



# ICAR Newsletter December 2012

**International Committee  
for Animal Recording**



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# Content

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## **A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT**

Six months have passed since our biennial session in Cork. In view of majority of participants this event was among most successful and best-organized ICAR sessions. Themes of the plenary and parallel sessions reflected real needs and interests of ICAR Members and of the community of professionals involved in providing services to animal farming and animal industry. Warm hospitality of our Irish hosts greatly contributed to the success of the event. The Cork spirit - enthusiasm and motivation of our Members and their employees and partners to meet challenges of the rapidly changing environment in which they operate - has continued after the session. In this issue of the Newsletter we present some of activities of the ICAR Board and ICAR Sub-Committees and Working Groups as well as future plans and programs aimed at improving services to our Members and through them to animal industry and animal farmers.

I take this opportunity to extend my sincere thanks to all individuals who contributed to our work in the 2012. At the same time, I convey greetings and best wishes of the ICAR Board to all our Members, their employees and costumers Season's Greetings and best wishes for success in 2013.

## **MEETING OF THE ICAR BOARD**

Under the chairmanship of Uffe Lauritsen, ICAR President, the ICAR Board held its meeting on 8th and 9th November 2012 in Rome, Italy. The meeting reviewed activities of the ICAR technical bodies in the period June - November 2012, their future plans and programs and endorsed the admittance to full membership of the World Simmental-Fleckvieh Federation and Compass Animal Health Inc., Canada, for associate membership.

Members of the Board and other participants at the meeting observed the moment of the silence for Frank Armitage. Uffe Lauritsen, President of ICAR, spoke about his services and commitment to ICAR and underlined his contribution in development of many programs and activities that will be continued in the future.

## **ICAR MEMBERSHIP**

As of 30 November 2012, ICAR has 71 full member and 33 associate members. ICAR Board and the Secretariat are in close contacts with a number of potential members in countries South America, Africa and Asia that are developing strong animal farming and livestock industry. These countries need ICAR services to increase efficiency of the sector and also to respond to requirements of export markets, particularly in the field of animal identification, registration and traceability of animal products.

## **EXPECTATIONS OF ASSOCIATE MEMBERS**

Associate Members of ICAR include organizations wishing to support ICAR's objectives. They represent one third of the total of ICAR membership. In order to ensure that ICAR activities meet interests and needs of this category of members, the ICAR Board requested the Secretariat to prepare a questionnaire on requests and expectations of associate members for ICAR services. The questionnaire will be submitted to the Executive Board and distributed to Associate Members.



Replies sent by Associate Members will be discussed by the Board at the Aarhus meeting in May 2013.

## **GOALS FOR 2013**

The ICAR Board at its November meeting reviewed the Strategic Plan and agreed that the organization should focus on the following priorities as goals for 2013:

- Genomic data use.
- Data transfer.
- Recording welfare and other traits.

## **NEW WORKING GROUPS AND TASK FORCES**

### **Animal Welfare WG**

Following discussions held during previous meetings on the role of ICAR in the implementation of policies and measures related to animal welfare the ICAR Board agreed that the Animal Welfare WG should be established. Pierre-Louis Gastinel, member of the Board, was requested to write the draft Terms of Reference that should be in line with guidelines of farmer organizations and EU regulations. The new WG should establish guidelines for measuring and recording traits relevant to animal welfare. The next step is to find a convenor that should review the ToR and invite worldwide experts to join the group. The Board agreed that the task of the new WG should also be:

- to educate policy makers on what is relevant;
- to work on the global level, not concentrating on Europe;
- to take into account on-going work carried out by OIE, IDF and FAO.



### **Breed Federation Task Force**

The Breed Federations act at national, regional and global level and play an important role in development and improvement of animal farming. The Breed Federations Workshop held on 27 June 2012 in Cork identified the following fields of the joint interest with ICAR:

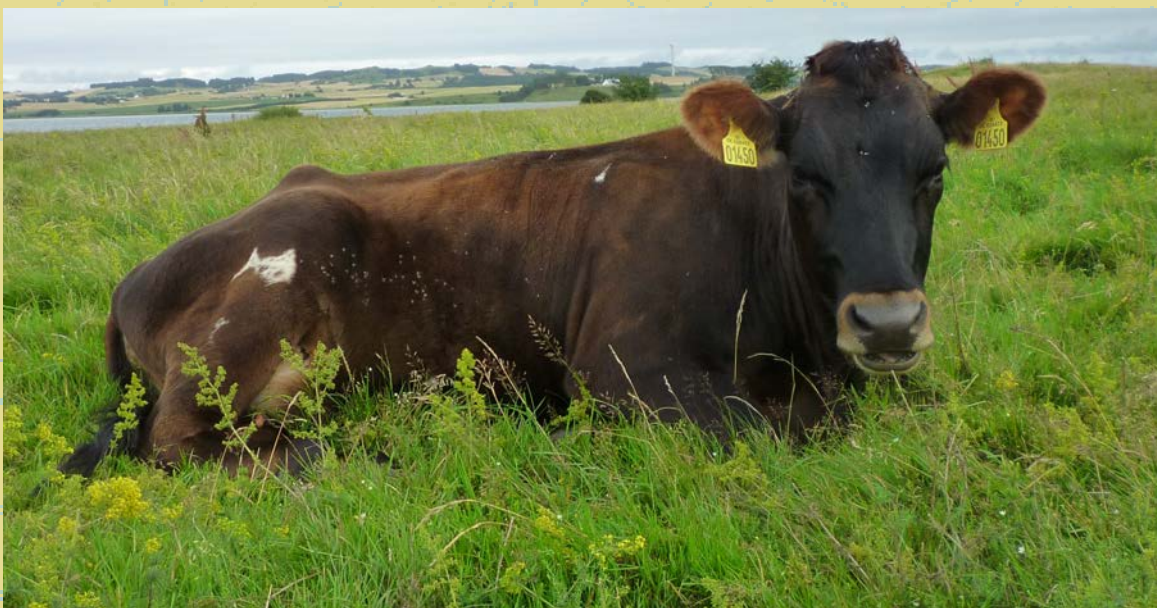
- parentage recording, including the use of SNP;
- conformation;
- genetic recessive codes, standards how to proceed when a new recessive comes out.

Following recommendations of the Workshop and interest of Breed Federations, the ICAR Board decided to establish the Breed Federation Task Force composed of members nominated by ICAR and Breed Federations. Chairperson of the TF will be elected from among members of the TF. Chairperson of TF will prepare a brief term of reference and work programme on the basis of suggestions made by the Board and by the TF and will be invited to participate at meetings of the Board with chairpersons of Sub-Committees and Working Groups.

## **ACTIVITIES OF SUB-COMMITTEES, WORKING GROUPS AND TASK FORCES**

### **Sub-Committee Recording Devices**

In addition to an ongoing joint work of SC Recording Devices and WG Animal Recording Data on robots, the Sub-Committee Recording Devices is planning to take up the procedure for approval and standardization of scales and other recording devices for beef production as well as to re-visit ICAR Guidelines with regard to use of jars and scales for milk recording in low to medium input production system. It is expected that there would be an increase in number of traits to be measured and that many recording devices would be developed in the near future. Sub-Committee also plans to consider requirements for and conditions for approval of new devices, such as the issue of interface between recording devices and information systems on farm level.





### **Activities and programmes of INTERBULL**

- INTERBULL Centre has completed the GMACE test run and from April 2013 it will become a routine procedure.
- The work on the establishment of the Genome Data Repository continues. A questionnaire with service options was sent to all interest groups including breed federation. Replies received indicate great demand for parentage verification data from majority of clients contacted, while some countries indicated need for technical assistance.

A meeting of Steering Committee of INTERBULL, ICAR Executive Board, Advisory Group and Interbull Centre staff will be held in Uppsala 7-8 January 2013. Jarmo Juga, a former president of ICAR will act as a convenor/facilitator.

### **A study on milk recording practices**

In the near future the Milk Recording Working Group will undertake a study on the milk recording practices and to match practice with guidelines. The WG should be enlarged by the inclusion of a member from North America so as to cover all major milk producing areas.



### **Developing Countries WG**

In spite of dynamic developments of the animal farming in a number of developing countries and the growing interest for ICAR programs and activities, Developing Countries Working Group is still encountering difficulties in working on remote basis particularly in view of technical constrain and lack of adequate equipment in many of these countries. It acts mainly on regional basis in cooperation with other interested international organizations. The first priority is the work on animal identification, which was the subject of FAO - ICAR workshops held in Tunisia and Chile and the one just, held in Morocco in December 2012. The possibility to have travel grants is the condition for participation of representatives of a number of member organizations from developing countries in ICAR meetings.

### **Accreditation of laboratories for SNP analysis**

Genetic Analysis Working Group is undertaking the accreditation of laboratories for SNP analysis with an attempt to increase the number of accredited laboratories for SNP and microsatellite analyses.

