

CONTRACTS & SPECIFICATIONS COMMITTEE

Report to the Technical Specification Group

Chair: Mr Wian Heath (South Africa)

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Proposal for Amendments to the Criteria for Auto Proportioning Additional Specimens of Total Alkali-insoluble Impurities in Appendix F of IWTO-19 (2024)

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INTRODUCTION

The use of the auto proportioning additional specimens is allowed in Appendix F of IWTO-19 for Total Alkaline Insoluble Impurities (TAI) samples no greater than 2.0 g (IWTO-19, 2024). The limit of 2.0g was proposed by NZWTA in 1987 (Austin, D., 1987) and endorsed by S.U.L.'s laboratory, Uruguay in 1987 (Camiau, H., 1987). However, both reports did not provide tested data to support the establishment of the 2.0g limit. It is assumed that both laboratories mainly tested wools of low TAI content at that time. This has left an open question to be answered, which is "can the method of auto proportioning be used for TAI samples greater than 2.0g?"

According to statistical randomness, the larger the quantity of a component within a material mix, the more uniform the distribution of that component throughout the total volume (Axe, 1995). Therefore, the higher the sample TAI content, the more uniform the weight of TAI will be between subsamples. In practice, a high pass rate of the Wool Base range check further supports the similarity among the subsamples.

This report investigates the feasibility of using the auto proportioning method on TAI samples that weigh more than 2g, particularly when using HSI (hyper-spectral imaging) for testing.

MATERIALS AND TRIALS

Three batches of QC data (i.e. using both the manual dissection and the HSI result) were used in this report: two QC trials conducted at AWTA Melbourne laboratory in April 2025 and one at AWTA Fremantle laboratory in May 2025. The limit of TAI mass was set to be 6.0 g. The samples tested at the Melbourne Lab were randomly selected from the seasonal tests, while all daily tests were used at the Fremantle Lab due to lower testing volume there at the time. In total 449 samples were tested by HSI-01 and HSI-02 at the Melbourne Lab and 243 by HSI-03 and HSI 04 at the Fremantle Lab. The ranges of TAI mass, TAI%, VM% (Vegetable Matter), WB% (Wool Base) and VMB% (VM Base) are summarised in Table 1.

A pseudo auto proportioning step was then performed using the criteria established in this report, by using the tested Sub A proportions the additional subsamples, such as Sub B and/or Sub C. IWTO-0 was then used to assess equivalence between the tested versus combined tested Sub A and Auto-Proportioned Subs B/C / (B & C). The data setup is:

Control: Combined actual tested values for all subsamples – No proportioning

Treatment: Combined tested Sub A with auto-proportioned subsamples B/C / (B & C).

Table 1. Ranges of QC samples tested at Mel and Fre Labs

Lab	Statistics	TAI Mass (g)	TAI (%)	VM (%)	WB (%)	VMB (%)
Mel	Mean	1.073	3.119	2.989	58.348	1.809
	SD	1.172	3.889	3.892	8.348	2.487
	Min	0.061	0.186	0.123	40.290	0.083
	Max	5.978	18.042	18.042	70.390	12.168
Fre	Mean	1.112	3.340	3.187	54.055	1.805
	SD	0.725	2.207	2.213	4.612	1.199
	Min	0.119	0.345	0.228	40.74	0.152
	Max	4.278	16.815	16.71	65.06	8.755

Note: Mel is short for Melbourne Laboratory and Fre for Fremantle Laboratory

Because the HSI QC trials were mainly focused on Grower lots which used two subsamples and had a mass limit set, the data in August 2025 were downloaded to complement the analysis. The data contained 15,937 tests, of which 2,074 were Bulkclassified or Interlots that required three subsamples to be tested. This extra batch of data was also used for analysing the mass equivalence among the subs in a much broader range.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Establishment of pre-conditions for auto-proportioning

Equivalence in TAI mass among the subsamples

Based on the requirement for subsamples, TAI mass of all subsamples should be equivalent prior to the auto-proportioning. Equivalence of the TAI mass between the subsamples was checked using IWTO-0 method for the August 2025 data. The data setup is:

Control: TAI mass of Sub A

Treatment: TAI mass of Sub B or Sub C

Figure 1 shows the results for Grower lots for Sub A vs Sub B. Figure 2 & Figure 3 show the results of Bulkclassified and Interlots, respectively for Sub A vs Sub B and Sub A vs Sub C.

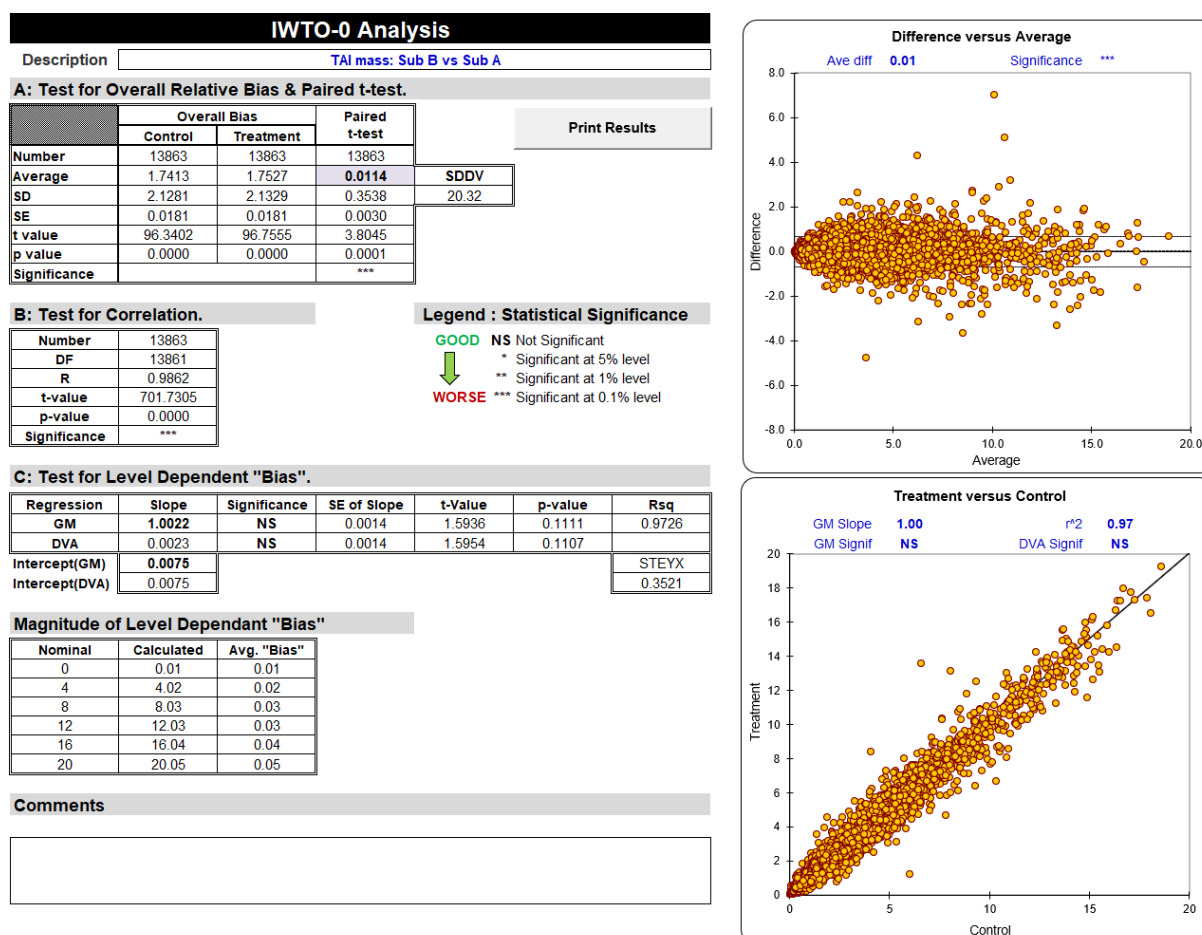


Figure 1. Paired t-test for the TAI mass of Grower lots: Sub A vs Sub B

For grower lots the average difference between Sub A and Sub B was 0.0114g with a s.e. of 0.003g.

