



ICAR Newsletter

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International Committee
for Animal Recording



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A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT

Intensive activities of the ICAR governing and technical bodies after the Riga session focussed on further steps in the application of genomics in international evaluation of dairy cattle carried out by our INTERBULL Sub-Committee at the INTERBULL Centre, on standardization of data transfer including protection of owners rights and interests of our Members, on development of new services such as international evaluation of beef cattle, on re-defining terms of reference and the profile of some working groups, such as those of the Working Group on Functional Traits and on strengthening contact with potential ICAR membership from a number of countries including those from Asia and South America. Sound financial position of the association made it possible for the ICAR Board to approve financial support to some of these new initiatives and projects.

Our future meetings – INTERBULL workshop on 26 – 27 February 2011 in Guelph, Canada, General Assembly and technical workshop for managers in Bourg-en-Bresse, France on 22 - 24 June 2011 and finally the next biennial session in Cork, Ireland in 2012 will give large opportunities for exchange of experiences and new ideas and, of course, for critical assessment of our work in serving our Members and their clients.

To all our Members and their employees, to all their clients and to all animal breeders and producers season's greetings and best wishes for happiness and success in 2011!

FINANCIAL POLICY AND SUPPORT TO SUB-COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS

ICAR as a non-profit organization has only two sources of income: membership fees and donations from physical and juridical persons. Expenditures cover management and office costs, dissemination of information and part of costs of meetings, workshops and seminars. Prudent and sound management of the ICAR assets and control of budgetary expenditures from time to time result in surplus which is usually transferred into ICAR reserve. In accordance with the decision of the ICAR Board, part of the surplus will be used for provision of support to specific and well defined programmes and projects developed by the ICAR technical bodies. The Executive Board has been authorised to accord financial support on an ad hoc basis. At its 27th meeting (November 2010) the Executive Board agreed on the following criteria that should be taken into account in the assessment or justification of requests for financial support:

- Benefits for ICAR and its members.
- Improvement of existing services.
- Improvement of guidelines.
- Development of new guidelines.
- Creation of new services.
- Creation of new income for Service-ICAR.

NEW FEE STRUCTURE

The existing system for calculation of membership fees was established in 1994 reflecting the profile and activities of ICAR Members. Statutory changes that allowed for more than one Member per country resulting in variety of profiles of Members as well as the development of services offered by ICAR to its Members imposed the need to review the system and the structure of membership fees.

The Executive Board has initiated a review of the existing system and requested the Secretariat to prepare proposals for the draft decision to be submitted to the ICAR Board and the 2012 General Assembly. New proposals will be based on the agreed level of the ICAR budget and necessary adjustments for inflation.

ICAR SERVICES FOR MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

ICAR provides to its Members directly and through its commercial company SERVICE-ICAR S.r.l. a number of services, such as testing and approval of identification, recording and analytical devices, benchmarking, Certificate of Quality and Patent Sentinel and Action Service.

Proposal for new rules on Certificate of Quality

Several organizations which provided services to ICAR Members that received the ICAR Certificate of Quality showed the interest in receiving the Certificate although they were not ICAR Members. Bearing in mind that the Certificate of Quality is a specific service offered by ICAR to its Members, the Executive Board at its 27th meeting agreed to submit to the Board the approval of the following rules:

- The ICAR Certificate of Quality can not be offered to non-members.
- Third party suppliers do not need to become members and the CoQ is awarded to the organization requesting CoQ. It is implied that the third parties are conforming to the CoQ requirements, however this does not mean that the third party can claim it has been awarded CoQ status by ICAR. If the third party does not want to make this claim, and use the ICAR CoQ logo, it has to request for a CoQ directly.

Patent Sentinel and Action Service

Patent Sentinel and Action Service (PSAS) has been established by ICAR in cooperation with EAAP to monitor developments in patenting of methods and material relevant to animal breeding, selection, evaluation and genetic improvement. A workshop held during the 2010 EAAP annual meeting in Heraklion, Greece, reviewed the present situation in national legislation and practices in Europe and in non-European countries. Papers presented at the workshop soon will be available at the PSAS web site, which is linked to the main web site of ICAR. Ms. Bianca Lind from Germany has been newly appointed to follow the activity of Patent Sentinel and Action Service and her comments and replies to queries will be presented regularly on the PSAS web site.

