

Building a dialogue between NRLs and French accredited laboratories ('peripheral laboratories')

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In order to better identify the expectations of accredited laboratories in relation to NRLs, ANSES and the Joint Laboratories Service Unit (a scientific unit that fulfils the missions of the Directorate General for Competition Policy, Consumer Affairs and Fraud Control and the Directorate General for Customs and Indirect Taxes) invited all of France's accredited laboratories to complete an online satisfaction questionnaire. Each accredited laboratory was asked to fill out a separate questionnaire for each area of activity in which it undertakes official analyses. These areas of activity cover several NRLs and are defined in the five broad categories listed in the Ministerial Order for the appointment of NRLs (Ministerial Order of 19/10/2011 published in the Official Journal of 28/10/2011; <http://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do?cidTexte=JORFTEXT000024720808&dateTexte=&categorieLien=id>): Biological contaminants found in foodstuffs – Chemical contaminants, residues and additives – Animal diseases – Plant health – GMOs.

The questionnaire was divided into 24 questions addressing the following points:

- scientific and technical support, methods and reference materials ;
- general organisation of ILPTs ;
- monitoring and alerts ;
- general perceptions of relations between the accredited laboratory and the NRLs.

This broad approach opened up some interesting lines of thought for all of the NRLs. On 13 November 2012, representatives from all of the NRLs worked together to analyse key factors to achieving successful relations between the NRLs and peripheral accredited laboratories as well as points for which an action plan (strengthening or easing) could be proposed together with the French certifying body and supervisory authorities.

A selection of points identified in this session will be presented and discussed with the accredited laboratories in a general meeting that will be held on 26 March 2013 (contact: ds@anses.fr).