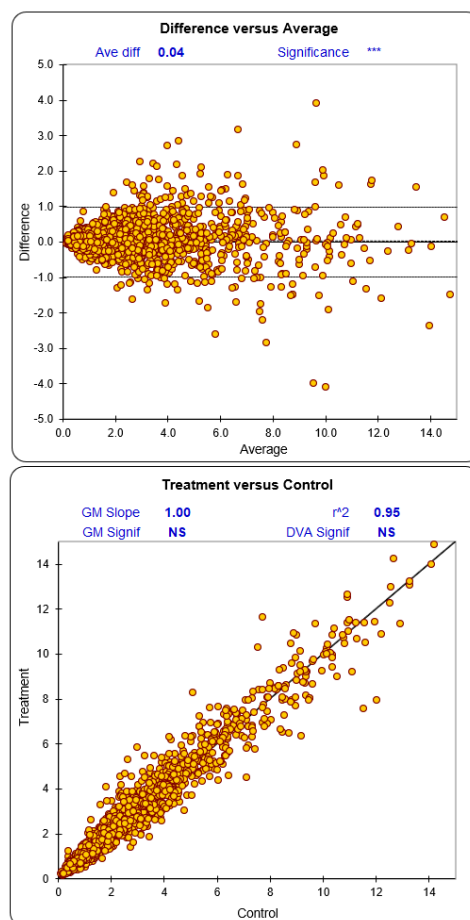
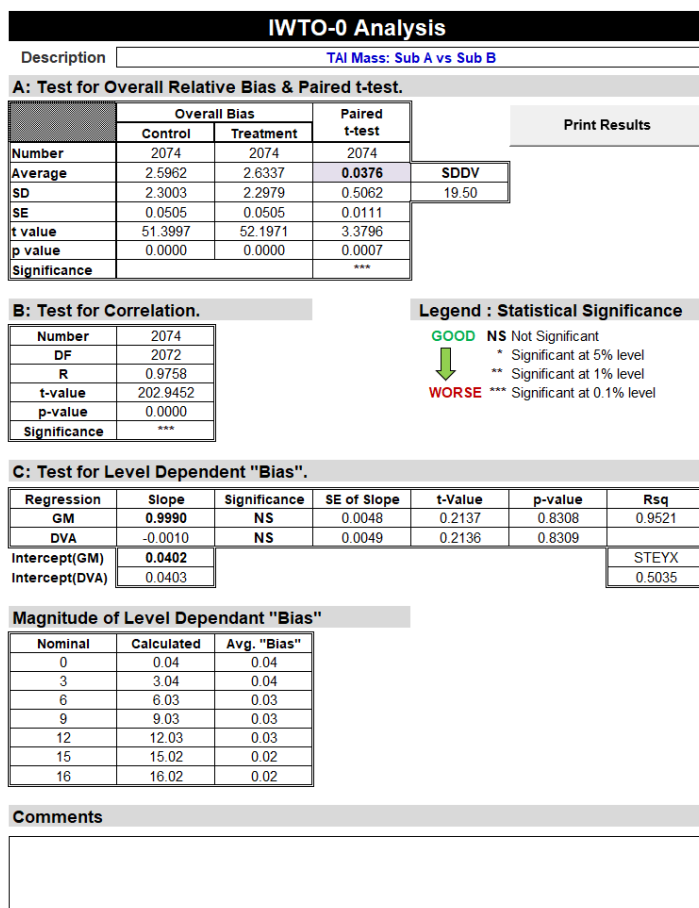


Figure 2. Paired t-test for the TAI mass of Bulkclassed and Interlots: Sub A vs Sub B

For Bulkclassed and Interlots lots the average difference between Sub A and Sub B was 0.0376g with a s.e. of 0.0111g

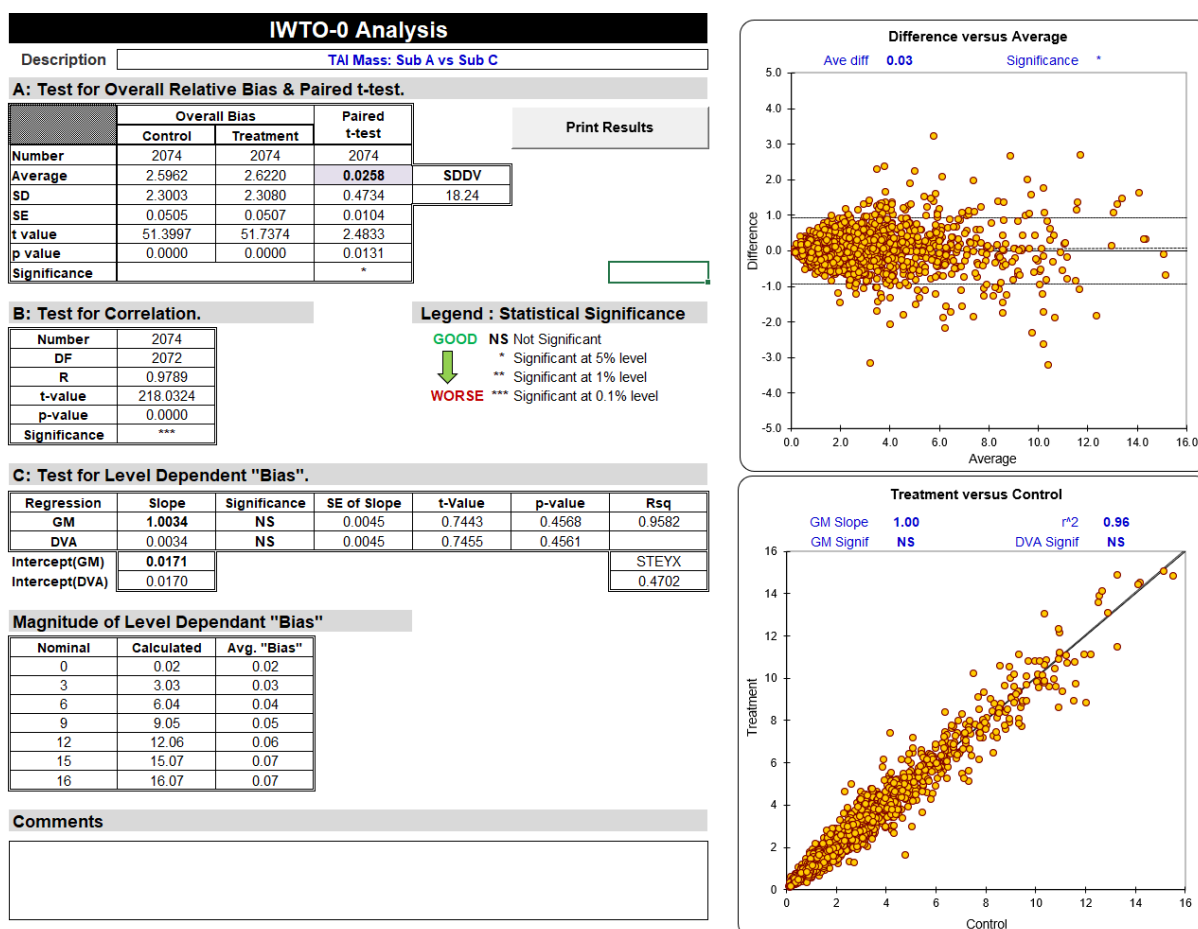


Figure 3. Paired t-test for the TAI mass of bulk and interlots: Sub A vs Sub C

For Bulkclassified and Interlots lots the average difference between Sub A and Sub C was 0.0258g with a s.e. of 0.0104g

The mass differences did not show a level dependence for all types of wools. Based on the standard deviation (SD) of the differences, the 95% confidence limit (95% CL) was $\pm 0.69\text{g}$ for the Grower lots and $\pm 0.99\text{g}$ for the Bulkclassified and Interlots.

Therefore, the auto-proportioning control limit of the difference between Sub A and additional Subs can be conservatively set at $\pm 0.5\text{g}$ for all types of lots.

Similarity in TAI composition among the subsamples

As required in Appendix F of IWTO-19, TAI composition must be similar prior to the auto-proportioning of any additional Subs. The assessment is done from a visual observation by a trained operator.

In summary, two pre-conditions have been established for the auto-proportioning method in this report:

- The TAI composition must be similar among all subsamples. (current method applied to $\leq 2\text{g}$ TAI weight subsamples as per IWTO Appendix F)
- The difference between the additional Sub TAI mass and the first Sub TAI mass must not exceed $\pm 0.5\text{g}$.

Equivalence of the WB% and VMB% between the tested and the combined with auto-proportioned values of Grower lots

For the QC-trial data, a pseudo auto-proportion was carried out for additional TAI subs of the tests which met the second and third criteria established. Because the TAI specimens were discarded for all tests, the first criterion, similarity in the composition, was not checked in this report.