New recording device

The ICAR Board, following the report on the successful testing and recommendation of the Sub-Committee on Recording Devices, approved “Mione Autosampler” manufactured by GEA Farm Technologies GmbH for milk sampling in automatic milking installations

INTERBEEF PROJECT ON INTERNATIONAL EVALUATION OF BEEF CATTLE

The InterBeef Working Group has initiated a project on the establishment of the international genetic evaluation of beef cattle. The project foresees approval of service agreement and fees by potential users, agreement on rules for participation including definition of roles and responsibilities, operating procedure, data flow and interfaces, quality control and query support. INTERBULL Centre will keep country databases and provide genetic evaluation and computation.

As of December 2010, the project has attained the following results:

- Methods and model of international genetic evaluation have been tested on two breeds from five countries.
- Country data have been transferred to the iINTERBULL Centre.
- The planned international genetic evaluation has been integrated with national ones.
- The evaluation included several breeds of beef cattle.

The interBeef Working Group requested a financial support to supplement funds provided by interested ICAR Members which participate in the project.

The ICAR Board considering that the project will result in new services and benefits to ICAR Members, agreed to provide a three year financial support to the project. The ICAR Board will monitor project performance on the basis of the progress report provided by Working Group each year. Clients will have to take over all the costs related to the routine service at the end of this period.

INTERNATIONAL GENOMIC EVALUATION - STRATEGIC PRIORITY OF THE INTERBULL SUB-COMMITTEE

The genomic information is rapidly introduced into systems used for selection in dairy cattle. The Interbull Centre conducted research runs on validation procedure and a test for validation of protein yield. The Interbull steering committee decided in Riga about a final version of the validation procedure and this was distributed from Interbull to national genetic evaluation centres. The genomic evaluation systems that have passed the validation test have been displayed on the ICAR webpage in order to fulfil the requirements of the EC regulation 427/2006 for wide use of semen also from young sires.

INTERBULL facilitates efficient use of SNP data

The research and development work on genomics at the Interbull Centre has been facilitated by support from EU and in collaboration with scientists of a number of countries. New methods are tested in a collaborative project involving Brown Swiss breed data from seven countries around the world. Interbull facilitates the exchange of genotyping information via a list of bulls, that displays in which location data on a given bull is stored. Through this list, bilateral exchange of DNA data is facilitated in order to avoid multiple genotyping of the same bull. In conjunction with these development an urgent need for standardisation of genotypic data formats was identified and Interbull/ICAR will work on standardised protocols in agreement with the providers of genotyping systems.

INTERBULL and Certificate of Quality

Interbull Centre has been asked to provide the pertinent documentation whenever there is a ICAR member requesting the Certificate of Quality in genetic evaluation. The interaction has been smooth.

Genomic Evaluation – Theme of the next INTERBULL Meeting

Due to the rapid developments in genomic evaluation and the applications in practical breeding programs the next workshop of Interbull will be organized as a workshop end of February 2011 in Guelph, Ontario, Canada. The next regular INTERBULL meeting will take place in August 2011 in Stavanger, Norway

GROWING INTEREST FOR ICAR, ITS MISSION AND SERVICES

Cooperation with Pan-American Dairy Federation

Uffe Lauritsen, President of ICAR, and João Dürr, head of Interbull Centre in Uppsala, attended the meeting of the Pan-American Dairy Federation (FEPALE) and presented ICAR and INTERBULL programs and activities. The meeting was held in Lugo, Galicia, Spain. FEPALE, FAO and ICAR agreed to organize a workshop on animal identification, registration and traceability in 2011 in Latin America.

Visit to Taiwan

Following visits of Andrea Rosati to China and Russian Federation in recent months and his attendance at national conferences of animal producers, Daniel Abernethy and Jay Mattison, Vice Presidents of ICAR, presented ICAR at a dairy farmer conference in Taiwan. Representatives of farmers' associations expressed the intention to become members of ICAR. The ICAR Secretariat will maintain contacts with interested organization, invite them to attend ICAR meetings and send them ICAR Newsletter and other information material on ICAR activities and services.

