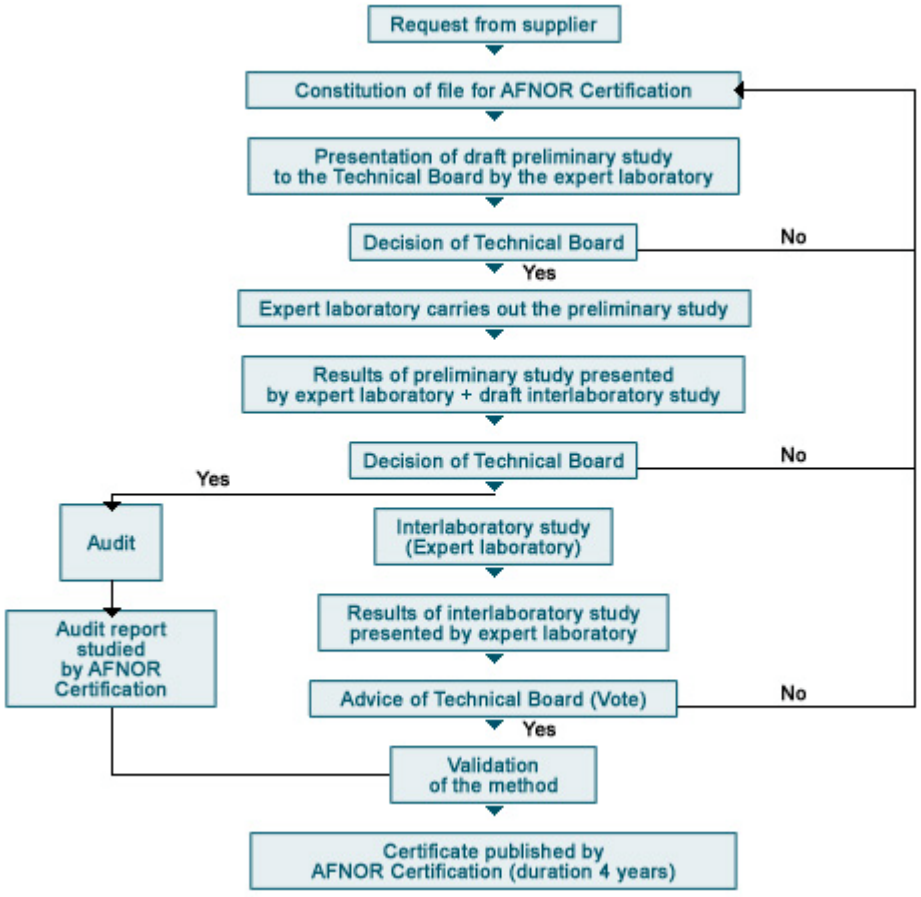

Figure 1 : diagram of the NF Validation system principle (Afnor source)

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ACTALIA CECALAIT AS A NF VALIDATION EXPERT LABORATORY

For many years, ACTALIA Cecalait was NF Validation expert laboratory. Following the extension of our scope of Cofrac accreditation according to EN ISO/CEI 17025 (calibration and tests), Afnor Validation has confirmed the extension of our approved domain. ACTALIA Cecalait is, then, expert laboratory on all the following methods:

- **Enumeration of microorganisms – Colony count technique at 30 °C (EN ISO 4833)**
- **Enumeration of β-glucuronidase positive *Escherichia coli* – Colony count technique at 44 °C (ISO 16649-2)**
- **Enumeration of coagulase positive staphylococci (ISO 6888-2)**
- **Detection of *Salmonella* (EN ISO 6579)**
- **Detection and enumeration of *Listeria spp* and *Listeria monocytogenes* (EN ISO 11290-1 and 2)**
- **Analysis of veterinary residues in milk**

NB: Please note that ACTALIA Cecalait is also accredited by Cofrac, according to ISO 17043, for the realisation of interlaboratory tests.

REMINDER OF THE MICRO VAL SYSTEM

MicroVal is an European certification organisation for the validation and approval of alternative methods for the microbiological analysis of food and beverages.

This organisation, situated in Delft, Netherlands (NL), validates and certifies the alternative methods in order to prove that they offer performances equivalent to the standardised methods.

As for the NF Validation system, the study is performed in 2 phases according to EN ISO 16140. For the evaluation of instruments determining somatic cells and microorganisms in milk (which can be used within the context of milk payment), the study is performed according to specific technical protocols.

ACTALIA CECALAIT AS A EXPERT LABORATORY

At the end of 2003, ACTALIA Cecalait has set up a application file, and the general committee of MicroVal has approved the qualification of ACTALIA Cecalait as expert laboratory in the dairy field in February 2014.

In addition to these "official" method or instrument, ACTALIA Cecalait carries out for many years instrument, analytical methods and reagents evaluations according to the current IDF/ISO evaluation stantards.

In the majority of cases, suppliers request a "third party" evaluation to present to the potentially interested dairy laboratories.

These evaluations are, in almost all cases, published as technical articles in the Cecalait's Newsletter and are available on the Cecalait's Newsletter section of our website www.cecalait.com.