Equivalence of WB% and VMB%

A series of IWTO-0 analyses were done to check the equivalence of WB and VMB between the auto-proportioned and the actual HSI or manual tested results against the criteria published in Appendix L of IWTO-19. A summary of the results is listed in Table 2 for overall biases and geometric mean (GM) slopes. The details of the analyses are shown in Appendixes 1 - 5.

Table 2. Overall bias and geometric mean slope for WB and VMB checks

Lab	Certified values	Overall bias			Geometric Mean Slope			Valid tests
		Standard	AutoPro vs HSI Tested	AutoPro vs Manual	Standard	AutoPro vs HSI Tested	AutoPro vs Manual	
Mel: 1 st QC trial	WB%	±0.1	0.000	-0.006	0.90-1.10	0.999	0.999	192
	VMB%	±0.1	0.006	0.003	0.90-1.10	1.009	1.016	192
Mel: 2 nd QC trial	WB%	±0.1	0.004	0.005	0.90-1.10	1.000	0.998	202
	VMB%	±0.1	-0.010	-0.029	0.90-1.10	1.002	0.995	202
Fre: QC trial	WB%	±0.1	-0.002	-0.048	0.90-1.10	1.001	1.006	217
	VMB%	±0.1	-0.001	0.056	0.90-1.10	1.004	1.031	217
Mel: Tests August 2025	WB%	±0.1	-	-0.001	0.90-1.10	-	1.000	12933
	VMB%	±0.1	-	0.001	0.90-1.10	-	1.001	12933

Note: the 2nd QC trial at the Melbourne Lab used an automate sample spreader. AutoPro: Auto proportion

The overall biases were all much less than ±0.1% and the GM slopes were well within the range 0.90 - 1.10 for both WB% and VMB%, which met the criteria set in Appendix L.

SD of the differences in VMB%

In addition to the overall bias and GM slope, there is a limit required for the SD of the differences at various VMB levels. Table 3 lists the results for the two QC trials at Melbourne,

Table 4 for the trial at Fremantle and Table 5 for the commercial tests in August 2025.

It can be seen from the tables that all SD values met the criteria required, either for comparing to the HSI or to the manual tested values (i.e. reference). As expected, the HSI SD values were much lower than the manual (subjective) values, indicating that the HSI testing system is very reliable and robust for auto proportioning.

Table 3. Standard deviations of differences for QC trials at Melbourne

VMB Range (%)	Maximum Allowable SD of Differences (%)	Mel: 1 st QC trial: SD of Differences AutoPro vs			Mel: 2 nd QC trial (spreader): SD of Differences AutoPro vs		
		HSI Tested	Manual	Valid tests	HSI Tested	Manual	Valid tests
0.0 - 1.0	0.1	0.045	0.146	88	0.046	0.114	74
1.1 - 4.0	0.2	0.084	0.193	98	0.065	0.181	101
4.1- 8.0	0.3	0.057	0.324	6 (4*)	0.081	0.342	24
>8.0	0.4	NA	NA	NA	0.066	0.346	3

Note: * two outliers excluded in comparison to Manual

Table 4. Standard deviations of differences of VMB for the QC trial at Fremantle

VMB Range (%)	Maximum Allowable SD of Differences (%)	Fre: QC trial: SD of Differences AutoPro vs		
		HSI Tested	Manual	Valid tests
0.0 - 1.0	0.1	0.046	0.135	61
1.1 - 4.0	0.2	0.052	0.195	141
4.1- 8.0	0.3	0.07	0.115	15
>8.0	0.4	NA	NA	NA

Table 5. Standard deviations of differences of VMB for the tests in August at Melbourne

VMB Range (%)	Maximum Allowable SD of Differences (%)	Fre: QC trial: SD of Differences AutoPro vs		
		HSI Tested	Manual	Valid tests
0.0 - 1.0	0.1	-	0.04	4012
1.1 - 4.0	0.2	--	0.08	6324
4.1- 8.0	0.3	-	0.14	1716
>8.0	0.4	-	0.18	881

Equivalence of WB% and VMB% between the tested and the combined with auto-proportioned values of Bulkclassified and Interlots

Similar analyses were carried out for the Bulkclassified and Interlots which used three subsamples. There were 1,401 lots of the 2,074 tests that met the first two criteria for the auto proportioning. The details of IWTO-0 analysis are shown in Appendix 5.

Table 6 shows the equivalence of WB and VMB to the tested values. The overall biases and GM slopes all met the criteria required in Appendix L.

Table 6. Overall bias and geometric mean slope for WB and VMB for Bulk and Interlots

Lab	Certified values	Overall bias		Geometric Mean Slope		Valid tests
		Standard	AutoPro vs Tested	Standard	AutoPro vs Tested	
Mel: Tests August 2025	WB%	±0.1	0.000	0.90-1.10	1.000	1401
	VMB%	±0.1	0.001	0.90-1.10	1.000	1401

Table 7 shows the SD of the differences for VMB. The values were all well in the control limits required.

Table 7. Standard deviations of differences of VMB for Bulkclassified and Interlots

VMB Range (%)	Maximum Allowable SD of Differences (%)	SD of Differences	Valid tests
0.0 - 1.0	0.1	0.065	232
1.1 - 4.0	0.2	0.120	864
4.1- 8.0	0.3	0.175	241
>8.0	0.4	0.121	64

CONCLUSIONS

The IWTO-0 statistical analysis method showed that the using a combination of tested (Sub A) and auto proportioned additional sub(s) produced equivalent WB% and VMB% to those of the actual tested values from either the HSI or the manual method. Therefore, it would have no commercial impact on the issued test results.

Two preconditions have been established in this report to allow auto-proportioning of TAI, with no upper mass limit. That is, the conditions for the auto-proportioning shall be:

1. TAI composition is similar among the subsamples (visual operator check)
2. The difference between the TAI masses do not exceed ±0.5g.

The formula: TAI mass difference (g) = Sub_{B or C} - Sub_A

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that changes be made to the criteria published in Appendix F of IWTO-19 (2024) for the auto proportioning method.

REFERENCES

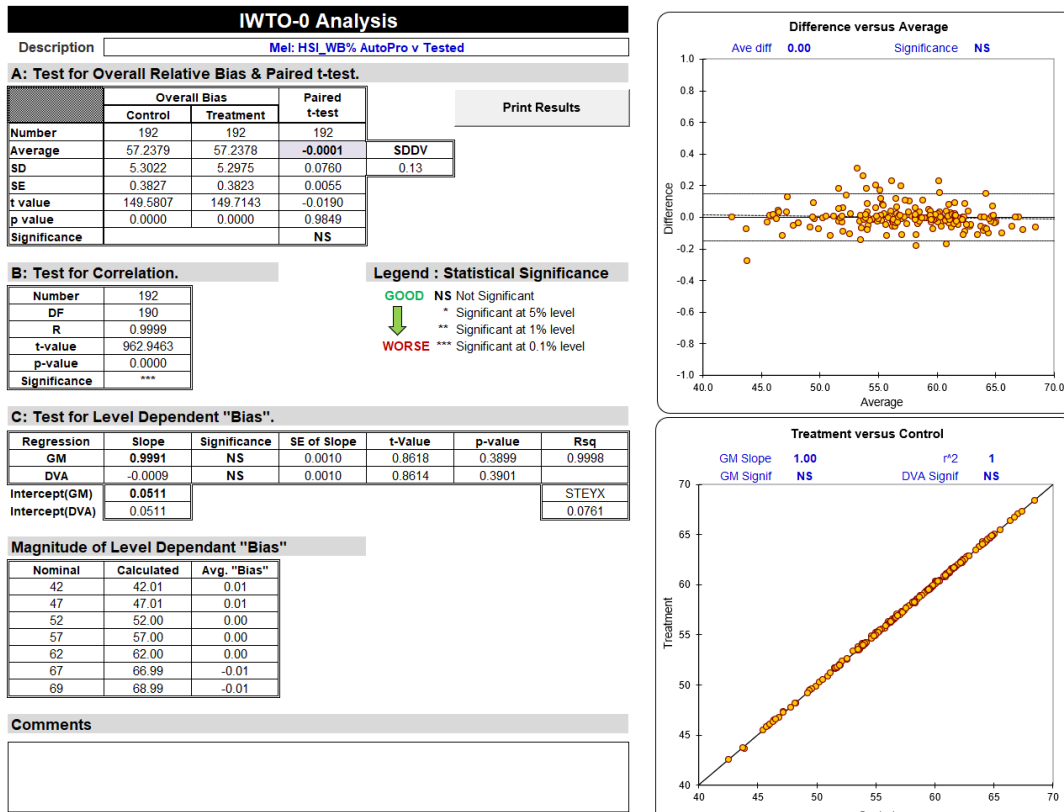
IWTO, (2024), Appendix F & L: Method for Determining Vegetable Matter Base and Total Alkali-insoluble Impurities of Scoured Subsamples, IWTO-19-2024.

