



# ICAR Newsletter

## October 2009

**International Committee  
for Animal Recording**



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## **A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT**

“Science and its applications have always played an integral part in the development of ICAR standards and guidelines” (ICAR Strategic Plan). This strategic orientation ensures the ICAR global position as standard setting international body. It has been implemented throughout ICAR's history and is crucial for the achievement of ICAR objectives. Moreover, success in providing services to its Members greatly depends on adjustments of the content and forms of ICAR programs to the changing environment and developments in technologies related to animal identification, recording, analysis of products and genetic evaluation.

In this issue of the NEWSLETTER, we present activities which took place during the summer (N.B. “summer” in the Northern Hemisphere!) 2009 drawing your attention to two events organized in cooperation with the European Association for Animal Production (EAAP) during their 60<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting held in Barcelona, Spain, 24-27 August 2009. INTERBULL meetings held in Barcelona focused on programs and activities related to the incorporation of genomics in estimation of breeding value. Advances and use of electronic identification of animals was the theme of a symposium which attracted great number of researchers and professionals involved in this field. And, in addition, we present two good news items from our Sub-Committee for Animal Identification: first, ICAR test protocols for testing identification devices have become ISO standards and second, the European Union has recognized ICAR standards in testing and approval of identification devices for use in the Union!

## **The 37<sup>th</sup> ICAR BIENNIAL SESSION 31 MAY - 4 JUNE 2010, RIGA, LATVIA**

The 37<sup>th</sup> Biennial Session will be held in Riga, Latvia from 31 May to 4 June 2010. The Organizing Committee issued the First Announcement containing information on the country, town, venue of the session and accommodation for participants. Andrea Rosati, Secretary General, visited Riga and discussed with local organizers preparation of the program for the session and technical arrangements.

The first draft of the program will be ready soon and announced by an e-mail alert and on the ICAR website. As always, the program was prepared to meet the needs of knowledge of ICAR members.

## **INTERBULL – EAAP SESSION AT THE 60<sup>th</sup> EAAP ANNUAL MEETING**

### **“Impact of global market on cattle breeding programs and practices**

One of 55 scientific sessions held during the 60<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of EAAP dealt with impact of globalization on cattle breeding programs and practices. While the use of genomics and market conditions will stimulate further orientation towards the use of international breeds, some authors considered that, in specific climatic and environmental conditions, reliance on local breeds and traits other than productivity would become more important for economy of cattle production. Under the chairmanship of Jarmo Juga from Finland and former president of ICAR and G. Thaler from Germany researchers presented ten papers covering:

- Future animal improvement programs applied to global populations (P.M Van Raden, USA).
- Practical cattle breeding in the future: commercialised or cooperative, across borderlines between countries (N. Bo, Denmark).
- Country profiles regarding the use of imported bulls (J.W. Durr *et al.*, Brazil – Sweden).
- Breeding for global dairy market using genomic selection (A.P.V. De Roos *et al.*, Netherlands).
- Utilizing international genetic pool, a Nordic experience (H. Stalhammar, Norway).
- Global vs local cattle breeding: beyond GxE (F.E. Madalena, Brazil).
- Challenges and opportunities for global dairy cattle breeding: a Canadian perspective (F. Miglior *et al.*, Canada).
- Monitoring sustainability of international dairy breeds (J. Philipsson *et al.*, Sweden).
- Brown Swiss x Holstein compared to pure Holstein for production in first two lactations (S. Bloettner *et al.*, Germany).
- Genotype x environment interaction in the Greek Holstein population (D. Tsiokos *et al.*, Greece).

For more details, please see Session 04, pp 28-32 of the Barcelona “Book of Abstracts” and “Barcelona presentations (PDF)” on the EAAP web site at:  
[www.eaap.org/Barcelona/Sessions/Session 04.html](http://www.eaap.org/Barcelona/Sessions/Session 04.html)

## **ICAR – FAO – EAAP SYMPOSIUM AT THE 60<sup>th</sup> EAAP ANNUAL MEETING**

### **“ Advances and use of electronic identification”**

Electronic identification of farm animals is widely used in almost all regions of the world and in various production systems in health and movement control, breeding programs, traceability of animals and in farm and herd management. The symposium organized by ICAR Sub-Committee for Animal Identification and Task Force for Developing Countries, FAO and EAAP was an excellent opportunity for researchers and field experts to present their experience and problems encountered in the application of electronic ID devices and systems. Almost one hundred authors participated in the preparation of fifteen theatre presentations and fifteen posters. The presence and active participation of representatives of national and international authorities, such as EU, and of control laboratories greatly contributed to the success of this event. J. Robles (Spain), O.K. Hansen (Denmark, ICAR SC Identification), B. Besbes (Tunisia, FAO and ICAR TF Developing Countries) and J.W Oltjen (USA) chaired the symposium.

