



OTSC Quarterly Newsletter



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Office of the Texas State Chemist

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Chair, vice-chair elected to TX State Chemist Advisory Committee

Two members from the agriculture industry have been elected to serve as chairman and vice-chairman for the advisory committee of the Office of The State Chemist (OTSC), a state department administratively housed by Texas A&M AgriLife Research in College Station. John Fritts, manager/owner of Gorman Milling Co. in Gorman, was elected new chairman, while Suzy Davis, general manager of Brownfield Farmers Cooperative Station in Brownfield, was elected vice-chairman. Ben Weinheimer, vice president of Texas Cattle Feeders Association, recently completed a one-year term as chairman of the advisory committee.

“Both John and Suzy will provide exemplary leadership to our advisory committee, which provides guidance on regulatory issues through the feed and fertilizer sector,” said Dr. Tim Herrman, director of the Office of The State Chemist. “We would also like to extend our gratitude to Ben Weinheimer, who has done an outstanding job as vice-chair and chairman for the past two years.”

“This was his second time to serve in a leadership role. Our committee members deal with many complex issues and help the agency make sound, science-based

decisions to protect animal and human health, the environment and consumers, while enabling the feed and fertilizer industry in Texas to thrive.” Dr. Herrman added.

The State Chemist Office includes two units: the Texas Feed and Fertilizer Control Service (“FFCS”) and the Agricultural Analytical Service. It provides inspection and laboratory services as part of surveillance and monitoring of animal feed, including pet food, food for humans and fertilizer. The FFCS performs a wide array of feed and fertilizer inspections including, but not limited to, consumer complaint and animal death investigations to activities performed as accredited agents commissioned by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

The Feed and Fertilizer Advisory Committee acts as an advisory group on policy concerning general program issues including: finances, long range plans, statutory changes, and establishment of rules and regulations by the FFCS and Agricultural Analytical Service.

Story by: Blair Fannin

Assessing the Impact of Hurricane Harvey on Cereal Grains & Oilseeds

In the aftermath of Hurricane Harvey, many associations representing producers, grain handlers and processors worked alongside the Office of the Texas State Chemist (OTSC) to assess the potential impact the flooding has had on cereal grains and oilseeds. Damaged cereal grains and oilseeds containing toxins, chemical adulterants or otherwise, meet the definition of adulterated, thus falling under the authority of the Texas Feed and Fertilizer Control Service of OTSC per the Texas Commercial Feed Control Act (§141.002 and §141.148). Working with moisture damaged or moldy grain poses a human health hazard as well as numerous worker safety risks ranging from engulfment to oxygen depletion resulting from mold growth.

According to Dr. Herrman, the State Chemist, the goal of the agency was “to provide legal certainty to the agriculture community and preserve market quality and integrity during the recovery process.”

As part of the recovery effort, OTSC assisted farmers, grain handlers and processors in assessing damage and providing testing services (e.g., mycotoxin, heavy metals, microbiology) **at no cost**. Phone surveys were conducted with the potentially impacted food and feed firms in the 58 disaster counties as declared by Governor Greg Abbott. On-site inspections were conducted for unreachable and impacted firms. In addition, the OTSC coordinated the farm level response for the Texas All Hazards Rapid Response Team in cooperation with the Food and Drug Administration and the Texas Department of State Health Services.

OTSC-TAMU AgriLife Research announces 2018 Proficiency Testing Program in Aflatoxin

A key component in managing aflatoxin risk in the global feed sector is proficiency testing. Since 2015, to assist feed laboratories around the world in assuring the quality of their test results, the Office of the Texas State Chemist (‘OTSC’) has implemented an Aflatoxin Proficiency Testing (PT) Program. Proficiency testing helps:

- evaluate the performance of laboratories;
- identify problems in a lab;
- establish the effectiveness and comparability of methods; and
- provide additional confidence to laboratory customers.

Eligible participants in the program include grain milling and grain handling firms, feed manufacturing industry, government laboratories and educational institutions. The PT program includes sending bi-annual proficiency samples, which consists of a single 100+ g

2018 Proficiency Testing Program in Aflatoxin - Continued

sample. For each round, participants are expected to analyze duplicate 50 g portions and report both results to OTSC via the PT program web portal. The maize samples used for the program contain naturally occurring aflatoxin and are analyzed for aflatoxin B1, B2, G1, and G2 by OTSC. Samples are analyzed using high performance liquid chromatography, and the relative standard deviation for the proficiency samples is calculated prior to their incorporation into the proficiency program. The OTSC is ISO/IEC 17025 accredited for aflatoxin analysis using this procedure and ISO/IEC 17043 and ISO 17034 accredited for conducting proficiency testing and producing reference material, respectively.

If your laboratory is interested in participating in the PT program, please visit our website at <http://apteca.tamu.edu>

Fumonisin Sampling, Testing, and Risk Management in Corn

Associations representing producers, grain handlers, and processors and the Office of the Texas State Chemist (OTSC) are working together to manage fumonisin risk in the 2017 corn crop in the South Plains and Panhandle of Texas. Cereal grains and oilseeds containing mycotoxins, such as aflatoxin and fumonisin, meet the definition of adulterated and fall under the authority of the Texas Feed and Fertilizer Control Service of OTSC per the Texas Commercial Feed Control Act (§141.002 and §141.148). OTSC recognizes the challenge associated with sampling and testing for fumonisin.

To address this concern, OTSC implemented a program referred to as the One Sample Strategy (OSS) to measure and manage mycotoxin risk using official equipment and methods. Earlier this year, the Risk Management Agency of the USDA expanded the OSS program to include OSS fumonisin results for crop insurance purposes, in addition to aflatoxin. Both the aflatoxin and fumonisin OSS programs provide guidance for creating a plan for representative sampling and accurate testing. By participating in OSS, grain operators can become qualified to conduct onsite fumonisin tests. OSS establishes criteria for proper sampling pattern, sample size, sample preparation, testing, and record keeping. Firms participating in these programs may issue official results on behalf of OTSC for the purposes of buying, selling, and regulation.

The One Sample Strategy is so named because it utilizes the concept of 'test once, use the results for multiple purposes.' The objective of this program is to provide legal certainty to the agriculture community while preserving market integrity through accurate sampling and testing. The Office of the Texas State Chemist monitors performance and verifies test results to ensure testing accuracy. As an additional service, firms participating in the OSS program receive reference material at no cost to ensure accurate testing.

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Protects consumers & enhances Agri-Business through its Feed & Fertilizer Regulatory Compliance Program, surveillance & monitoring of Animal-Human health & environmental hazards, & preparedness planning.

Fumonisin Sampling, Testing, and Risk Management –Continued

OTSC recently approved a test kit that tests up to 100 ppm fumonisin (based on in-house validation), and participants in OSS are able to report up to this level. Multiple grain elevators and commercial labs are participating in the program. The Office also posts its results in a map format on their Best Management Practices to Prevent or Reduce Mycotoxin Contamination website at <http://mycotoxinbmps.tamu.edu/mapsupdate.aspx>.

For more information about the One Sample Strategy, log onto <http://otscweb.tamu.edu/risk/OneSample/> or call the Office of the Texas State Chemist at 979-845-1121.