



ICAR Newsletter

April 2013

**International Committee
for Animal Recording**



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A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT, UFFE LAURITSEN

It is my particular pleasure to start this Newsletter by reporting on important events and activities that took place during the past four months: two of our Sub-Committees - INTERBULL and Animal Identification - organized meetings and a strategic workshop, our Executive Board met in USA, ICAR has strengthened its strategic alliances with sister organizations and its global image and relevance. Hosts of the 2013 Technical Workshop have completed all logistics and have produced an interesting program. More details will be presented in my report to the General Assembly to be held in my country, in the city of Aarhus, on 29 May 2013.

THE MOST IMPORTANT ICAR EVENT IN 2013

ICAR Technical Workshop 2013 and Health Data Conference

Organizers of animal recording systems have to keep improving their services. The ICAR Technical Workshop should be an important forum for exchange of experience. The intention is to have presentations on available applied technologies, which have in practical scale proven adequate functionality. A basic requirement for all systems is proper identification in all steps, so this is expected to be a key issue in this year's presentations.

Technical session I: Valid Identification (Chairperson: Kaivo Ilves)

Proper identification of animals, samples and data is in cooperation with secure logistic systems the basis for valid recording. This session will focus on how to achieve sufficient validity of identification and logistic systems in relation to validity of recordings used for traceability, documentation and decision support.

Technical session II: Identification in Milk Recording (Chairperson: Jay Mattison)

This session will focus on the validity of the chain from identifying the cow being milked to the data returned to this cow from the recording system and other reports. This involves identification and logistics but also milk meters and laboratory equipment and methods to avoid carry-over in sampling and testing.

Manufacturers showcase (Chairperson: Brian Wickham)

Exhibitors are invited to propose presentations regarding new products and new developments. Workshop organisers will choose among proposed presentations a limited number for oral presentation in this session.

Technical session III: Identification in Reproduction and Functional Traits (Chairperson: Daniel Abernethy)

This session will focus on ways to collect relevant data and how to use new (possibly automatic recorded) data in relation to reproduction and functional animals. Which data could be collected and how could it be used?

Technical session IV: Beef Recording, Sheep and Goat (Chairperson: Andrea Rosati)

This session will focus on issues especially regarding beef cattle, sheep and goats. The selection of presentations will be more relaxed in regard to the main focus of the workshop.

Parallel session: Increasing demands on the milk recorded sample (Chairperson: Martin Burke)

This session focuses on carry-over issues in sampling of milk and the importance to avoid/minimize the problem especially in the light of the increasing use of veterinary analyses of milk recording samples

Challenges and Benefits of Health Data Recording in the Context of Food Chain Quality, Management and Breeding (Chairperson: Christa Egger-Danner)

This session will focus on future challenges concerning animal breeding and consumer concerns - regulations of interest for this topics and expected developments. The different perspectives of parties involved (farmers, veterinarians, processors, consumers, administration,...) will be covered. Best practices of recording and use of health data are presented and challenges and solutions discussed. Aspects of use of antimicrobials is a topic as well.



The circumstances and requirements for the successful implementation of a health monitoring system differ very much between countries. Different approaches have to be used. Within this session the use of automated systems for recording of direct and indirect health data and need, requirements and possibilities of research will be discussed.



ICAR GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The ICAR General Assembly will be held on 29 May 2013 in Aarhus, Denmark. The Assembly is expected to receive President's Report, Treasurer's Report, Inspector's Report, 2012 Year End Financial Statements and 2014 Budget. It will also elect new Board members, approve new guidelines as proposed by Sub-Committees and Working Groups and approved by the Board. The President of ICAR will deliver Certificates of Quality and ICAR Awards.

AMENDMENTS TO THE ICAR STATUTES

The ICAR Board proposes to modify art. 8 of the Statutes and to convene the Extraordinary General Assembly for May 2013, immediately after the Ordinary General Assembly in Aarhus in May 2013. The Secretariat has already sent the invitation, agenda, form for attendance and proxies to the voting members so as to ensure that the quorum is achieved and the process for proxies clearly understood. In the invitation the exact wording of the new art. 8 has been clearly indicated together with the reasons of its amendment.