For more details please see Session 43, pp 481-496 of the “Barcelona “Book of Abstracts”” and “Barcelona presentations (PDF)” on the EAAP web site at:  
[www.eaap.org/Barcelona/Sessions/Session 43.html](http://www.eaap.org/Barcelona/Sessions/Session 43.html)





*Picture taken at the INTERBULL Meeting held in Barcelona when Bill Montgomerie and Paul VanRaden received the diplomas, acknowledging their valuable services to Interbull, since their mandates as members of the Interbull Steering Committee ended.  
From the left: Jan Philippsen (Sweden), Bill Montgomerie (New Zealand), Paul VanRaden (USA), Reinhard Reents and Neil Petreny.*

## **INTERBULL MEETING, Barcelona, Spain, 21-24 August 2009**

One hundred fifty participants from 32 countries at the four day meeting discussed past experience, current problems and future developments in science and technology in fields relevant to the scope of INTERBULL – international genetic evaluation of sires. The meeting discussed also the INTERBULL strategic plan, operational issues and modification of current procedure for conventional international genetic evaluation. Particular attention was paid to the incorporation of genomics in the estimation of breeding values of bulls.

The INTERBULL Steering Committee approved a number of decisions related to implementation of the current policies and future development of the international genetic evaluations.

In this issue of the ICAR Newsletter, we present the outcome of discussions on some crucial issues and an outline of decisions approved by the Steering Committee. For more details please refer to the web-site at: [www.interbull-slu.se](http://www.interbull-slu.se)

## **INTERBULL Strategic Plan**

The Interbull Steering Committee (SC), reviewed the strategic plan prepared in January 2009 and presented at the business meeting. It was agreed that a more detailed version of the plan would be sent to the members for comments and suggestions in October 2009, and the should be approved in March 2010, at the Paris workshop.

## **Incorporation of genomics in estimation of breeding value**

### **Genomics Task Force**

Considering the numerous issues that still require special advice from specialists, the SC decided to extend the mandate of the genomics Task Force until the next annual meeting, to be held in Riga, Latvia, from May 31 to June 4, 2010, during the more general ICAR meeting.

### **Validation:**

This issue received high priority, and the IB Technical Committee, under assistance of the IB Genomic Task Force, will finalise a validation test for GEBV's (a method III-G) in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of 2009. The SC will then evaluate the proposal and eventually approve this validation test method. The SC will then recommend the proposed validation procedure to ICAR for approval. Evaluation systems for genomic EBVs that pass this test should be considered valid within the EC.

### **GMACE**

In November or December 2009 a first research run for GMACE will be conducted by Interbull under guidance of the IB genomics Task Force. The results will be reviewed by the Task Force and the IB Technical Committee. Results will be discussed during a workshop in March 2010.

### **Conversion factors**

The use of conventional conversion equations from one country scale to another were tested by the INTERBULL Centre by running genetic correlations between countries including GEBVs from one country at a time. Although correlations varied within the range usually observed in Interbull runs, both TC and SC considered inappropriate to apply any form of conversion before a methodology to validate GEBVs is in place.

### **Brown Swiss Genomics**

A research project to create a common reference population for the Brown Swiss breed at the Interbull Centre has been approved by the SC and was presented at the business meeting. SNPs prediction equations will be calculated in each country scale at the Interbull Centre. The project is funded by the European Brown Swiss Federation, European Commission and the Swedish Agricultural University (SLU.) Other Brown Swiss populations are welcome to join the project.

## **INTERBEEF – FROM RESEARCH TO SERVICE**

In August 2009, the Working Group INTERBEEF had a strategic planning session to prepare the transition from research to service – international genetic evaluation of beef cattle. It held the first meeting with its newly established Scientific Advisory Committee for Beef Cattle Beef (Dorian Garrick, from Iowa State University, USA, and Roel Veerkamp, from Wageningen University, The Netherlands).



## ICAR TEST PROTOCOLS HAVE BECOME ISO STANDARDS

Testing of electronic identification devices conforming to ISO standards 11784 and 11785 is done according to ISO standard 24631, parts 1 – 4. This standard was published in August 2009 and thereby replacing the previous ICAR test protocols used since 1995.

The test procedures in the two sets of documents are identical, which means that the tests performed and approvals given in the years 1995 to 2009 under the ICAR test protocols are still valid under the ISO 24631 standard.

The ISO standards on animal identification above referenced are available in the ISO store: [www.iso.org/iso/iso\\_catalogue/catalogue\\_tc/catalogue\\_tc\\_browse.htm?commid=47156](http://www.iso.org/iso/iso_catalogue/catalogue_tc/catalogue_tc_browse.htm?commid=47156)

The main title of ISO 24631 standard is: **Radiofrequency identification of animals.**

The standard will be built out with further parts. Some are already under development.

ICAR's position as Registration Authority of ISO for ISO 11784/11785 conforming products remains unchanged.

