

40 Years of MEBAK® On the November 19th 1971, the first assembly of the Mitteleuropäische Brautechnische Analysenkommission e. V. or MEBAK® took place in the “Old Library” at the VLB Berlin. This association for brewing analysis, which began its existence as the Deutsche Brautechnische Analysenkommission (DBAK), is now celebrating its 40th anniversary.

In the beginning, participating institutions included the VLB Berlin as well as the Wissenschaftliche Station für Brauerei in Munich, the Versuchsanstalt für Bierbrauerei der Bayerischen Landesgewerbeanstalt in Nuremberg, the Staatliche Brautechnische Prüf- und Versuchsanstalt in Freising-Weihenstephan, the Landesanstalt für landwirtschaftliches Gewerbe at the University of Hohenheim, the Versuchs- und Untersuchungsstation für die Gärungsindustrie in Mühlheim, the Lehrstuhl for Chemical-Technical Analysis in Freising-Weihenstephan, the Versuchsstation Schweizerischer Brauereien in Zurich, and the Versuchsstation für das Gärungsgewerbe in Vienna, along with the central laboratory of the Schultheiss brewery in Berlin and Stuttgarter Hofbräu as representatives from the German brewing industry.

The year that MEBAK® was founded, Prof. Dr. F. Drawert, who had previously led DBAK, was elected as the first Chairman. Dr. H.-J. Wellhoener became his vice chairman. Under their leadership, MEBAK® became a registered association in 1981 with its headquarters in Freising, Germany. Their successors, Dr. H. Pfenninger of the institution now called Labor Veritas in Zurich and Prof. Dr. E. Geiger of Weihenstephan, took over in 1990. In 2000, leadership passed to Prof. Dr. H. Miedaner of the Weihenstephan Research Center for Brewing and Food Quality (TUM) and Dr. H.-M. Anger of the VLB Berlin. At the 63rd assembly in April 2004, Dr. H.-M. Anger and Dr. A. Gresser of the Forst Brewery in Meran were elected to fill these positions. In April 2010, Prof. Dr. F. Jacob of the Weihenstephan Research Center for Brewing and Food Quality (TUM) and Dr. G. Bender of the Karlsberg Brewery in Homburg followed in their footsteps.

The name MEBAK® was chosen to include members of Central European countries who share the same or similar analytical and technological concerns. For this reason, the inclusion of Czechoslovakia and Italy was discussed early on and these two countries, i.e. the Czech Republic and Italy, have been members for many years now.

Since its inception, the work MEBAK® undertakes has continued to include analytical methods suitable for small and medium-sized breweries. This has not diminished despite the spread of globalization. One of the most important objectives pursued by MEBAK® today, which is reflected in its guiding principles, is to promote research in the areas of analysis and technology for raw materials and beverages, in order to make both established and new analysis methods more accessible. This involves determining fundamental principles and processes, which serve to standardize the analysis of raw materials as well as intermediate, secondary and finished products, additives, processing aids, product containers and packaging materials, particularly for the malting and brewing industries. In outlining and describing analysis methods pertinent for brewing and beverage production, MEBAK® provides laboratory technologists and other specialists with helpful tools applicable in daily practice. The goal is to reliably and analytically track raw materials through the intermediate and final stages of production, all the way through to the packaged product. This serves to fulfill the quality standards required in the market.

MEBAK® also carries out performance tests on new laboratory equipment, supports university and industry research projects and promotes cooperation between other institutes, such as state and private laboratories (for example, within the scope of collaborative trials) as well as between European and American technical and scientific umbrella organizations (European Brewery Convention (EBC), American Society of

Brewing Chemists (ASBC), Association Latinoamericana de Fabricantes de Cerveza (ALAFACE)) involved in beer brewing and beverage production.

One of the objectives most important to MEBAK® continues to be compiling and providing students with information on analytical methods in organized reference works, in order to aid in their educational and vocational training. These methods are all documented in a multiple volume collection called Brautechnische Analysenmethoden (Brewing Analysis Methods), which is now considered a standard reference work. They are also being translated into English volume by volume. This collection comprises multiple volumes that are frequently revised and updated. These volumes include Water, Raw Materials, Wort, Beer and Beer-based Beverages, Sensory Analysis, Product Containers and Packaging Materials, Volume III (analysis methods) and Volume IV (technical processing aids, cleaning and disinfecting agents and much more).

The volume Microbiology is currently a work in progress. Furthermore, MEBAK® has created guidelines for CIP systems, for monitoring brewhouse operations and for beverage dispensing systems. MEBAK® is also currently preparing guidelines for filtration systems. www.mebak.org

Bilduntertitel:

In 1971, Prof. Drawert was elected as the first Chairman of MEBAK®, which was originally known as DBAK.

Dr. Fritz Jacob of Weihenstephan is the current Chairman of MEBAK®.

Participants attending one of the first MEBAK meetings at Doemens in Gräfelfing, Germany.