

The Pico•Tag® Method: *The Method for Amino Acid Analysis*

In the spring of 1984, Waters introduced the Pico•Tag Method for Amino Acid Analysis. Initially, the procedure was designed to provide the biochemist with a state-of-the-art package for peptide/protein analysis (LAH#220). Recently, Waters has introduced enhancements that allow the analysis of free amino acids in physiologic samples as well as food and feed type samples (LAH#359). This versatility as well as Waters' commitment to customer support, has made the Pico•Tag system the best selling reverse phase amino acid analysis system in the world.

Even more than commercial success, it is probably fair to state that true scientific acceptance of an analytical method can be judged by the number of citations that method receives in the scientific literature. Based on this reasoning, the acceptance for Pico•Tag is phenomenal! Waters first publication on PITC-based amino acid analysis² appeared in December 1984. Even though this year-end publication date resulted in no citations for 1984, this paper was the tenth most cited paper of 1984 in all chemical literature for the three year period 1984-86³. In fact, of the hundred most cited papers from this period, it was the most cited paper in both 1986 and 1987, with 115 citations in 1987 alone, and the most cited paper of the four year period 1984-1987!

This extraordinary explosion in the use of PITC-based methods is mirrored in public acceptance of the Pico•Tag method. We believe that this success is due, at least in part, to our commitment to provide our customers with the most up-to-date information on amino acid analysis in general and the Pico•Tag system in particular. To this end, we continue our research on both the fundamental chemistry of PITC derivatization and applications of this powerful tool⁴ for amino acid analysis. The most recent example of these efforts are a review article in *Analytical Biochemistry*¹ and a comprehensive methods book for the Pico•Tag method⁵.

-
- 1 Cohen, S.A. and Strydom, D., *Anal. Biochem.* 174, pg. 1, 1988.
 - 2 Bidlingmeyer, B.A. Cohen, S.A., and Tarvin, T.L., *J. Chromatogr.*, 93, 1984.
 - 3 Garfield, e., *Current Contents*, 31 (28), 3-15, 1988.
 - 4 Maugh, T.H., *Science*, 225, 42, 1984.
 - 5 Cohen, S.A., Meys, M. and Tarvin, T.L., *The Pico•Tag® Method A Manual of Advanced Techniques for Amino Acid Analysis*, published by Waters Chromatography Division, 1989.