### New type of test shown on the ICAR website

Since 1995 ICAR has tested the conformance of more than 200 transponder products, which all be seen on the ICAR website at:

[www.service-icar.com/manufacture\\_codes/Manufacturers\\_DB/manufacture\\_codes\\_main.asp](http://www.service-icar.com/manufacture_codes/Manufacturers_DB/manufacture_codes_main.asp)

**The conformance test** demonstrates if the transponders function as required by the ISO standards 11784 and 11785. However the conformance test does not provide important information such as indication of expected read ranges etc. Such results come from the performance test (ISO 24631, Part 3).

**The performance test** is required for approval of transponders to be used in sheep and goats in EU, so this year we have a growing number of products performance tested. On the ICAR website you can find the performance tested products shown with the date of performance test.

The test results are not shown on the web site, but there is a link showing the type of document that ICAR sends to the manufacturer after the performance test. This document provides quick information about the main results and customers could ask manufacturers for this document. Also on the ICAR website there is a link showing the recommendations on transponder performance criteria from ISO TC23\SC19\WG3\TWG in relation to COUNCIL REGULATION (EC) No 21/2004.

## LATEST COMMUNICATIONS FROM SUB-COMMITTEE FOR RECORDING DEVICES

It has been found by ICAR that in the construction of LMS2-1 milk meter, installed before 1 June 2009, in the AMS system does not conform with the ICAR rules for SAC-Futureline, Insentec Starline and Boumatic Proflex. To correct this problem Idento Operations has, in cooperation with ICAR and LMS, made a change to the system, which brings the milk meter back to the approved situation. In all the new AMS systems, produced from June 1st 2009, this change has already been implemented. For all the already existing systems Idento Operations offers free of charge an upgrade kit to their customers. **The upgrade kit, from Idento are available through their**

**dealers, in the below countries, from October 1st 2009, and offered for free of charge during six months, to the end of March 2010.** It is urged that the upgrade be implemented in the old system during the given period as part of the normal periodic maintenance. To keep track on the upgrades completed, Idento requests a signed form back from the dealer who performed the upgrade. Idento will further be responsible to keep ICAR and the affected ICAR Member Organizations informed that the change over has been completed during the given period.

Countries that are involved: Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Czech Republic, Netherlands, Belgium, Luxemburg, France, , Switzerland, Spain and Italy.

## THE WORLD DAIRY SUMMIT

The World Dairy Summit of the International Federation Meeting was held in Berlin on September 20th- 24th. Several members of the ICAR SC on milk laboratory analysis were present at the meeting. Also the ICAR Secretary General, Andrea Rosati, attended the meeting to strengthen the relation of ICAR with IDF. More information about the meeting are visible at the IDF website at: [www.fil-idf.org](http://www.fil-idf.org).

## NEW ICAR OFFICIALS - APPOINTMENTS BY THE ICAR BOARD

### Sub-Committee Animal Identification

**Ken Evert** (Australia) has been appointed as a new member of the Sub-Committee for Animal Identification replacing **Peter Bailey** (Australia) who has completed his term.

### Sub-Committee Interbull

The Board approved the recommendations by Interbull to nominate **Bevin Harris** to replace **Bill Montgomery** from New Zealand and **Marj Faust** to replace **Paul van Raden** from the United States of America as new members of the Steering Committee.

### Working Group Beef Recording

The Board accepted resignation of **Japie van der Westhuisen** (South Africa) as a Chairmen of the Working Group and expressed their appreciation for his work. The future activities and the structure of this WG are still under consideration.



### Working Group Goat Milk Recording

The Board accepted resignation of **Drago Kompan** (Slovenia) as a chairman of the Working Group for Goat Milk Recording and expressed the appreciation for his contribution and leadership during his nine year long service. **Zdravko Barac** (Croatian Agricultural Agency) has been appointed as the new Chairman of the Working Group.

## ORGANISATIONS GRANTED WITH THE CERTIFICATE OF QUALITY

The ICAR Board during the latest meeting held in Porec, Slovenia, granted the following four organisations with the Certificate of Quality:

- **Agricultural Research Council** (South Africa) for:  
Identification system for dairy cattle, beef cattle, milking sheep and milking goats.  
Recording of production of dairy cattle, beef cattle and milking goats.  
Genetic evaluation of dairy cattle.
- **Cattle Information System** (United Kingdom) for:  
Recording of production of dairy cattle.
- **Edinburgh Genetic Evaluation Services** (EGENES) (United Kingdom) for:  
Genetic evaluation of dairy cattle, beef cattle and sheep.
- **South African Studbook and Animal Improvement Association** (South Africa) for:  
Identification system for dairy cattle, beef cattle, milking sheep, milking goats and other species of animals.
- **Italian Animal Breeders' Association** (Italy) for:  
Identification of dairy cattle, beef cattle, buffalo, dairy sheep and goats.  
Production recording of dairy cattle, beef cattle, buffalo, dairy sheep and goats.

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## SECRETARIAT'S CONTACTS

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