Austin, D. (1987), Appendix 3: Precision of Weight Proportion Assessment of the Components of Total Alkali-insolubles and its Effect on Vegetable Matter Base Percentage of New Zealand Wools, IWTO January 1987, Pairs, Raw Wool Certification Sub-committee.

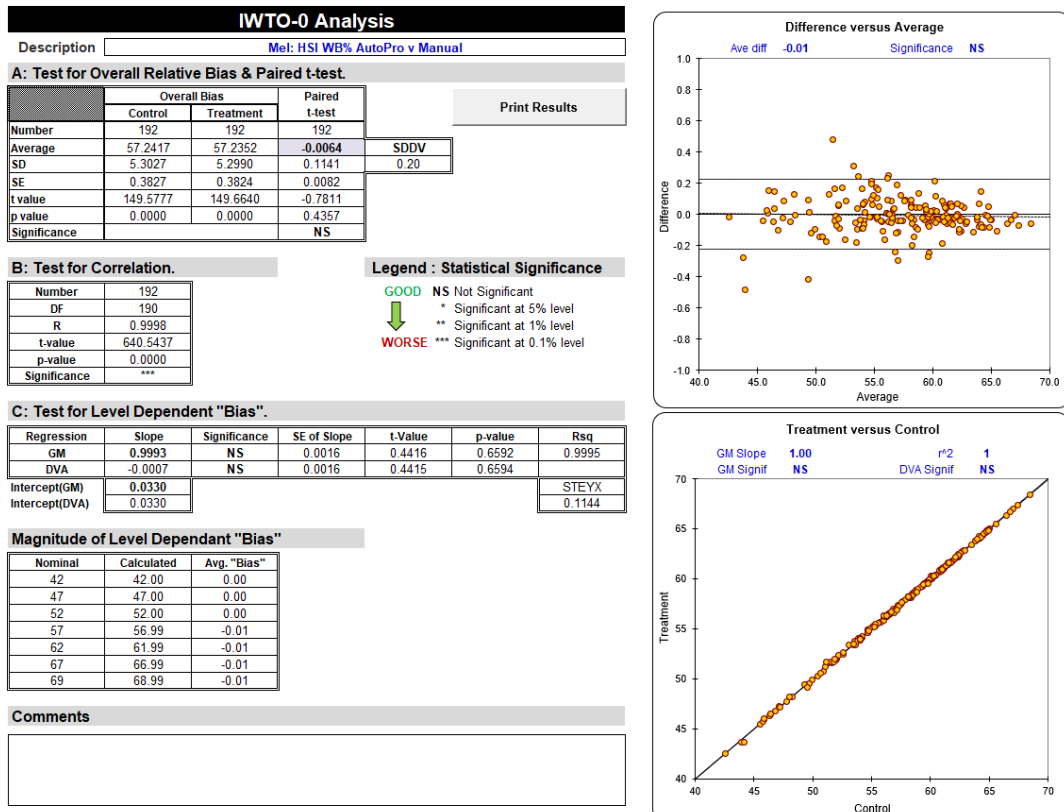
Camiou, H. (1987), Appendix 4: Differences between the Weighing and Visual Estimation of Alkali-insoluble Components of Uruguayan Wools, IWTO June 1987, Rio De Janeiro.

Axe, D. E. (1995), Factors affecting uniformity of a mix, Animal Feed Science and Technology Volume 53, Issue 2, Pages 211-220.

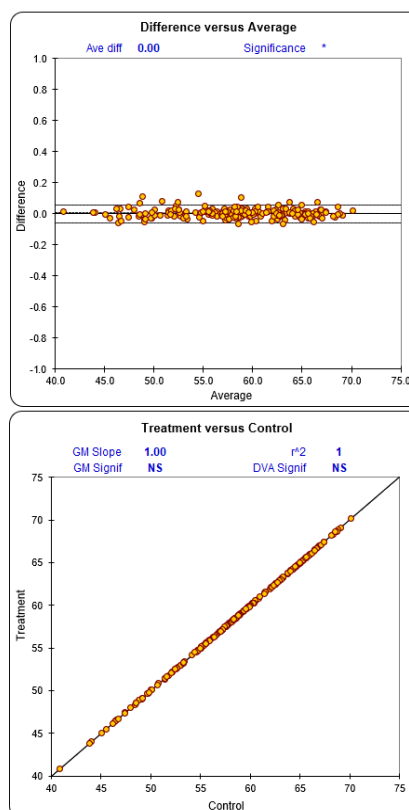
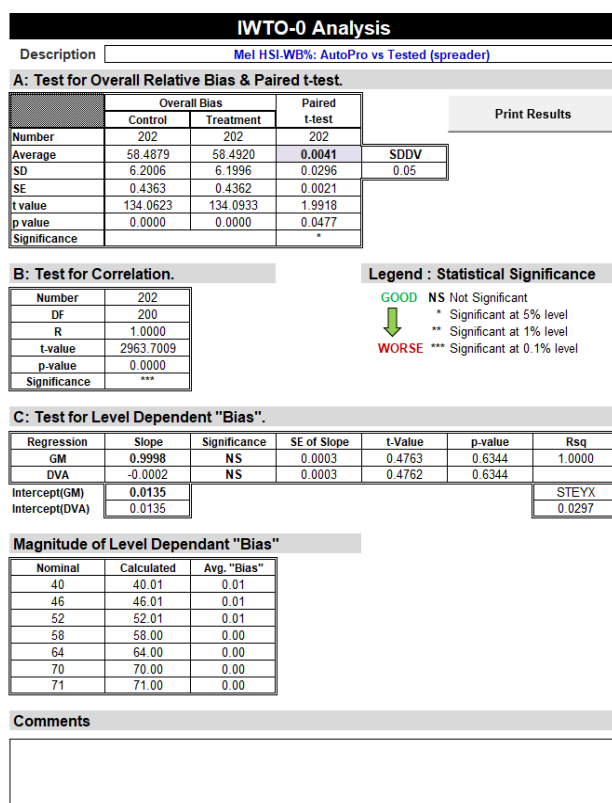
Appendix 1. Equivalence of WB% for Melbourne QC trials



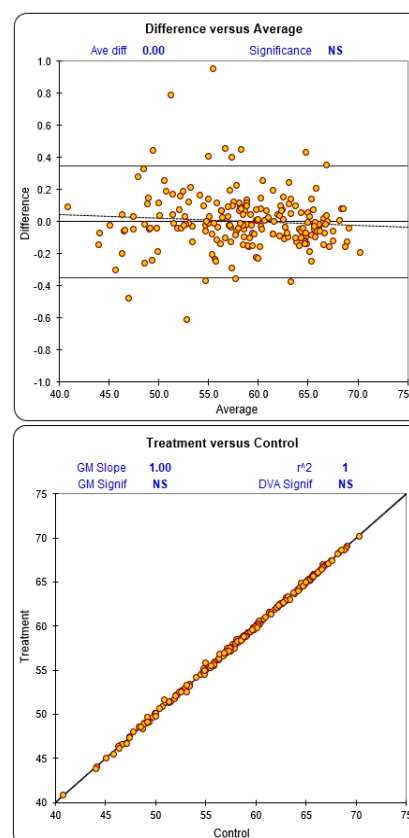
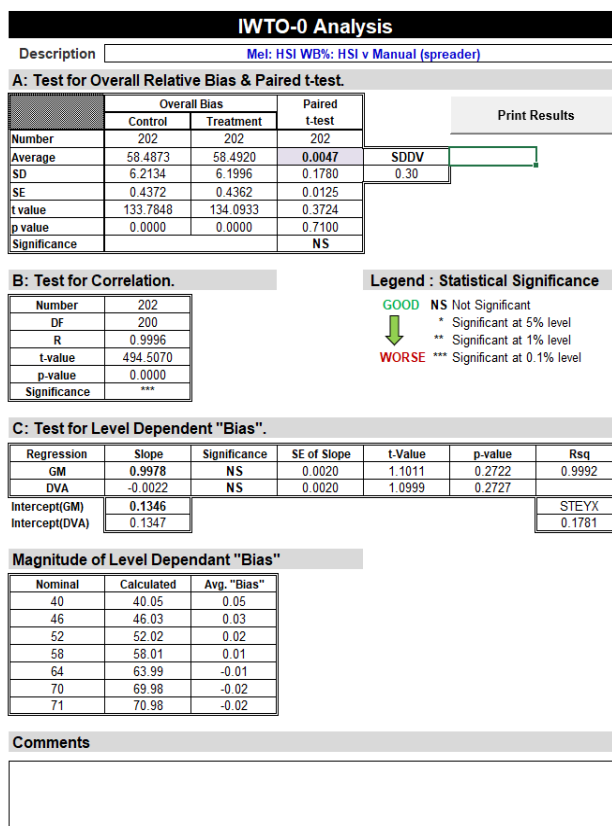
(a) HSI Auto proportioned vs T HSI Tested



