



SoftTrace MilkData for increased control and reduced running costs

Customer:

Glanbia Central Milk Testing Laboratory, Dungarvan, Co. Waterford, Ireland



Glanbia is Ireland's leading dairy processor and food ingredients group with a strong global presence in key food markets and sectors around the world. Glanbia has manufacturing operations in 7 countries, sales and technical support locations in 14 countries and its products are sold to over 130 countries worldwide.

Glanbia Central Laboratory, in Co. Waterford Ireland, analyses milk and milk products for payment and herd management purposes. The Central Laboratory currently has two accreditations to the CLAS standard (for chemistry and microbiology) which addresses the management and technical requirements of ISO 17025 and also the laboratory aspects of the BRC technical standard.

The MilkData system is configurable and industry specific. Using it we have achieved significant improvements in the general running of the laboratory. We have increased control over sample test scheduling and achieved a rapid turnaround of sample results. We have also reduced running costs. On top of that, MilkData provides full traceability from the time the sample is received through analysis to validation and release of the test results.

Michael Cosgrove
Laboratory Manager

Challenges:

- Reduce running costs
- Increase sample volumes without increasing resources
- Increase test frequency
- Eliminate manual data entry
- Achieve rapid results interrogation
- Achieve demonstrable compliance with statutory requirements
- Provide a more service-oriented, customer approach to milk suppliers

Solution:

- SoftTrace MilkData integrated with laboratory instruments, Glanbia's milk management & payments system, financial system and external regulatory systems

Key Benefits:

- Increased productivity and efficiency
- Increased visibility on all sample test results and payments
- Enhanced communications with suppliers, farm advisors, vets and regulatory bodies
- Enhanced service capabilities
- Enhanced test scheduling capabilities
- Full traceability on all samples
- Guaranteed data quality and integrity
- A comprehensive and flexible range of services to suppliers and customers
- Minimised compliance risk

Meeting Glanbia's current and future objectives

Glanbia Central Laboratory has implemented SoftTrace MilkData as part of an integrated construction and IT modernisation project designed to take full advantage of the latest testing technologies and information management systems.



Glanbia's on-going investment in operational excellence at the Central Laboratory typifies the company's commitment to its milk suppliers, customers and consumers by investing in advanced food quality, traceability and safety systems. With the modernisation project, Glanbia set out to find a cost effective software tool to improve laboratory operations, reduce lead times and increase responsiveness to the service needs of their suppliers. The immediate challenges faced were:

- An increasing workload.
- The need to provide new services in areas such as animal health monitoring, PCR on mastitis pathogens and dedicated tests to meet the needs of individual farmers.
- Reliance on manual, time-consuming processes.
- The risk of human error.
- Emerging security issues.

In response to these challenges, Glanbia set out to achieve a virtually paperless laboratory operation capable of integrating fully with internal and external information systems. Glanbia focused not only on increasing sample volume but also on providing outstanding customer service, timely results and guaranteeing the integrity and quality of those results. The company aimed to provide an enhanced level of service to their 5,000 milk suppliers via increased test frequency (6,000 samples per day), rapid results interrogation, guaranteed data integrity and compliance with statutory requirements. Having evaluated a number of alternative systems, Glanbia selected SoftTrace MilkData to meet the company's central milk testing challenges.

In terms of both functionality and technology, MilkData fulfilled our requirements more comprehensively than the other systems on offer. It is user friendly, highly configurable and competitively priced. With an emphasis on speed, accuracy, archiving and compliance with standards for data interchange we knew the system was capable of meeting our cost reduction, efficiencies and service objectives. We were confident that we would receive high levels of support from the SoftTrace team because of their substantial experience in providing quality and traceability solutions to the Dairy and Food industries in particular.

Maurice McNamara - IT Manager, Glanbia

Comprehensive Functionality

For each Glanbia supplier, SoftTrace MilkData stores milk composition and quality data based on the analysis of milk samples. MilkData interfaces with the laboratory's milk testing instruments to automatically capture test results. As results are made available for validation, they are cross referenced against user defined grades and limits. Abnormal results are highlighted for the attention of the Laboratory Manager. Additional functionality allows for results to be split by a combination of area and analysis groups prior to being transferred for validation. This functionality is configurable by laboratory instrument. Once validated, analysis data is available for transfer to Glanbia's bespoke payment system (Bainne) and for use in running enquiries, standard reports and geometric averages functionality.

- Automated, real-time data capture from laboratory instruments and results graphing.
- Milk payment, truck load, individual cow and herd analysis.
- Animal disease testing analysis, certification, alerts and reports.
- Full geometric management system including automatic alerts, enquiry and reporting system.
- Barcode management system (farmer, truck and intake samples).
- Farm quality management system (inspections and certification).
- Farm water sample testing, reports and email alerts.
- Antibiotics purchases monitoring.
- Tanker load collection management.
- TCM analysis, trending, reports and email alerts.
- Current and historical results by test, milk deliveries, payment grade, current geometric status and results.
- Sample scheduling, sample reception, sample date validation and variance analysis.
- OLE links to standard operating procedures and test methods.
- Automated report SMS messaging and emails.
- Comprehensive suite of enquiries, reports and graphs.
- Supplier Enquiry Dashboard (individual supplier profile).
- Archive system.
- Full system security.



Data Capture and Results Monitoring

At Glanbia, the sample reception and scheduling functionality integrates with the laboratory instruments for automatic test data capture and the rapid collection and monitoring of sample results in real-time. This has improved productivity, minimised compliance risk and the risk of human error by eliminating manual data entry. The Sample Reception system facilitates the transfer of test batches between operator workstations. At the Glanbia Central Laboratory, SoftTrace MilkData integrates with the following laboratory instruments: Foss P4000, Foss actoscan, Bentley IBC, Delta Combifoss, Foss360, Petrifoss, Biofoss, Eliza and PCR.



Results Management and Validation

At Glanbia, MilkData's Manager Module is used to validate and manage test results. It interfaces with Glanbia's Bainne payment system. It is designed with a suite of software to meet the laboratory's specific requirements. These include accessing supplier history, more tests. Reports include a percentage variation report, individual exceptions report.

Glanbia uses SoftTrace MilkData to automatically email herd investigation results to supplier advisors, reducing the number of queries received. The rapid provision of herd investigation results ensures that advisors are in a position to provide timely advice to suppliers on individual cows that are adversely affecting their results and subsequent payment.

The speed of access to report and enquiry data has improved significantly since we implemented MilkData. The ability to interface with our other in-house systems such as Bainne and the cross referencing of data between our systems has given us enhanced validation and traceability effectiveness.

Michael Cosgrove

Expert Professional Services

The SoftTrace provides Glanbia Central Laboratory Management and IT personnel with a range of services including systems analysis and design, development and implementation, as well as consultancy on the laboratory's hardware and networking requirements in order to maximise throughput and system performance.

We were extremely happy with the performance of the SoftTrace team throughout the design and implementation stages of this project. Their on-going technical support and customer service is excellent. We receive prompt and informed service on system customisations and modifications to meet our specific needs. I look forward to a lasting, mutually beneficial partnership with SoftTrace to continue to meet Glanbia's emerging needs.

Maurice McNamara



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