



ICAR NEWSLETTER

Focus on ICAR Strategy and on the work of the ICAR Groups

ICAR Strategy

The ICAR Board has been considering the best long-term strategy for ICAR.

When ICAR was first established it was to set standards for "butterfat recording". Since then ICAR has developed into a substantial organisation with major sub-committees such as Interbull and Meters and Jars. As ICAR has developed so has the world within which the member organisations provide services to their customers. There is now competition across national boundaries and within countries between member organisations. The PC has brought record processing power to the farm, making heavily centralised record processing increasingly difficult to justify unless added value services are included as part of the central service package.

The ICAR Board has conducted a preliminary review of ICAR strategy and will be sending a letter and questionnaire to all member organisations seeking their views on the way forward for ICAR.

News from ICAR Groups

Interbull

Interbull is the largest of the ICAR Sub-committees and works with international cattle genetic evaluations. In the last year the number of production evaluations has been increased from 2 to 4. Work has also now started on the provision of international genetic evaluations for type traits. First results are due in August 1999. Further details of the work of Interbull can be found in the Interbulletin June 1999 newsletter.

Meters and Jars

The Meters and Jars sub-committee has been responsible for establishing tests for recording equipment and for issuing "Approval Certificates" to manufacturers whose equipment passes the ICAR tests. This group will in future introduce standards and tests for weight recording and ultrasonic body composition recording and beef quality measurement devices.

The latest list of meters and Jars fully or provisionally approved and a list of the devices currently under test is shown on the last page of this newsletter.

Animal Identification

The Sub-committee on Animal Identification was formed to provide advice, tests and guidelines on electronic identification devices. Since its establishment the Board have added the additional task of carrying out tests and issuing approvals for conventional identification devices that are frequently associated with electronic devices.

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To date Manufactures codes for electronic identification devices have been issued to 19 manufacturers, several of whom have more than one type of device available. Further details on Electronic Identification can be found in the electronic Identification Newsletter.

Task Force Development Fund

One of the Aims of ICAR is to promote recording and evaluation. To this end the Task Force Development Fund arrange meetings and seminars to promote recording and evaluation in countries where recording is in its early stages and or where the systems in use in existing ICAR member countries are not suitable for use in developing countries.

A full report on the proceedings of the Task Force workshop in India has been published. A meeting for Central and Eastern European countries was held in Warsaw last August alongside the EAAP meeting and the proceedings will be published by ICAR in the near future. A further joint FAO/ICAR restricted participants number meeting is planned from 22 to 25 September 1999 in Bella (Italy) on Developing Breeding Strategies for Lower Input Animal Production Environments.

Quality Assurance of Animal Recording

The ICAR Board have decided to establish a new "Quality Assurance" group to carry forward the foundation work on quality assurance issues done by the Accuracy working group and the Interbull Audit group. The group have been tasked with the important work of considering the development of standards and guidelines for quality Assurance of all ICAR and Interbull related work areas and have been asked to make recommendations with regard to the future requirements for the Special Stamp.

Lactation Calculation Methods

The Lactation calculation group was formed to provide guidelines which incorporate the new methods of lactation calculation available since the definition of the interpolation and centering methods described in the ICAR guidelines. The group will be using the work done by the accuracy working group to benchmark proposed new methodologies for calculation accuracy.

Animal Recording Data

The Board decided at their last meeting to amalgamate the work of the Computer Developments group and the Animal Information Details. The new group has been tasked to develop industry standards for data definitions and data transfer formats. The group has also been asked to develop guidelines for validating defined data items and with keeping the ICAR guidelines in step with the ISO standards for data definition and data transfer.

Functional Traits

The ICAR Functional Traits group was established to develop guidelines for the recording and evaluation of health and fertility traits. The group has been asked to develop standard methods and coding for health and fertility recording.

The Functional Traits group have also been asked to consider the ways in which the guidelines can link in with the requirements of disease eradication programs and with product quality assurance scheme record requirements.

Milk Testing Laboratories

The group provides a benchmarking ring test for key milk components, enabling member organisations to ensure that their results are within the normal range of test results for comparable organisations. The group is also considering the feasibility of additional quality assurance services and the demand for additional ring tests. In the event of new methods

of milk testing being developed for on farm use, the group will be asked to carry out tests and to make recommendations as to the use and applicability of the new technology in milk recording organisations.

Milk Recording of Goats

The group has been asked to update the recommendations and guidelines for Goat recording, with particular reference to the needs of developing countries and the availability of new methods of recording and evaluation.

Milk Recording of Sheep

The group has brought forward new recommendations for the recording and evaluation of milking sheep. These are now being prepared for inclusion in the ICAR guidelines. The group have been asked to liaise closely with the Meters and Jars group to see if cost effective solutions can be found for the testing and approval of recording devices for sheep and goats, which are already approved for dairy cow recording.

