



ICAR Newsletter

May 2010

**International Committee
for Animal Recording**



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A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT

Like previous ICAR biennial sessions, this 37th Session offers great and unique opportunities for all those involved in the areas of animal identification, recording and evaluation. For researchers there will be the opportunity to present new ideas and scientific solutions. For technicians there is the opportunity to obtain information on new technologies, to exchange experience with colleagues from other countries and organizations and to get acquainted with new equipment, methods and tools for animal identification, recording and evaluation. For manufacturers there is the opportunity to meet and hear about the needs of end-users and the opportunity to present their new products to the global leaders. For the organizational managers there will be an opportunity to exchange experiences in practical management of new technologies and explore methods to harness them for improved services to clients. Finally, the 37th Biennial Session is, first and foremost, a meeting place for our technical bodies and a forum for presentation of their work to Members and the public.

Although the programme of the 37th Biennial Session is available on the ICAR web site, we felt that a short overview of major themes and events planned for this Session could be of assistance to participants at the Session in selecting meetings and sessions in accordance with their specific interest and fields of work. Our readers which are not able to attend the 37th Session can consider this as an advanced information on the content of proceedings of the Session which will be published in ICAR Technical Series shortly after the Session. In addition, as in the past, we felt obliged to inform our readers on some of actions undertaken by the Board in the recent few months.

In closing I wish to extend a warm welcome to all participants at the 37th Session and thank our Latvian hosts for their considerable efforts to ensure the success of our conference. Enjoy your stay in the beautiful city of Riga and the surrounding area!

FROM THE PROGRAMME OF THE 37th BIENNIAL SESSION

In comparison with previous sessions, the 37th Biennial Session has been structured in slightly different way: in addition to traditional parallel sessions and workshops generally corresponding to mandates and terms of reference of the ICAR Sub-Committees and Working Groups and to the review of new technologies, it includes for the first time two new sets of themes:

- **Southern Hemisphere Opportunities** and
- **The World Cattle Breed Federations meeting.**

Recommendations of these two meetings are expected to contribute to expansion of ICAR programs and activities.

Identification

Animal identification continues to gain momentum in developing countries and in countries with economies in transition, mainly in reply to requirements related to food safety, trade in animal and animal products and animal health. In addition to this theme which will be presented by Badi Besbes and Cuthberg Banga, the Parallel Technical **Session 2.3** (Thursday, 3rd June from 08:00 to 10:00 hrs) includes a review of performance test of EID devices and two country papers on ID situation and practices in France and Denmark.

Recording

A special workshop on **“Milk recording services in 21st Century”** – challenges and opportunities - will be held on Tuesday, **1st June**, from 10:00 to 12:30 hrs in Beta Room. The workshop includes a review of new technologies and their impact on milk recording, latest robotic sampling systems, a review of ‘carry over’ sampling systems and an international review of best recording practices. The ICAR Guidelines will be updated in accordance with new recording technologies.

Health and fertility are among key factors of profitability of animal production. Authors of papers to be presented in **Parallel Technical session 3.1** (Wednesday, 2nd June, from 16:30 to 18:30 hrs) consider recording of health and fertility traits as a pre-condition for the implementation of measure aimed at improving health and fertility in dairy cattle.

Milk analysis

New developments in reference systems will be discussed at the meeting of the Sub-Committee for Milk Analysis (Tuesday, 1st June, from 14:00 hrs, SIGMA room). Themes included in the program cover, among other subjects, the stage of progress of the ICAR Reference Laboratory Network, analytical precision performance in ICAR proficiency testing program and herd monitoring through on-farm milk analysis.

Beef recording

Integrated solutions to achieve high levels of beef recording and trends in beef cattle recording and evaluation in USA will be discussed at the **Parallel Technical Session 3.2** (Wednesday, 2nd June, from 16:30 hrs, OMEGA2 room).

Future plans and activities of INTERBEEF will also be discussed.

Small dairy ruminants

On-line sensing of suitability of milk for cheese making, genetic ranking of rams, use of genetic data in sheep breeding and AI of sheep are themes of the **Parallel Technical Session 2.1** (Thursday, 3rd June, from 08:00 hrs, KSI room).

Evaluation

Only two years have passed since the genomic evaluation of dairy cattle was placed for the first time on the agenda of an ICAR biennial session. Rapid expansion of techniques related to use of genomic analysis parallel with some economic factors contributed to the spread of the use of these method. The ICAR Sub-Committee INTERBULL organizes a special workshop (WS1 on Wednesday, 2nd June, from 16:30 to 18:30 hrs) on **“The use of genomic tools in animal breeding”**. Themes of the workshop cover new developments in chip technology, combining marker densities in genomic evaluation, use of genomic selection in dairy cattle breeding schemes as well as an overview of

INTERBULL activities in this field. Presentations by André Eggen, Paul Van Raden, Theo Meuwisse and João Dürr are part of the programme.

News from manufacturers

Manufacturers' Showcase, Wednesday 2nd June from 13:30 to 16:00 hrs, has already become a standing item in programs of the ICAR Biennial Session. Representatives of **Bentley, Lely, DNA Genotek, FOSS, Holstein UK and Afikim** will present new achievements and equipment for rapid determination of chemical composition in cow, sheep and goat milk, vision of automation and sensor development, sampling of DNA, central milk testing and production complexity of fluids. **Holstein UK** will present a Virtual Cow.

