

INTERBEEF Working Group meeting
17th January 2013

Contents

| | |
|---|---|
| 1. Introduction & Welcome (Brian Wickham - Chairperson) | 1 |
| 2. Agreement of Agenda | 1 |
| 3. Minutes of Meeting 12 th January | 1 |
| 4. Report of Technical Committee | 1 |
| 5. Use of Data in Research | 3 |
| 6. New Service Users..... | 3 |
| 7. Agreement for sharing costs and service fees | 3 |
| 8. Priorities for Interbeef | 3 |
| 9. Workplan | 3 |
| 10. Logo Protection | 4 |
| 11. Website | 5 |
| 12. Future Meetings of WG | 5 |
| 13. Guidelines..... | 5 |
| 14. AOB..... | 5 |
| 15. Appendix 1 – List of Meeting Participants..... | 5 |

1. Introduction & Welcome (Brian Wickham - Chairperson)

Participants and apologies: Attached as appendix 1.

The Chairperson welcomed participants and explained that while he works as an independent consultant his work for Interbeef was funded by ICBF and in this respect he continues in the same capacity as when he worked full time for ICBF.

People at five other locations (Finland, Germany, Spain, Ireland and South Africa) participated in the meeting via Webex and Powownow.

2. Agreement of Agenda

Agreed as distributed in advance of meeting with the addition of an item dealing with publication of evaluations as part of the Technical Committee report.

3. Minutes of Meeting 12th January

The minutes were adopted without change after a short discussion raised by Thomas Schmidt in relation to the accuracy of birth weights, access to pedigrees and number of evaluation runs per year. These matters were dealt with later in the meeting and did not reflect on the accuracy of the minutes.

4. Report of Technical Committee

The minutes of the Technical Committee meeting held in Uppsala on December 6th and 7th were distributed in advance of the meeting. Joao Durr, Manager of the Interbull Centre (ITBC) used slides (see copy on the Interbeef Website in the Stansted meeting area) to summarise the key outcome of that meeting.

Points covered in his report included:

- **Administrative matters** – terms of reference will be discussed online and finalized in Aarhus, future meetings to coincide with Interbeef WG meetings and ICAR meetings. A research infrastructure based on using MIX99 running on a virtual machine, which research partner(s) can access, is planned. Research agreements covering data usage, publication of results and research use of MIX99 are needed.
- **Calving trait research & pilot run** – guidelines updated (see on Interbeef webpage - https://wiki.interbull.org/public/beef_guidelines) and research plan on agenda later in the meeting today. There was further discussion in relation to the accuracy of birth weights. There is considerable variation between countries in the ease with which calving ease and birth weights can be recorded. The more intensive systems having perhaps better data on calving ease and the more extensive systems having better weight data.
- **Weight evaluations** – two runs per year is recommended. After considering resource availability and discussing needs of Service Users **it was agreed that for 2013 the first run should be as soon as possible and the second run in September.**
- **Implementation Flow** – a report was provided by the ITBC to each country on 22nd December after the technical committee meeting. Joao has not received feedback. Pavel commented that their pedigree analysis initially showed lots of animals excluded and this problem seems to be resolved for Limousin but still seems to be a problem for Charolais. He asked for list of problems for Czech. Joao clarified that the list requested by Pavel refers to the editings in the phenotypic data. It was agreed that countries should receive the record that is edited out and the reason why the record was removed from analyses. It is not just for Czech Republic, but for all users. Pavel also asked if the genetic parameters for each country could be estimated by ITBC instead of by the country. Eric pointed out that this could be difficult.
- **Correlation matrix** – these were provided from new run using complete data and it was agreed these should be re-estimated using selected data as recommended by the Technical Committee. Clara asked if there is a risk of selection bias from using the common sires. Joao responded that the other animals contribute little information for the between country variance component estimation. The current focus is to ensure variance components for the first routine run and to await the outcome of ICBF research and advice on variance component estimation.
- **Reliability over estimation** – settings of MIX99 may not be correct. Currently under investigation.
- **Publication rules** – the Technical Committee did not reach agreement on this and asked that the WG provide clarification. After considerable discussion, including clarification of the publication rules used in France, it was agreed that a committee comprising **Joao, Eric and Anders be asked to make a detailed proposal based on the following principles:**
 - a) Each service user would provide a list of animals that meet their requirements for publication.
 - b) ITBC would compute an Interbeef international evaluation accuracy indicator based on a combination of the computed reliability and, potentially, a number of other measures (herds, number of progeny, number of populations with performance data, ...).
 - c) That animals meeting or exceeding agreed criteria for the Interbeef international evaluation accuracy indicator would be publishable, on the base and scale of the respective Service Users.
 - d) Each Service User would be free to publish its own animals (as indicated by the contents of the file of animals that are publishable) on its own base and scale according to its own publication criteria.
 - e) A Service User can only publish animals, in their own base and scale, from other Service Users if the animals meet the accuracy criteria of Interbeef international evaluations
 - f) For test runs all results will be distributed but none of the results of test runs can be published.