(b) HSI Auto proportioned vs Manual tested

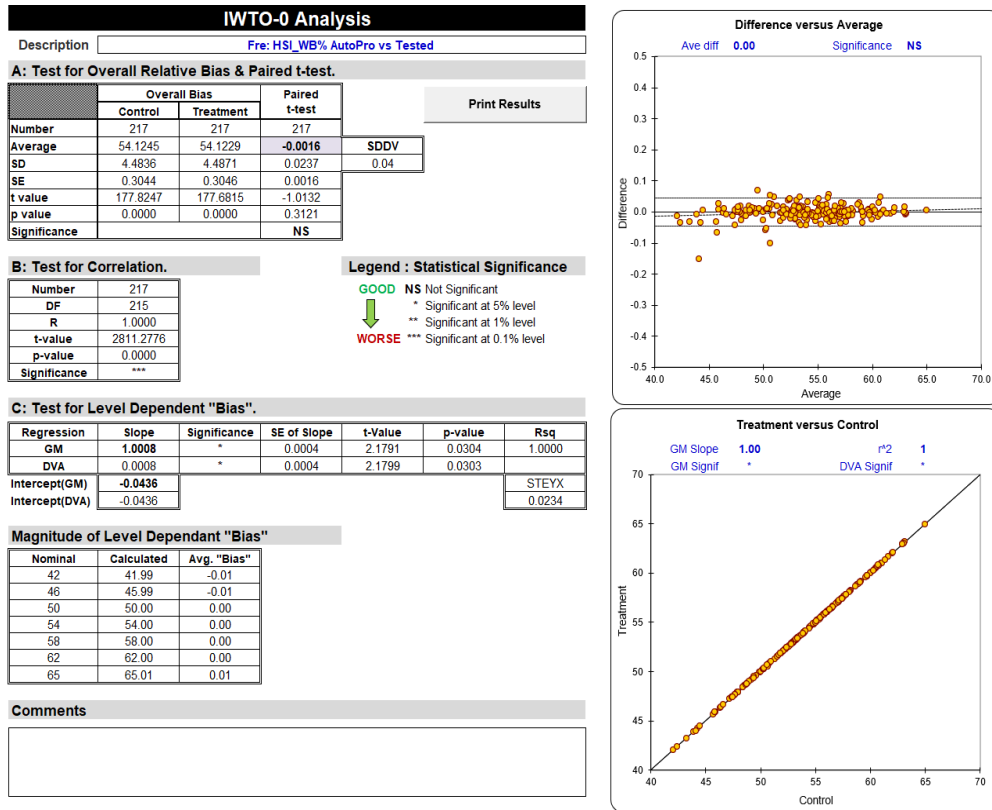


(c) HSI Auto proportioned vs HSI Tested (using spreader)

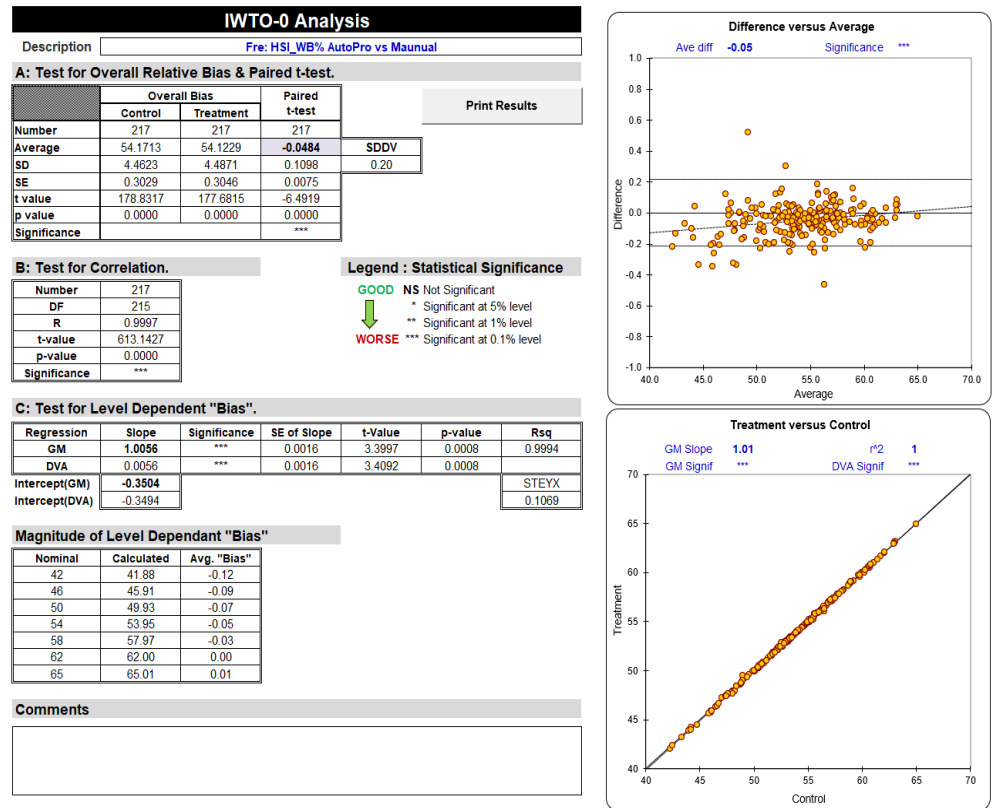


(d) HSI Auto proportioned vs Manual tested (using spreader)