Management of recording and evaluation organizations

One of the objectives of the ICAR Biennial Sessions is to offer an opportunity to managers of ICAR Members to exchange experiences and to acquire global information on developments in fields related to their work. The **Technical Session 4.1** (Friday, 4th June, from 8:00 hrs, room BETA1) includes several themes such as new services to support uptake of breeding value results, management of the B system in a small country, test day, alternate testing and transitioning of milk recording systems in changing times as well as sufficient time for discussion on these issues.

ICAR General Assembly

All participants interested in ICAR have the opportunity to hear first hand information on the accomplishments and future plans of ICAR, learn about the financial status of the organization and see the presentation of ICAR awards during the Ordinary General Assembly to be held on Wednesday, 2nd June from 8:00 to 10:00 in the room Omega.

RECENT ACTIVITIES OF ICAR

INTERBULL Workshop on "The use of genomic information in genetic evaluations" and INTERBULL industry meeting

One hundred eighty participants from 35 countries at workshop and industry meeting, organised by INTERBULL Sub-Committee (Paris, France, 5 and 6 March 2010), reviewed the use of genomic information in genetic national and international evaluation. Participants agreed that this new approach in genetic evaluation represented a great challenge for national organizations involved in genetic evaluation as well as for INTERBULL as the unique global body with great experience in international genetic evaluation. Papers presented at the workshop are available on the INTERBULL website.

Certificate of Quality

Thirty four ICAR Members have availed themselves of the system of auditing and evaluation of their activities and services through the ICAR Certificate of Quality. Since the inception of the system, the ICAR Board has awarded the Certificate of Quality to twenty four Members, while ICAR auditors are currently working with management of an additional ten Members.

Four additional organizations have been granted the ICAR Certificate of Quality since early 2010 and will be recognized for their performance at the General Assembly. They include:

1. The "Arbeitsgemeinschaft Schweizerischer Rinderzüchter" - ASR (*Swiss Cattle Breeders*) for its following members and the following fields:
 - The Swiss Brown Cattle Breeders' Federation (SBZV), Swissherdbook cooperative Zollikofen (Swissherdbook) and Holstein Association of Switzerland (FSHo) for: identification system for dairy cattle, recording of production of dairy cattle, genetic evaluation of dairy cattle, laboratory analysis and data processing work.
 - The Swiss Beef Cattle Association (Mutterkuh Schweiz) for: identification system of beef cattle, recording of production of beef cattle, genetic evaluation and data processing work.
2. The "Svenskmjolk" (*Swedish Dairy Association*) for: identification system for dairy and beef cattle, and recording of production and genetic evaluations of dairy cattle.
3. The "Hrvatska Poljoprivredna Agencija" (*Croatian Agricultural Agency*) for: identification system for dairy and beef cattle, milking sheep and goats, recording of production of dairy cattle, sheep and goats and beef cattle, and genetic evaluation of dairy cattle.
4. The "Plemenárske služby Slovenskej Republiky" (*Slovak Breeding Services*) for: identification system of beef cattle and recording production of beef cattle.

New ICAR service: on-line goat milk enquiry

The Working Group for Goat Milk Recording and the ICAR Secretariat have developed this new service for ICAR Members involved in goat milk recording. The on-line enquiry is on-line since 5 May 2010 (www.waap.it/goat_enquiry) and data submission are expected soon.

INTERNATIONAL CONTACTS

China

Andrea Rosati (Secretary General of ICAR) and Erling Strandberg (Chairman of the Functional Trait Working Group) participated at the national meeting of the Chinese Animal Science Association held in Beijing, November 8th – 10th 2009. Andrea Rosati chaired the genetic session and Erling Strandberg presented an invited paper. On this occasion, they met with representatives of Chinese authorities, scientists and representatives of producers and informed them on ICAR programs and activities. They expressed interest in strengthening contacts with ICAR and in obtaining further information required for their potential membership.

Russian Federation

Olivier Leray (Chairman of the Sub-Committee Milk Analysis) and Andrea Rosati (Secretary General of ICAR), visited Moscow 18th – 21st March 2010 where they participated at the Dairy Forum – a convention of dairy industry representatives for all Russia. On this occasion, they had separate meetings with managers of Russian Dairy Union, IDF National Committee and Russian Breeding Corporation and informed them on ICAR programs and activities. Managers of the Russian Dairy Union and the Russian Breeding Corporation expressed the interest in establishing closer contacts with ICAR and to participate to future ICAR meetings

South America

João Dürr, Director of the INTERBULL Centre in Uppsala, in March 2010 participated at the meeting of the Pan-American Association for Milk Production (FEPALE) held in Sao Paulo, Brazil, where he established contacts with representatives of recording and evaluation organizations from a number of countries. A number of organizations expressed the interest in joining ICAR. In interviews to media from Argentina and Uruguay he gave an overview of ICAR activities and in particular of the work in the field of genetic evaluation performed by INTERBULL Sub-Committee and its Centre. Cooperation between FEPALE and ICAR could include joint organization of workshop and reciprocal participation in activities organized by the two organizations.

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