- g) For routine runs only those animals that meet the accuracy criteria of Interbeef international evaluations or are publishable by one or more Service Users will be distributed.

5. Use of Data in Research

Two papers (Use of Data for Research & Letter of Agreement) had been distributed in advance of the meeting. After discussion and clarification it was agreed that these would be used, subject to any modifications agreed by the WG in future, as the basis for all future research collaborations.

It was also agreed that the ITBC would have an agreement with researchers who utilise MIX99 or any computing facilities at the ITBC to undertake the research.

6. New Service Users

Andrea Rosati provided an update on potential new Service Users. Latvia and Germany are currently in the process of becoming Service Users. Discussions with ARC and SASB will be held in the near future to clarify participation for South African populations. Switzerland was represented at the meeting and is interested in becoming a Service User for all the beef breeds in Switzerland.

As soon as the Agreement has been signed by new members they can start providing data and participating in the Interbeef services.

7. Agreement for sharing costs and service fees

Brian Wickham & Andrea Rosati led the discussion on a proposed new model for establishing services fees. After a comprehensive discussion it was agreed that they would develop a final proposals based on the following principles:

- a) That there be **no** entry fee.
- b) That there be a annual fee for participation in Interbeef International Genetic Evaluations and related services which comprises three elements: **base fee** (same for all Service Users), **per trait set fee** (regardless of number of breeds) and a **per breeding animal fee** (as a reflection of population size) which, on a per animal basis, declines with increasing population size.
- c) That the number of breeding animals be based on females in the reference year (initially 2011) that calve and whose progeny qualify for use as breeding stock, or in other words, Herd Book registered pedigree cows.
- d) These fees would be implemented according to a timetable that respects existing agreements.

8. Priorities for Interbeef

A report providing results of the survey of Interbeef Stakeholders conducted in July 2012 was distributed in advance of the meeting. After a brief discussion it was agreed that more time should be devoted to considering the results and that this should take place at a future meeting. The ICAR meeting in Aarhus in May 2013 was proposed and the Chairperson will take action on this.

9. Workplan

a. Evaluation Service – Charolais & Limousin for Weaning weight

Joao provided an update on the Workplan and made the following points:

- i. It is proposed that the first “routine” results will be distributed at the beginning of March.
- ii. Service Users should update pedigrees immediately.
- iii. Files of ET animals need to be provided.

- iv. New parameter files are required for each Service User.
- v. New data and parameter files are required for calving traits and associated research.
- vi. The publication discussion (see item 4 above) needs to be finalized.
- vii. This week he will send a letter with all this information and timetable to Service Users.

b. Research proposal covering variance component estimation and use of cross bred data in weaning weight evaluations

Thierry Pabiou reported that the work is planned as committed. Cross-bred pedigree data is to be sent and used to test the reconstruction of heterosis, recombination and breed composition at the ITBC. Work is planned to start by end of January but must be preceded by the signing of a research agreement as also for 9c, below, before any data can be released from ITBC to ICBF.

c. Research proposal for development of international beef genetic evaluations for Calving traits

Pavel Bucek made a presentation on the Czech research proposal (see copy on the Interbeef Website in the Stansted meeting area).

The proposal was approved in principle at the January 2012 in Stansted and further discussed in Cork. It has since been referred to the ITBC and their feedback has been incorporated in the revised proposal. It has also been considered by the Technical Committee who have recommended that it proceed. Any technical issues will be discussed with the Technical Committee. The financial resources and systems are in place and the work is expected to take 12 months to be completed.

After discussion it was agreed the research proposal for calving traits as proposed by the Czech Service User be approved and that the relevant agreements (Use of Data for Research, Letter of Agreement, & ITBC facility agreement) can now be signed and when signing has been completed the data can be released.

d. Research proposal for development of international beef genetic evaluations for carcass traits

Kirsty Moore reported that a broad outline is being prepared and a search for funding is underway. ICBF are keen to collaborate in this project based on their previous work in this field. An update will be provided at the Aarhus meeting in May 2013.

e. Development of international beef genetic evaluations for female fertility traits

Clara Diaz reported that the funding situation in Spain is not clear. They have person to do the work and it will be at least one month before the funding availability will be known.

It was agreed that this is a high priority for beef breeding and since there have been recent developments in Germany and Ireland it might be worth having beef cattle female fertility as the focus of a workshop in 2013 (see below – future meetings).