Appendix 2 Equivalence of WB% for Fremantle QC trial

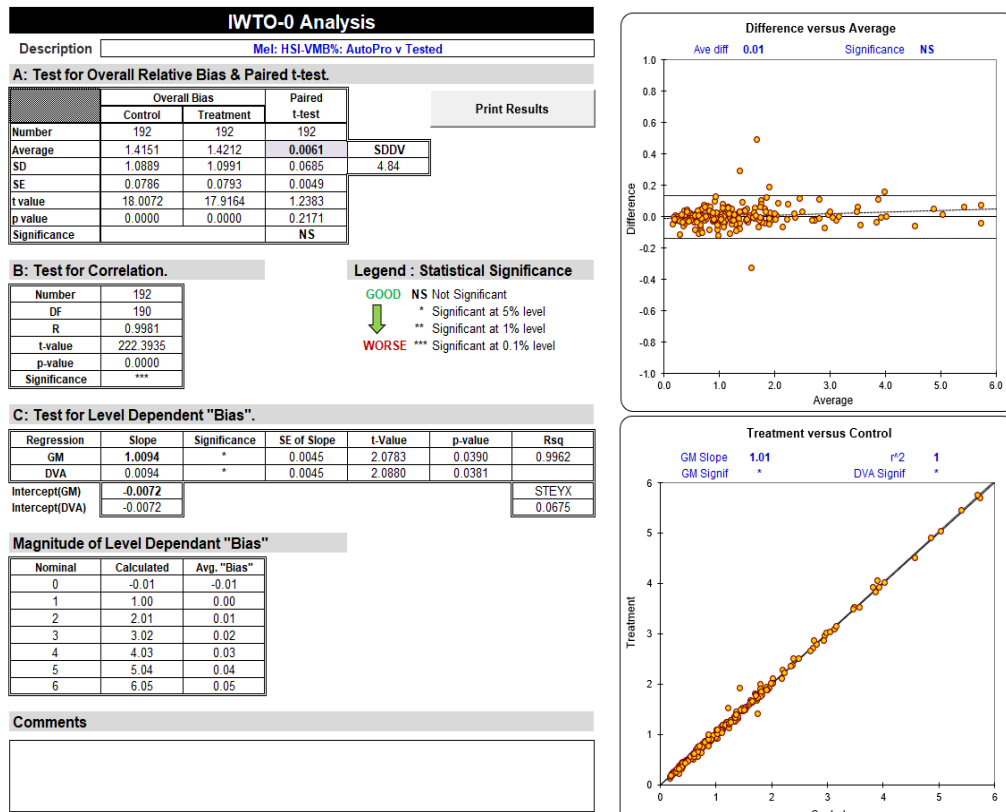


(a) HSI Auto proportioned vs HSI Tested

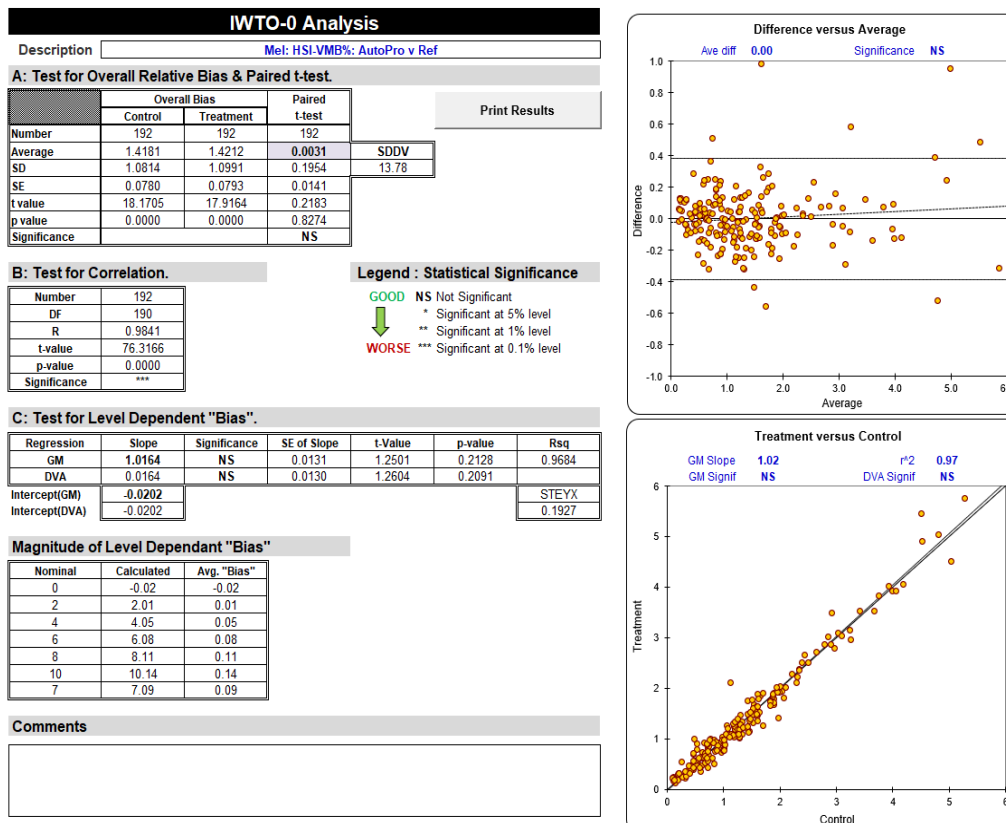


(b) HSI Auto proportioned vs Manual tested

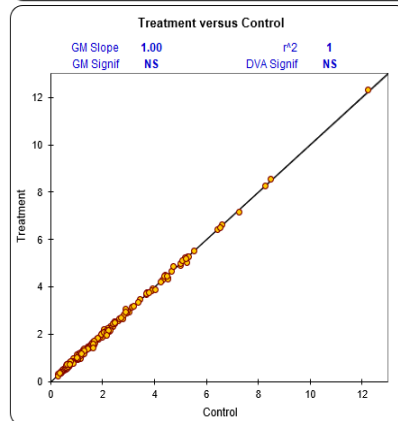
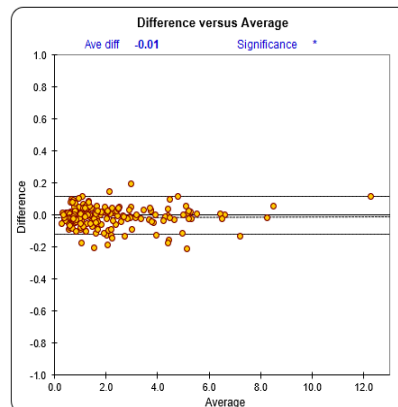
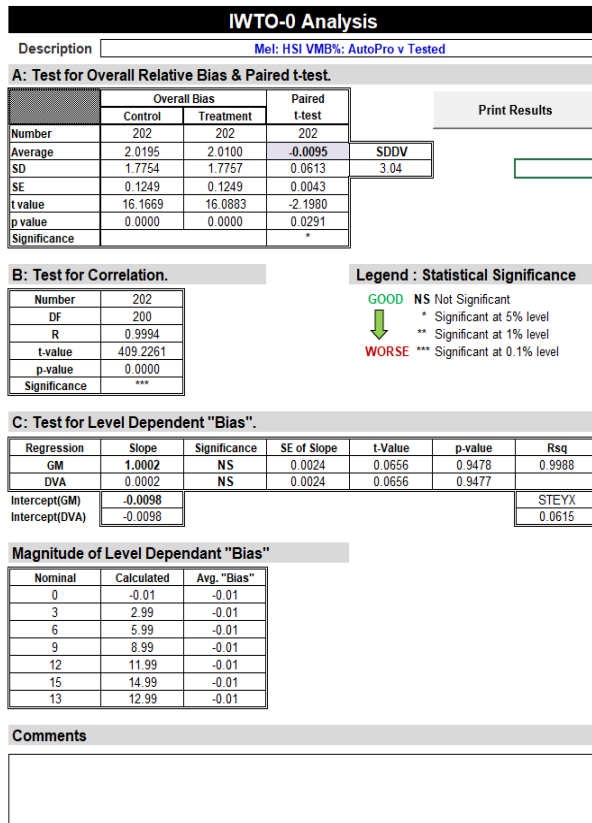
Appendix 3. Equivalence of VMB% for Melbourne QC trials



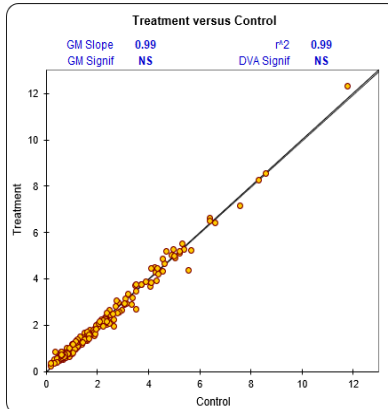
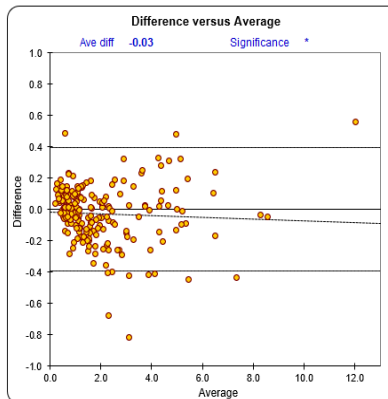
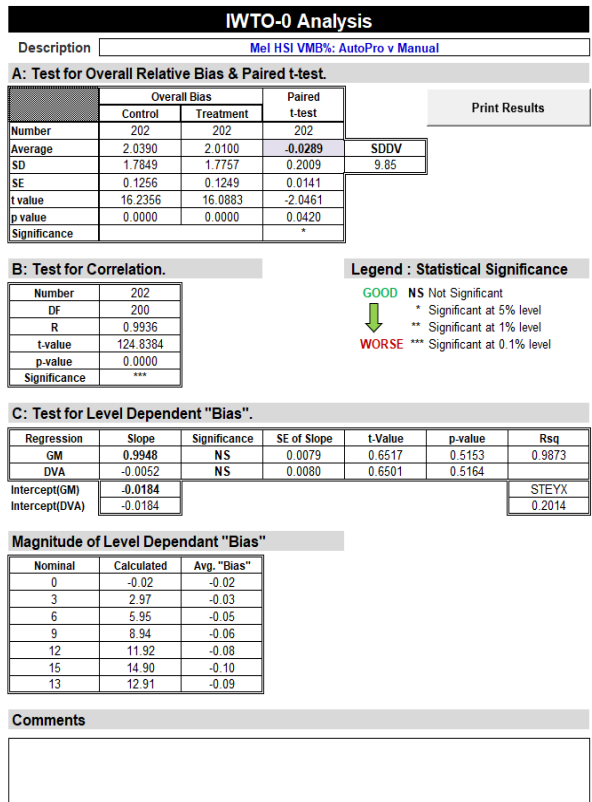
(a) HSI Auto proportioned vs HSI Tested



