



# INTERNATIONAL COTTON ADVISORY COMMITTEE

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From the Secretariat

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## 8<sup>th</sup> CSITC ROUND TRIAL COMPLETED

The eighth Round Trial conducted under the auspices of the Task Force on Commercial Standardization of Instrument Testing of Cotton (CSITC RT 2008-4) was conducted during November and December 2008. 65 testing laboratories with 95 instruments participated in RT 2008-4, the highest level of participation in any of the CSITC Round Trials to date. During 2008, a total of 80 laboratories participated in at least one Round Trial; several laboratories participate only seasonally, concurrent with their normal operations, an entirely acceptable practice.

In each Round Trial, five cotton samples with known values are mailed to each participating laboratory. Each laboratory tests each sample six times each day for five days, for a total of 150 tests. Each sample is tested for the six CSITC parameters of length, length uniformity index, micronaire, strength, Rd (reflectance) and +b (yellowness). Accordingly, 900 separate test results (150 tests of 6 parameters) from each instrument are evaluated.

Laboratory results for each Round Trial are collected by USDA and forwarded to the Bremen Fibre Institute for evaluation. Laboratories are given an overall ranking, as well as rankings for performance on each of the six parameters. Rankings are based on the first four upland cotton samples with known values. The purpose of the fifth cotton sample in all CSITC Round Trials is for special study purposes and is not used for performance-ranking. A Brazilian bale was used for the fifth sample in the 8<sup>th</sup> CSITC Round Trial. Results for each test center are confidential, but each testing facility received an evaluation of its performance in the Round Trial and a detailed diagnostic analysis of results.

Rankings are based on the results of each lab in coming closest to the mean (average) values for all laboratories participating in the Round Trial on all six parameters. The range of scores for the combined properties among the 81 instruments was 0.26 to 3.03 (a score of zero would be perfect), and the median overall evaluation of combined properties was 0.53.

The typical inter-laboratory variations achieved by instrument testing, given as standard deviations, were:

### CSITC RT 2008-4

Property	Standard Deviation based on Single Tests	Standard Deviation based on 30 Tests/Sample
Micronaire	0.10 mic	0.08 mic
Strength	1.27 g/tex	1.02 g/tex
Length	0.017 inches	0.012 inches
Length Unif.	0.8 units	0.6 units
Color Rd	1.22 units	1.16 units
Color +b	0.39 units	0.34 units

### Summary Tables Available on the Web

Summary tables from the first seven CSITC Round Trials are available on the web site: [www.ICAC.org](http://www.ICAC.org). The summary includes:

- Inter-laboratory averages and variability and in-laboratory variability for each of the 6 properties and each of the five cotton samples;
- Graphs showing the distributions for every property and each cotton;

A summary list of the combined properties evaluations from testing centers; and  
A summary list of the evaluations for each property from testing centers.

### **Benefits of Participation**

Participants in CSITC Round Trials benefit from detailed feedback that can be utilized to demonstrate measurement performance to customers and to address measurement related problems. Results will confirm the participant's ability to provide reproducible test measurements that are based on the established international standard. In addition, participation is a recommended practice for fulfilling quality management requirements in laboratories (e.g. ISO 17025).

The CSITC Round Trials complement, but do not replace, the Bremen Cotton Round Trial and the USDA HVI Checktest. Participation in CSITC Round Trials provides numerous benefits:

- Statistically robust evaluations of instrument performance based on 4 cottons and 30 tests per cotton during each Round Trial,
- An overall rating of instrument accuracy in comparison with elite testing facilities worldwide,
- Unique quarterly and annual certificates of laboratory participation and instrument ratings, and
- Detailed diagnostic evaluations of instrument performance of a range of parameter values.

Nevertheless, participation in the Bremen and USDA programs remains meaningful. The Bremen Round Trial is not limited to High Volume Testing and allows evaluation of all cotton testing instruments free of cost. The USDA HVI Checktests are conducted monthly, rather than quarterly.

### **Round Trial Cost & Sign-Up**

Participation in the CSITC Round Trial is subsidized by USDA, the Bremen Fibre Institute and the ICAC Secretariat. Support is also received from the Common Fund for Commodities and the European Commission through the CFC/ICAC/33 project. A nominal fee of US\$400 per year during 2009 for four trials is charged to cover expenses associated with sample distribution.

To participate in future CSITC Round Trials, contact:

International Cotton Advisory Committee – CSITC  
Email: CSITCsecretariat@icac.org  
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(Press releases are available via e-mail. To register for this free service, send your contact information to publications@icac.org)

The International Cotton Advisory Committee is an association of 42 governments of countries with an interest in cotton. The Secretariat of the Committee publishes information related to world cotton production, supply, demand and prices, and provides technical information on cotton production technology. Detailed statistics are found bimonthly in *COTTON: Review of the World Situation*, \$180 per year via email, \$215 per year in hard copy. A monthly outlook is available by email for \$285 per year. Access to the latest weekly estimates of world cotton supply and use by the Secretariat is available on the Internet for \$450 per year. Access Secretariat reports at [www.icac.org](http://www.icac.org).