

Fertilizer Methods Forum Background

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History:

- ***Started as the “Metals Forum” in 2002***
 - *Has been around for 17 years*
- ***Primarily organized by Bill Hall***
 - *Independent group that tagged on to the AAPFCO WA*
- ***One topic – what are safe levels of “heavy metals” in fertilizers and how to measure them?***
- ***Completed work in 2006; asked participants if should keep the Forum going?***



History:

- *In 2007, changed to the “Methods Forum”*
 - *Became more laboratory focused*
 - *Not limited to laboratory topics, if sufficient interest*
- *In 2016, it became a subcommittee of the AAPFCO Magruder Committee, to help ensure long-term sustainability*
 - *Only committee with “full rights” for industry*
 - *Now has a working group of organizers*
 - *Bill Hall (retired) still involved, for now*
 - *Now has its own operating budget*
- *Attendance ranges between 40 to 60 attendees*



Format:

- *Identify topics of interest/concern*
 - *Focus Areas*
- *Pull in speakers/experts, as available*
- *Start with everyone assembled together for topics of mutual interest*
- *Sort into breakout groups for specific interests*
 - *e.g. instruments, specific methodology, nutrient(s), quality control, sample preparation, etc.*
- *Formulate a “plan-of-attack”*
- *Assign/share tasks*
- *Report progress at future meetings*



Who should (*and does*) attend ?

- *Any interested chemist who tests fertilizers or related products.*
- *State, industry, commercial, private and even international fertilizer chemists.*
- *Subject matter experts*
 - *PhD's*
 - *Instrument vendors*
 - *Experienced/recognized experts*
- *Someone new to fertilizer testing*
- *Someone with a new method or suggested modification or improvement*



Why should attend ?

- *Very few opportunities for fertilizer chemists*
- *Experience and skill level are not prerequisites*
- *Opportunity to network*
- *Defined topics based upon feedback, but also open format to discuss any topic*
- *Complements the efforts of AAPFCO Lab Groups*
 - *Slow Release Committee*
 - *Magruder Committee*
 - *Lab Services Committee*
- *Improve uniformity of techniques and results*
- *Your opinion matters and will be heard*



Information

- *Meeting lasts 1.5 days after the AAPFCO WA*
 - *An extra day for a related local scientific tour*
- *Registration fee is similar in cost to AAPFCO's*
- *Meeting information, topics, forms and presentations are posted to AAPFCO website*
- *Jamey Johnson is also the treasurer of the Methods Forum, so consistency*
- *For first time attendees, we might be able to coordinate scholarship support with AAPFCO*
- *The goal is to keep the Methods Forum going as long as there is interest (& lab challenges)*