(b) HSI Auto proportioned vs Manual tested

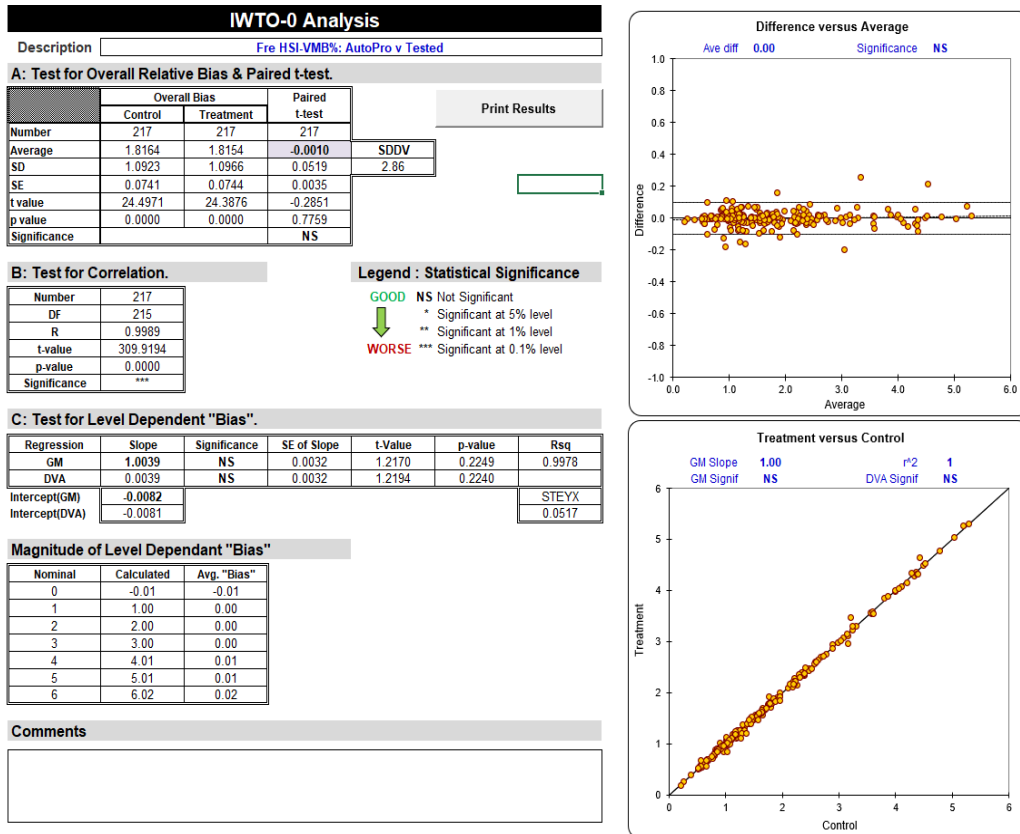


(c) HSI Auto proportioned vs HSI Tested (using spreader)

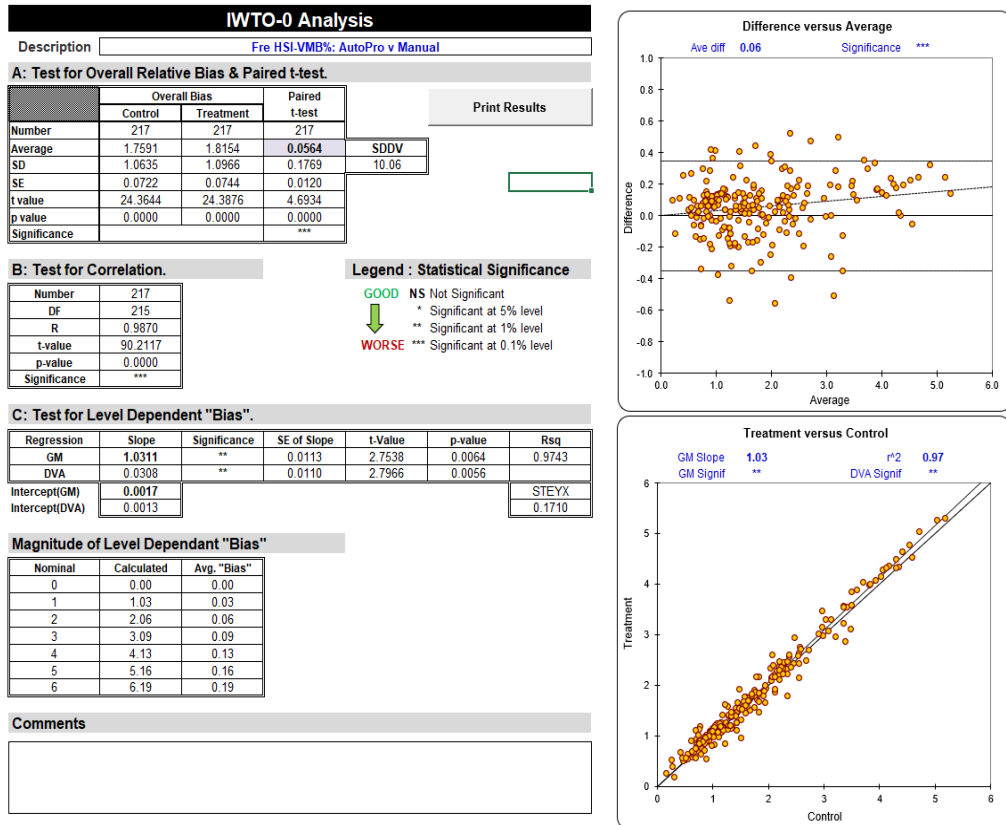


(d) HSI Auto proportioned vs Manual Tested (using spreader)

