

AUDITING FIVE SPANISH BEEF CATTLE BREEDERS' ASSOCIATIONS FOR THE ICAR CERTIFICATE OF QUALITY; EXPERIENCES OF AN AUDITOR.

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Abstract

Eight beef cattle breeders' associations in Spain indicated during 2020 to be audited for compliance with ICAR's certificate of quality for the following fields of activity:

- Animal Identification (Cattle)
- Beef Recording (Cattle)
- Herdbook Recording
- Conformation Recording
- Data Processing and
- Genetic Evaluation (Beef Cattle).

The questionnaires were completed but the Covid-19 traveling restrictions prohibited a visited audit. This was replaced by online interviews in November 2020 and May 2021. Awaiting the final visited audit an interim report was issued.

The visited audit took place in November 2021. The five associations that requested the visited audit are:

- Araparda (Breed: Parda de Montaña)
- Acruga (Breed: Rubia Gallega)
- Aseava (Breed: Asturiana de los Valles)
- Aecrani (Breed: Avileña-Negra Ibérica)
- Ferpam (Breed: Parda de Montaña/Spanish Mountain Brown Breed)

Observations and experiences:

- EU regulations on animal identification ensure compliance with the ICAR guidelines.
- Generally, personnel and breeders are enthusiastic, show diligence, have experience and vision for their associations and breeds.
- Measurement and recording range from ICAR A, B and C (mixed).
- There are varying degrees of cooperation and integration of skills, experience and facilities among the associations.
- Most associations succeed in integrating breeding objectives with consumer preference and market.
- A core of highly skilled and experienced geneticists plays an important role in genetic evaluations and incorporating genomic technologies.
- Frequency of genetic predictions will assist in more efficient selection practices.
- Female fertility traits should also be included in genetic merit predictions and selection indices.
- Bull evaluation and in cases, semen distribution are used to accelerate genetic progress.
- Good governance was generally observed, including enthusiasm and active participation from board members of associations.

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