Bovine SNP comparison tests:

ISAG and ICAR jointly decided to co-organize two Bovine SNP comparison tests for purposes of standardizing genotyping and nomenclature, and provide performance information for laboratory accreditation with ICAR. For this reason ICAR gives, besides the technical support of its Genetic Analysis working group, also financial support. These extra comparison tests start in 2011. The first batch of samples will be distributed in January, and the second in June. In the case genotyping is outsourced, the outsourced lab is to be ICAR accredited and needs to participate in the SNP comparison test. In order to participate in the SNP comparison tests, labs need to be paid Institutional members of ISAG. The list of SNP markers to be typed and reference genotypes will be provided together with the samples. The deadline for application is January 15, 2011. Please contact our office (icar@icar.org) to receive more information.

NEWS FROM ICAR MEMBERS

US Council on Dairy Cattle Breeding

The Council on Dairy Cattle Breeding (CDCB) is the designated authority for the quality certification of data submitted to the Genetic Evaluation Program at Animal Improvement Programs Laboratory of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). Data flow and quality assurance is open to organizations submitting and reaching compliance of data or procedures as outlined in the Quality Assurance guidelines of the CDCB and administered by the Auditor, Quality Certification Services, Inc., under the authority of CDCB. New entrants to the process including genomic labs and submitters (requestors) of genotype data will be accommodated through process that is being developed for genotype data. The CDCB is currently reviewing the merit of genotypes from the 3K SNP chip. Research results on the accuracy and potential utilization of genomic prediction from this new genomic test will be reviewed as the base for either additional research or for the developing an implementation timeline to make the 3K genomic evaluation results official.

What is new in your organization? Send us your comments and information on developments in the use of genomics in breeding value estimation in your country or your organization. We'll be glad to publish it for the benefit of all ICAR membership.

THE NEXT GENERAL ASSEMBLY, 22 JUNE 2011, BOURG-EN-BRESSE, FRANCE

The next ICAR General Assembly will be held on 22 June 2011 in Bourg-en-Bresse, France. Like in previous occasions – General Assemblies held in Verona, Italy and Porec, Croatia, – the event will include a technical workshop for managers, social events, visit to cattle exhibition and study tours.

A preliminary program of the technical workshop for managers foresees the following themes:

1. New approaches in management of recording activities: how to demonstrate benefits of herd recording, how to make our business attractive (Chair and introduction Jay Mattison followed by country cases).
2. New technologies in performance recording: imagining, automation, PDA, RFID (Chair: Kaivo Ilves).

3. Phenotyping of complex traits: quality of products, health, welfare, reproduction, environmental footprints (Chair: Marco Winters).
4. Genomic impact on livestock industry (Chair: Reinhard Reents).
5. Milk analysis new technology impact on offered services for man and breeding and management for breeding and management (Chair: Olivier Leray).
6. Showcase (Chair: Frank Armitage).

See you in Bourg-en-Bresse! We are going to improve our managerial skills, see colleagues and discuss with them issues of common interest, and, also, see the best of the Montbelliard breed of cattle – the second largest dairy breed in France.

More information about the technical workshop can be found on the website at www.france-genetique-elevage.fr/spip.php?article871 or downloading the flyer at www.icar.org/Bourg-en-Bresse/Flyer_ICAR_2011.pdf

THE 38TH BIENNIAL SESSION, 28 MAY 01 JUNE 2012, CORK, IRELAND

The next Biennial Session will be held in Cork, Ireland, from Monday, 28th May to Friday, 01 June 2012 at premise of the Rochester Park Hotel. The draft programme includes a number of events such as the meetings of local farmers on Monday and Tuesday. The main theme of the session would focus on recording for farm profitability. Joint session should deal with linkages and interaction between recording and genomic evaluation. The final programme will be approved by the Board at the meeting in June 2011. The ICAR Newsletter will keep you informed on the state of preparation for 2012 Biennial Session. Information will be soon available on the website of the event, available at: www.icar2012.ie



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