Appendix 4. Equivalence of VMB% for Fremantle QC trial



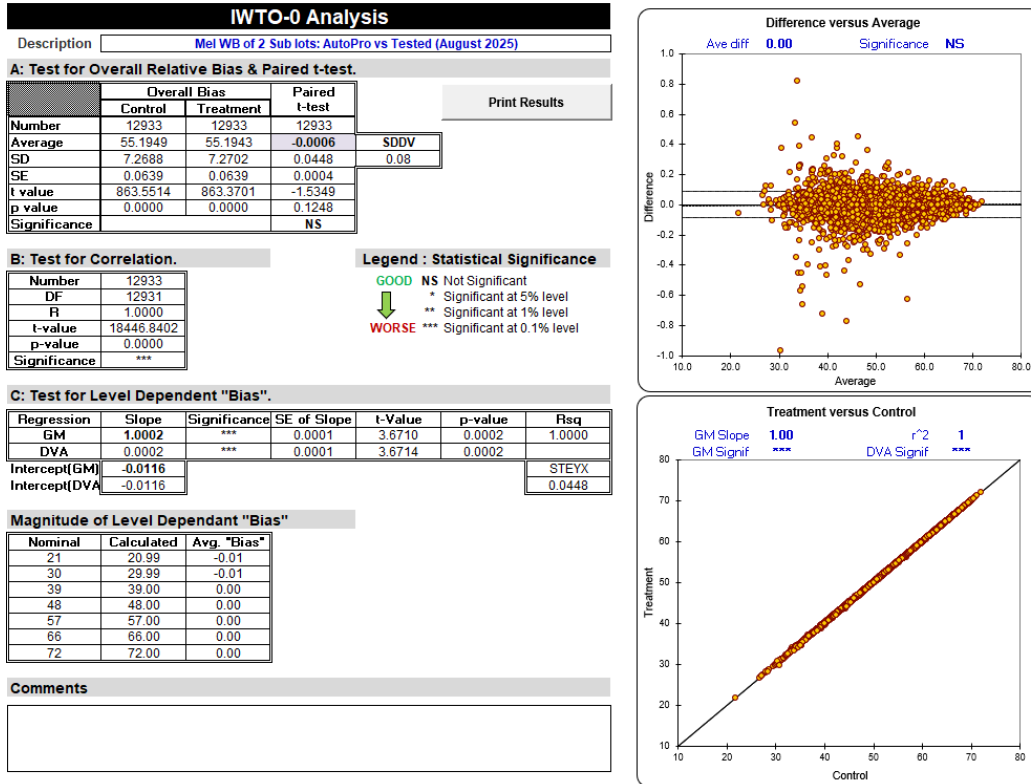
(a) HSI Auto proportioned vs HSI Tested



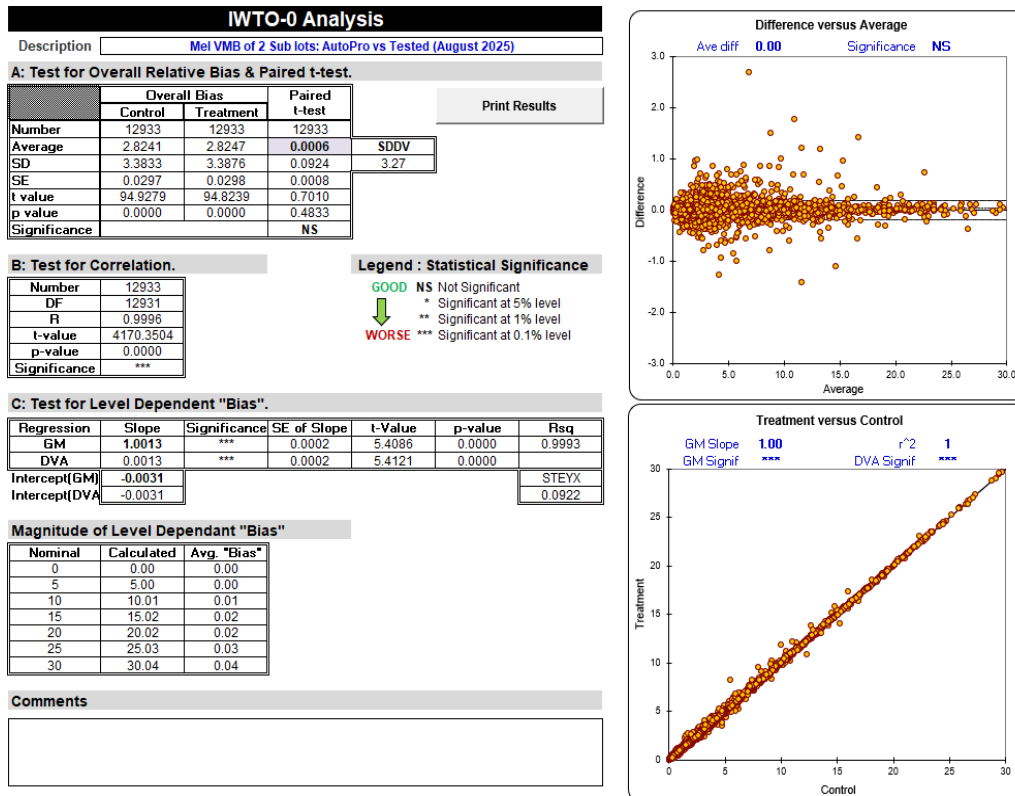
(b) HSI Auto proportioned vs Manual Tested

Appendix 5. Equivalence of WB% and VMB% for the Tests in August 2025

A. Grower lots (two subsamples)

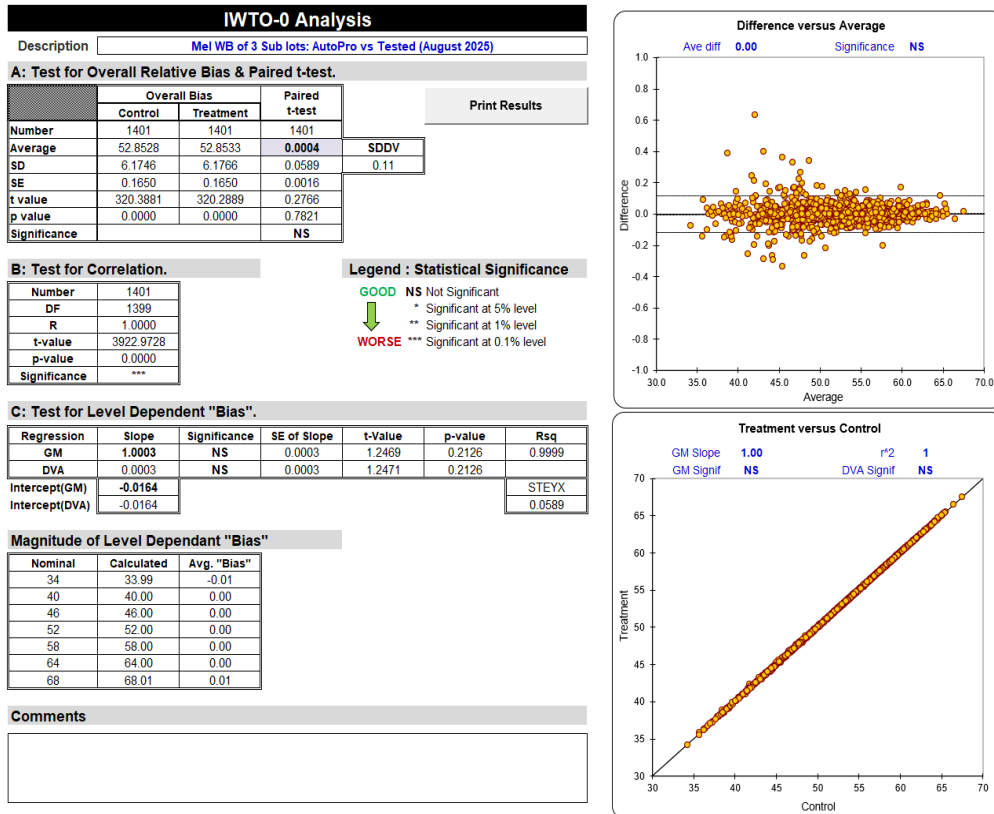


(a) Auto proportioned vs Tested WB% (manual method)

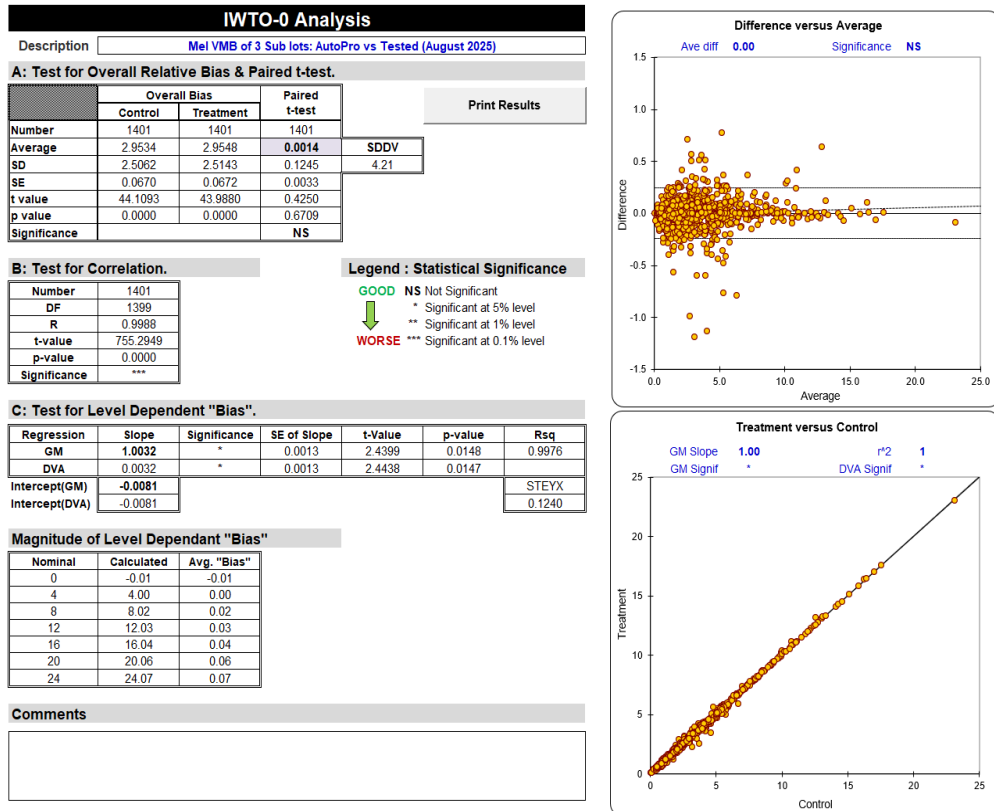


(b) Auto proportioned vs manual Tested VMB% (manual method)

Bulk and Interlots (three subsamples)



(a) Auto proportioned vs Tested WB% (manual method)



(b) Auto proportioned vs manual Tested VMB% (manual method)