

## **STRENGTH IN NUMBERS: COMBINING INSTITUTIONAL DATA INTO A SHARED ZOOTRITION©**

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### **Abstract**

The nutrient composition of many unique feedstuffs (i.e. various browses, whole prey, insects) utilized within zoo and wildlife feeding programs is often not well characterized. While published data from peer-reviewed literature can be compiled and entered into formulation and records-keeping software (i.e. Zootrition), institution-based samples and detail are often preferred (and/or required for targeted research purposes), hence must be analyzed separately. In 2018, Dairy One/Zooquarius Laboratory services ([www.dairyone.com](http://www.dairyone.com)) announced targeted analytical packages and pricing for improved information in support of applied zoo nutrition, to which individual facilities/personnel submit samples and receive institution-based reports. We propose to develop that service further through creation of a pooled database of all submitted samples. Although sample source will remain anonymous in the summary data, any institution willing to contribute their individual samples to this pooled effort will receive annual updates that map directly into a Zootrition database structure. Standardized sample descriptions will be used for submission and reporting, with examples highlighted in the presentation. The collective datasets will provide not only more robust numbers for assurance of data validity but also provide a useful comparison of an institution's individual data against the larger group and assist in the identification of data gaps that can be targeted for future efforts/resources.