Art. 8 Admission to membership (existing art.)

8.1 Admission to membership of ICAR shall require approval by the Board.

Art. 8 Admission to membership (proposed art.)

8.1 Admission to membership of ICAR, with full rights and privileges, shall require approval by the Board and need to be proposed by an existing member of ICAR or the ICAR Secretariat.

8.2 Associate membership is open to other organisations supporting ICAR's objectives, and need to be proposed by an existing member of ICAR or the ICAR Secretariat and approved by the Secretariat.

MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

The ICAR Executive Board held its meeting on 10th and 11th March 2013 in St. Pete, Florida, USA. Uffe Lauritsen, Daniel Abernethy, Pierre-Louis Gastinel, Jay Mattison, (Members), Andrea Rosati (Secretary General). Reinhard Reents, member of the Executive Board, attended the meeting through skype conference. The meeting reviewed activities of technical bodies, approved documents for submission to the Board and to the General Assembly and the state of international cooperation. Members of the Executive Board thanked the National Dairy Herd Improvement Association for hosting the meeting and Jay Mattison for excellent arrangements.

JOINT MANAGEMENT OF BREED CODES WITH NAAB

The Executive Board discussed with representatives of National Association of American Breeders (NAAB) the proposal of the Letter of Agreement for the joint management of breed codes. The proposal will be discussed by NAAB Board at the next meeting and return with a decision. The NAAB database is a platform for future applications that has to be developed in by the Secretariat and the ICAR Working Groups.

INTERBULL STRATEGIC PLANNING SESSION AND THE STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

The Interbull Steering Committee, Interbull Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) and a number of members of the ICAR Executive Board held a two day strategic planning session in Uppsala, Sweden, in January 2013. The strategic planning session was very comprehensive and yielded a structured framework to guide Interbull for the next three years. Jarmo Juga acted as facilitator.

The Steering Committee reviewed the state of the Interbull data base for genomic data, input data and distribution of GMACE results, GEBV tests, standardisation of genomic reliability computations and an a turnaround time for official routine run.

SUB-COMMITTEE OF ANIMAL IDENTIFICATION

The Sub-Committee of Animal identification devices met in Madison, Wisconsin, USA, on 3-5 February, 2013. It reviewed recent activities and agreed on future programs which include further revision of ICAR Guidelines related to evaluation of machine readability, cancellation of family tag testing, preparation of the draft guidelines for material testing of RFID and conventional eartags and the draft procedure for re-testing of tags.



The web page containing the list of approved devices (plastic eartags and RFID), according to the system of identification of manufacturers has been regularly up-dated with new approvals. The Secretariat is in a permanent contact with the manufacturers and regularly replies to their requests for information and procedures for the approval.

ADHIS 30 YEAR - HERD 2013 CONFERENCE

Our Australian member, ADHIS with headquarter in Melbourne, celebrated their 30 years anniversary. Celebration took place in the town of Bendigo early March. Local and international guests were invited for a two day conference > including social events. During the workshop, Uffe Lauritsen current President and the former ICAR President Neil Petreny had the opportunity to present some key facts on herd testing and data collection. The event was well planned and the organizers had managed also to attract a row of high ranking people in the industry. The technical level of speeches was high, and gave the audience a lot of information's. Some domestic and others from abroad. During the two day session, Tweets commenting the messages from the podium, went through the air constantly.

Even in the hot, dry Australia, the spirit is high, and the knowledge of value of correct, precise and validated data is alive. Thanks to Daniel Abernethy and his nice colleagues in ADHIS for very inspiring days !

ICAR WEB SITE

In addition to basic information on the organization and on activities of bodies of the association, the ICAR web site contains PDF files from Niagara Falls and Cork sessions and the Bourg-en-Bresse meeting, Guidelines in PDF form, Technical Series, Newsletter, Certificate of Quality, Manufacturers Code, approved ID devices, approved milk recording devices and on-line cow, sheep and goat milk recording databases. ICAR Forum has been reinstalled in September 2012 and initially it had some 150 visits, mostly by participants in Interbeef. Chairpersons of other bodies should be alerted and advised on possibilities offered by the Forum.