### **New ICAR Data Base**

The ICAR Board initiated the establishment of a new ICAR database containing all relevant data on ICAR activities and services. The existing stock of data already in use as well as newly collected data will be re-organized in the new system that will be available to ICAR Members and all stakeholders involved in activities related to ICAR mandate and programs. Access to the ICAR database should be limited and regulated in accordance with subject matter and interest of Members and other potential end-users.

### **New tasks of the Animal Data Recording WG**

In reviewing future strategic orientation of ICAR and goals for 2013, the ICAR Board underlined the need for the Animal Data Recording Working Group to establish link with Sub-Committee Recording Devices and to strengthen its work on practical problems of data transfer. The Group should develop models for validation of data and contribute to defining traits to be measured. Particular attention should be paid to files for genetic evaluations within and between countries and to transfer of data from farmers to Members. Data transfer would be facilitated by interface between milk meters and information systems on farm level.

## **THE IMPACT OF THE CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS AND FUTURE TRENDS ON ICAR PROFILE AND ACTIVITIES**

Hans Wilmink, Member of the ICAR Board, presented at the November meeting of the Board his views related to the impact of the current developments and future trends on ICAR profiles and activities. The Board commended Hans Wilmink for providing the base for long term strategic



planning and agreed on the need for ICAR to monitor developments in animal industry, in particular impact of innovations and new technologies, changes in farm structure, integration in food chain, geographic shift of milk and meat production and the existing diversity in farm size and structure so as to adjust its programs and activities in response to new demands and requirements of ICAR Members. Power point presentation is available on the ICAR web site.

## **BRIAN WICKHAM - NEW COORDINATOR OF ICAR TECHNICAL BODIES**

Brian Wickham, the former Vice-President of ICAR and CEO of the Irish Cattle Breeders Federation, was nominated ICAR Technical Advisor in the ICAR Secretariat and the coordinator of Sub-Committees, Working Groups and Task Forces.

## **CHARLES HUNLUN - NEW COORDINATOR FOR CERTIFICATE OF QUALITY**

Charles Hunlun from the South-African Studbook has been nominated Technical Advisor in the ICAR Secretariat and coordinator for activities related to the ICAR Certificate of Quality.

## **ICAR FEE STRUCTURE**

The ICAR secretariat has received a couple of comments about the new fee structure. After consultation with the President, we desire to explain again the reasons of changing and the structure of the fees. Structure of ICAR fees has been left untouched since almost twenty years and needed a brush up. ICAR Board asked a small group to work on the issue. Out of this work came the frame which has been set up as the base for the fees in the coming years. The main issue was to ensure that new species and services coming into ICAR activities felt they got the benefit out of it while at the same time they contributed with resources at a more appropriate level. Up to now mainly resources from dairy cattle were the major source of income for ICAR. In the last twenty years ICAR has enlarged the services to other species and types of productions. An example is Interbeef, which now has been established as a formal service. Like for Interbull, the work behind carried out in core ICAR, needs contribution from the actual species.

The Board knows that is not possible to calculate precisely all draws, inputs and necessary resources for all services, but on the other hand, we must ensure that the vast majority of members will not notice other changes than the contribution will be more equal shared between different species and production types (milk, beef and wool).

## **NEW PRINTING VERSION OF THE GUIDELINES**

The new version of the Guidelines is just printed. The very precious book that we publish and that collects all guidelines and standards that ICAR produced is finally available. The hard copies will be delivered to all our members and to other relevant persons working for ICAR. The printed copies will also be given to those who will participate to the 2013 Aarhus ICAR annual meeting. Not to forget that the Guidelines are already available for free downloading at the ICAR website at:



[www.icar.org/Documents/Rules%20and%20regulations/Guidelines/Guidelines\\_2012.pdf](http://www.icar.org/Documents/Rules%20and%20regulations/Guidelines/Guidelines_2012.pdf).

## **Guidelines for parentage recording**

The ICAR Board requested the Parentage Recording Working Group to develop guidelines for the use of the full range of DNA analyses to determine identification and parentage. Guidelines should be developed in close consultation with Interbull Sub-Committee and the Genetic Analysis Working Group.

## **ICAR TECHNICAL WORKSHOP 2013**

ICAR Technical Workshop and the General Assembly of ICAR will be held in Aarhus, Denmark, 9-31 May 2013. The theme of the Workshop is ICAR MOVING FOR THE FUTURE. More details can be found on the ICAR homepage at: [www.icar.org](http://www.icar.org)



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