

Invitation to the IAG Proficiency Test 2026

for the determination of botanical impurities / prohibited materials in feed

Vienna, Jan. 2026

Dear Colleagues,

For years the IAG section Feed Microscopy has been organising collaborative studies for the evaluation of botanical impurities and prohibited materials in feed. It provides an independent proficiency assessment as required by accreditation bodies. The organisation of this year's proficiency test is subcontracted to AGES, Vienna, Austria.

On behalf of the IAG board we are delighted to invite you to the 2026 proficiency test for the detection of botanical impurities and prohibited materials in feed by light microscopy.

Practical information as well as the planned time schedule are indicated on the next page.

If your laboratory, company or institute is interested to participate to this proficiency test, your participation will be charged with 350€ including shipping costs and excluding VAT for IAG members and/or for mycotoxins NRL's in Europe, UK, and Switzerland.

All other laboratories will be charged with 450€ including shipping costs and excluding VAT in Europe, UK, Switzerland (shipping costs to non-European countries on request).

This price includes the preparation of the samples, the analysis and report of the results. Certificates of participation will be delivered to the participants.

Participation/Registration for new customers:

If you are interested in the participation, please register [here](https://ringtrials.ages.at/) (<https://ringtrials.ages.at/>)

Choose Microscopy Registration

Klick the **Sign up for Microscopy 2026** button and fill in the registration form comprehensively.

These details will be used for the dispatch of the samples and for any further correspondence. After successful registration, you will receive your registration ID in an automatically generated email.

Participation for customers who have already an existing account.

In case you have already created an account on our PT website [here](https://ringtrials.ages.at/) (<https://ringtrials.ages.at/>), please log in by clicking on **Login**

Klick on **My applications** and **sign up for Microscopy 2026**

We ask you to confirm your participation **until February 06th, 2026 at the latest.**

After the registration, please use your email, username, general registration number or ringtrial registration number and the password you have created to log in on the proficiency test platform <https://ringtrials.ages.at/> .

After receiving the samples, you will receive an invoice for the ring test fee by email. Any additional costs for the bank transfer have to be paid by the participant. **The fee has to be paid before the publication of the final report.** In order to avoid additional costs, we propose an international bank transfer by IBAN and BIC/SWIFT.

Please feel free to forward this message to other potentially interested institutions, laboratories, and companies.

On the reception of your form, an invoice will be sent. Note that the sending of the samples will only occur upon full fees payment.

Please note: All data is treated confidentially and anonymously and is used exclusively for the evaluation of this proficiency test ([AGES terms and conditions](#))

We are looking forward to your participation!

Roland Weiss

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

The IAG proficiency test for microscopy is an international proficiency test, which is organised with the aim to evaluate the laboratories performances in the microscopy of botanical impurities in feeding stuffs to control the maximum levels as set in directive 2002/32/EC and prohibited materials as laid down in regulation EG 767/2009.

Objectives

The objective of the present proficiency test is to assess the performance of the participants to detect the presence of botanical impurities and prohibited materials in feed by the reference method using light microscopy as stated in IAG methods A3 to A5 and A10.

The organizer team

The test will be coordinated by the Austrian Agency for Health and Food Safety GmbH (AGES).

Test material

Each participant will receive 3 samples

- Soybean meal, ~350 g
- Bird feed, ~ 350 g
- Challenger sample, ~500 g

The samples are fortified with botanical impurities and/or prohibited materials.

AGES will endorse the homogeneity of the samples. Nevertheless, each laboratory participating in the proficiency test is solely responsible to reach appropriate homogeneity for the sample sub-portions taken for analysis.

Each sample shall be analysed by light microscopy.

Only the soybean meal and the bird feed samples are used for the evaluation of the laboratories performance. The challenger sample will be used to calculate the uncertainty of a naturally contaminated sample.

General outline of the exercise

- Parameters that will be assessed are:
 - presence or absence of botanical impurities and their amount in mg/kg
 - presence or absence of prohibited material
- AGES will provide participants with an online access to the AGES ringtest platform for reporting the results of the proficiency test analyses.

- Each participating laboratory will be assigned a unique code and only the organizer of the study knows the key to this code. After completing the test each laboratory will get a report including its results and lab code. The final report of the study will be published with anonymised results.

Time schedule

- Registration to the ringtest: **January 12th, 2026 to February 6th, 2026**
- Sample shipment: **middle of February 2026 (expected week 9)**
- Deadline for returning the results to the organizer: **April 17th, 2026**
- Preliminary report: **beginning of June 2026 (expected week 24)**
- Presentation of results on the IAG Annual Meeting on **June 16th to 18th 2026**
- Final report: **end of June 2026**

Contact information

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If you have any further questions, please contact us at office@ages.at subject "IAG microscopy PT".