During the period February - December 2012, there were 21 000 visits per month and 79 000 pages were downloaded (3.5 pages per visit). In January 2013 a new peak of visits was reached with 38 500 visits, mainly due to the many activities announced through the web, with 125 100 downloaded pages. In the two following months, the average number of visits returned to the observed values (22 000 visits and 70 000 visted pages).



The number of visitors and interest shown for various elements of the web page confirmed the essential role of this tool for the exchange and dissemination of technical information.

PROPOSALS FOR IMPROVEMENT OF SERVICES TO TECHNICAL BODIES

The ICAR Secretariat identified a number of actions that would improve services provided to ICAR Sub-Committees, working groups and task forces. Proposals submitted to the ICAR Board include: .

- Publication of the latest Terms of Reference for each Group on the ICAR website.
- Placing on the ICAR Website support documentation of all the ICAR Groups including:
 - membership;
 - contact details;
 - meeting schedules;
 - agenda;
 - minutes;
 - reports;
 - recommendation.
- Adoption of a standard format for all Terms of Reference for all Groups;
- Each ICAR Group should review its Terms of Reference in collaboration with the ICAR Secretariat at not more than four yearly intervals and report their findings and recommendations to the ICAR Board for adoption.
- The ICAR Board should reviews the framework within which the Groups are formed, the relationship between the Groups and the way they contribute to ICAR's Strategic Plan.
- The structure of the ICAR Guidelines be reviewed with the objective of:
 - simplifying maintenance
 - clarifying Group accountability
 - eliminating duplication, and
 - removing overlaps.

The systems used for maintaining the Guidelines be reviewed with the objective of:

- improving the quality of the guidelines for better serving the livestock industry;
- improving ease of access to end-users, and
- reducing administration costs,



The above proposals will be discussed by the meeting of the Board with chairpersons of Sub-Committees and Working Groups to be held in Aarhus in May 2013.

UP-DATED HANDBOOK AND INTERNAL REGULATIONS

The Secretariat has finalised the Handbook for Members of the Board composed of the Charter of members of the ICAR Board, the ICAR By-Laws and Internal Regulations of the ICAR Board (Rules of Procedure of the Board, Terms of Reference of officers of the Board, Process for recommending candidates for onto the ICAR Board and voting process, Board position description for Board member recruitment and Policy - process for approval of hosting nation for ICAR bi-annual session and annual meeting).

RELATIONS WITH THE INTERNATIONAL MEAT SECRETARIAT

Uffe Lauritsen, A. Rosati and P.L. Gastinel held a meeting with Mr. Hsin Huang, Secretary General of the International Meat Secretariat (IMS), which is the equivalent of the International Dairy Federation (IDF) for meat. This meeting was part of the strategy of collaboration with other international organisations. It was agreed to exchange information with IMS and invite their experts to our events. P.L. Gastinel already attended the IMS meeting in Paris.

CONFERENCE

With the release of the bovine genome in 2009 and the rapid discovery in understanding of the genome function, the potential application of genetic engineering to livestock is getting ever closer to reality. This will have an (in)direct impact on ICAR and its member and therefore it may be useful for the membership to appreciate the current state of affairs, in order to better equip themselves in how to respond to the arrival of this. The Executive Board of ICAR and the EAAP Council discussed possibilities of organizing a one-day workshop with participation of scientists, EU



officials, and representatives of producers and consumers. The workshop could be held in Brussels, in connection with AGRIBEX, the international agriculture fair between 3rd and 8th December 2013. The purpose of the workshop would be to gain expertise on this matter and to make ICAR more relevant in a new and important field of animal science applied to livestock industry preserving ICAR neutrality and sensitivity to many ethical questions that have been raised around this topic. The final decision will be made by the Board at the Aarhus meeting in May 2013.

SECRETARIAT'S CONTACTS

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