10. Logo Protection

Andrea Rosati reported that following the request for Logo protection made at the Interbeef WG meeting in Cork (May 2012) detailed cost have now been obtained. While the initial total cost is high (some €29,000) the meeting strongly supported any actions required to ensure the logo and name is protected in all regions with significant populations of beef cattle.

11. Website

Brian Wickham reported that initiatives were being taken by ICAR to ensure the ICAR website fully supports the needs of the Interbeef WG, and all of ICAR's Groups.

12. Future Meetings of WG

- a. With ICAR in Aarhus – Monday 27th May – Interbeef Technical Committee and Tuesday 28th May 13:00 to 18:30 there will be a Working Group Meeting.
- b. With EAAP / Interbull – 23rd to 25th August 2013. It was agreed that there should be an Interbeef contribution to the Interbull/EAAP meeting and that "*Maternal Traits in Beef Cattle*" is a theme that the Interbeef WG would support. Joao agreed to facilitate this.
- c. With Interbull & ICAR in Berlin from 19th to 23rd May 2014.

13. Guidelines

Brian Wickham reported that he, in his role working for ICAR taking care of ICAR Groups, is currently reviewing the structure of the ICAR Guidelines and this review will cover the sections which are the responsibility of the Interbeef WG.

14. AOB

The Chairperson asked for feedback about the use of facilities to enable remote participants to join the meeting. The webex facility for the presentations worked very well. The quality of sound was not so good. This was addressed by having speakers in the meeting come closer to the microphone. It was agreed that this technology should be used again in the future and that alternatives for achieving a better quality sound experience should be explored.

15. Appendix 1 – List of Meeting Participants

| Last Name | First Name | Company / Country | E-mail | Stansted |
|-------------|------------|--|----------------------------------|-----------|
| Arcila | Mauricio | Canadian Beef Breeds Council | Mauricio@canadianbeefbreeds.com | Apology |
| Couto | Elena | ICAR - SERVICE-ICAR Srl. | elena@icar.org | Apology |
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| Holmquist | Bruce | Canadian Simmental Association | bholmquist@simmental.com | Apology |
| Kucera | Josef | Czech Fleckvieh Breeders Association | kucera@cestr.cz | Apology |
| Maiwashe | Norman | Agricultural Research Council | norman@arc.agric.za | Apology |
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| Nikolpv | Vasil | | iasrj_nikolov@abv.bg | Apology |
| Palucci | Valentina | Interbull Centre | valentina.palucci@hgen.slu.se | Apology |
| Reinhardt | Friedrich | Vit Information Systems Tierhaltung | friedrich.reinhardt@vit.de | Apology |
| Weller | Joel | The Volcani Centre | weller@agri.huji.ac.il | Apology |
| Aufdermauer | Tony | Switzerland | tony.aufdermauer@mutterkuh.ch | In Person |
| Bucek | Pavel | Czech Moravian Breeders' Corporation, Inc. | bucek@cmsch.cz | In Person |
| Dürr | João | Department of Animal Breeding and Genetics | Joao.Durr@hgen.slu.se | In Person |
| Fogh | Anders | KNOWLEDGE CENTRE FOR AGRICULTURE | ADF@vfl.dk | In Person |
| Griffon | Laurent | Institut de l'Elevage | Laurent.Griffon@idele.fr | In Person |
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DRAFT Minutes of Interbeef WG Meeting – Thursday 17th January 2013.
Radisson Blu Hotel, Stansted, England.

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|--------------------|---------|---|--------------------------|-----------|
| Moore | Kirsty | Edinburgh Genetic Evaluation Service | Kirsty.moore@sac.ac.uk | In Person |
| Rosati | Andrea | EAAP/ICAR | rosati@icar.org | In Person |
| Sarma | Rita | Latvia | | In Person |
| Schmidt | Thomas | Germany | dr.schmidt@rind-bw.de | In Person |
| Venot | Eric | Station de Genetique Quantitative et Appliquee INRA | eric.venot@jouy.inra.fr | In Person |
| Wickham | Brian | Chairperson (ICBF) | brian@consultwickham.com | In Person |
| Diaz | Clara | INIA | cdiaz@inia.es | Remote |
| Pabiou | Thierry | ICBF | tpabiou@icbf.com | Remote |
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| van der Westhuizen | Bobbie | ASA Stud Book & Animal Improvement Association | | Remote |
| Van der Westhuizen | Japie | SA Stud Book & Animal Improvement Association | japie@studbook.co.za | Remote |
| Wutke | Martina | ADR | martina.wutke@adt.de | Remote |

Key:

Apology = did not participate in meeting but did put in an apology.

In Person = was present in Stansted for part or all of the meeting.

Remote = participated via Webex (for video) and Powownow (for sound) for part or all of the meeting.

Draft 20th January 2013

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