



International Dairy Federation

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## SELECTIVE ENUMERATION OF BIFIDOBACTERIA IN MILK AND MILK PRODUCTS

Brussels, 4 April 2007- IDF has just released a draft standard method on bifidobacterial enumeration describing how the method was developed and assessed for its performance based on selectivity, reproducibility and repeatability. This method can be used as a roadmap for developing a microbiological standard method.

Bifidobacteria play an important role as probiotic microorganisms in fermented dairy products. Depending on the individual properties of the strains as well as on their density in the product and the survival conditions in the human intestinal tract, several beneficial effects have been demonstrated for certain bifidobacteria in numerous studies. In this context, selective viable count and bacterial viability have been identified as key criteria for determining the quality of probiotic products.

As far as bifidobacterial enumeration is considered, several methodologies have been proposed during the last two decades, however, with limited applicability due to laborious procedures and/or lacking selectivity. According to experience, the accompanying microflora often negatively influences the discrimination among the different groups of bacteria contained in a product. On this account, an IDF group of experts has elaborated a procedure for bifidobacterial enumeration, which is easy to perform and of high selectivity.

"The aim of IDF experts was to identify and validate a suitable medium, which allows the selective detection and enumeration of the different species of bifidobacteria used in dairy products. This developed method will prove vital in developing a microbiological standard method." said Christian Robert, IDF Director General.

"Selective Enumeration of Bifidobacteria in Dairy Products: Development of a Standard Method" is the new Bulletin of IDF n°411/2007. It can be ordered in electronic form via the IDF website at <http://www.fil-idf.org>

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Note to editors:

*"Founded in 1903, The International Dairy Federation represents the dairy sector worldwide by providing the best global source of scientific expertise and knowledge in support of the development and promotion of quality milk and dairy products to deliver consumers with nutrition, health and well-being."*