Milk Recording of Buffalo

The Buffalo group works in close association with the Task Force Development Fund. Joint meetings have been organised and a further meeting will be arranged in parallel with the ICAR 32nd Session in Slovenia. The group has also been asked to liaise with the Meters and Jars group over the testing and approval of meters for recording.

Beef Performance Recording

The group was established to develop guidelines for recording which in the longer term could lead to International standards for beef recording and evaluation. Currently the group is reviewing the methodology in use in member countries with a view to making recommendation for measurement standards and definitions for all important traits.

Artificial Insemination and Relevant Technologies

The group was formed to address the issues of data collection and labeling associated with AI and ET. The Board recognised that significant amounts of data were being recorded by AI organisations in the course of their work and then being used by other organisations. The role of the group is to bridge the needs of the recording and AI organisations, making recommendations in areas of common interest.

Efficiency Recording

The Board has asked for a small group to produce a report on efficiency recording. The impact of production systems on the environmental resources available and the efficiency with which inputs are utilised are important issues. Some member organisations are operating in countries where "environmental resource use" is associated with taxation and production liscencing regulations. The group has been asked to consider these issues and to determine whether there is a need for and a role for ICAR recording guidelines in this area.

Conformation Recording

The conformation group has already adopted international guidelines for Conformation Trait recording in Holstein cattle. The group have now been asked to further develop this work to cover the traits associated with the new Interbull type trait evaluations and to extend heir work to cover other Dairy and eventually the Dual Purpose breeds in association with the beef recording group.

Sheep and Goat Meat Recording

The Board recognising the economic importance of sheep and goat meat in some member countries and in many developing countries has decided to establish a new group. The new group will consider the recording and evaluation issues involved and will develop guidelines for meat recording in goats and sheep.

Group Leaders

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Quality Assurance of Animal Recording	To be decided			

Meters and Jars Update

The tables below show the position as at 1st July 1999

List of provisionally approved meters

Meter	Manufacturer
Afiflo 9000	SAE Afikim Israel
Bou-Matic M+ milk meter	Bou-Matic Dairy Equipment Division of DEC International USA
Favorit International	Agro-Vertriebsgesellschaft GmbH, Germany
Free-Flow (Flowmaster FF, Opticflow)	SCR Engineers Ltd. Israel
Lactocorder	Werkzeug- und Maschinenbau Berneck AG., Switzerland
Pulsameter 2	Labor-und Messgeräte GmbH Germany
Tru-Test HI Fast Empty	Tru-Test Ltd. New Zealand
Tru-Test WB Ezi-Test	Tru-test Ltd. New Zealand
Tru-Test WB	Tru-Test Ltd. New Zealand

List of approved meters

Meter	Manufacturer
Afikim (Fullflow)	SAE Afikim Israel
Bou-Matic Perfection 3000	Bou-Matic USA
Dairy-Manager	Surge Babson Bros Co. USA
Dairy Master Weighall	E.P. Harty and Co.Ltd Ireland
Flomaster 2000 / Alpro Flomaster Pro	Alfa Laval Agri AB Sweden
JM 100	Alfa Laval Agri AB Sweden
Level Milk Meter	Nedap Agri BV. The Netherlands
Manuflow 21	AB Manus Sweden
Meltec (Memolac 2)	Westfalia Separator Ag. Germany (Nedap Agri BV. The Netherlands)
Metatron	Westfalia Separator Ag. Germany
Milko-Scope MKII	Alfa Laval Agri AB, Sweden
MR 2000 (Combina 2000)	Gascoigne Melotte. The Netherlands
Tru-Test Auto sampler	Tru-Test Ltd. New Zealand
Tru-Test F	Tru-Test Ltd. New Zealand
Tru-Test HI	Tru-Test Ltd. New Zealand
Waikato MK5	Inter Ag, New Zealand

Note: The Manuflow 2 was provisionally approved. This meter has been replaced by the Manuflow 21. The sampling device "Shuttle" of Lely in conjunction with the Level Milk Meter on the Lely milking robot is currently under test.

List of meters currently under test

(Including meters where testing has been completed but no final decision has yet been taken with regard to the test results).

Meter	Manufacturer
Accuweigh	Germania Dairy Automation, USA

ICAR Board Members

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Announcement

INTERBULL meeting **26-27 August, 1999**

The meeting will take place following the 50th EAAP Annual Meeting at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology, ETH, in Zürich.

Next ICAR Session will take place from **14 to 20 May, 2000** in Slovenia

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Information is available at the Rome Secretariat.

Request

Please let me know - as soon as possible - what you would like to be covered in future issues of the Newsletter and also the names and addresses of other people who you feel should receive it.

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