



# ICAR Newsletter December 2013

**International Committee  
for Animal Recording**



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## A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT

The past six months were marked by intensive activities of the ICAR governing and technical bodies inspired by the outcome of the Aarhus Technical Workshop and initiatives and ideas aimed at further improvements of ICAR strategy and programs in providing services to its Members. The global role and relevance of ICAR mission and programs has been confirmed also by the fact that nine organizations - seven full members and two associate members - joined the association in the past six months. We have now 108 members in 54 countries from all continents.

The Board continues to work on developing ICAR. Together with Service ICAR we have grown to a substantial level of activities and annual turnover (app. 1 mio. €), and there is a need to examine the way we are organized and the way we work. The board has appointed an internal WG among its members plus representatives from the staff to do the work. Further information will be delivered in Berlin.

Compared to 10-15 years ago, our members expect more from the membership. This is the reason the board has allocated funds for developing items that would not be handled unless we do it. Examples are investigation of the nature of carry over on milksamples and development of a structure for data exchange. Fortunately we have the financial capacity. ICAR welcomes any proposal that support and increase the value of animal recording. Seeking support to development has one overall prerequisite - it must add economic value to the farmers bottom line.

During 2013 I visited a number of Members. Thanks to all of you for extraordinary hospitality and friendship, for sharing ideas, and not the least for personal help in many ways.

In concluding, may I express my thanks and appreciations to all colleagues involved in ICAR activities in the past year and send my Season's Greetings and best wishes for successful and happy new 2014!

## NEW STRATEGIC PLAN

The draft of the new strategic plan approved by the Board aims at enabling ICAR to improve its role and mission taking into account a number of trends which may have an impact on ICAR. The use of genomics, the amount of data from one animal or from a farm will increase; chain integration to guarantee food safety and pressure on environmental and animal welfare will become more important. Scarcity of resources will be an issue and, at the same time, there will be more demand for protein and energy. Integration in the livestock improvement industry will happen and recording activities will be across borders. Easy of management, low emission, high animal welfare, long term profitability will be the main drivers for the primary producers. ICAR mission is to improve its role as the global leading provider



of guidelines, standards and certification for animal identification, recording and evaluation and of management tools. Challenges for ICAR are to anticipate the need for more guidelines and standards and for recording of more traits and the need for ease of management. In addition, the need for more protein will stimulate increase of animal production in developing countries, where ICAR can play an important role. ICAR has to work for the coming years on promotion and visibility, growth by new activities, new guidelines and ICAR has to improve itself to make the strategic plans happen.

The Board underlined that the Strategic Plan as a living and dynamic document would be amended and corrected by contributions from ICAR Members, members of the Board, members of the ICAR technical bodies and the ICAR Secretariat.

## **NEW PROJECTS**

The ICAR Board approved the financial support to the project of the WG Animal Data Exchange on the establishment of a software testing facility and a project, proposed by the Identification Sub-Committee, related to verification of criteria for acceptable variability of parameters after each environmental test.

The Board endorsed further contacts with interested organizations and institutions aimed at developing guidelines on methane emission and at joint work on developing genomic evaluation of dry matter intake.





## **HUNDRED SIXTY VOLUNTEERS IN ICAR SUB-COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS**

In reviewing activities of Sub-Committees and Working Groups, the ICAR Board expressed its satisfaction with the level of activities of the ICAR technical bodies and the involvement of around 160 professionals - employers of ICAR Members - who volunteer as experts in ICAR Sub-Committees and Working Groups.

## **PREPARATIONS FOR THE ANIMAL IDENTIFICATION WORKSHOP IN SOUTH AFRICA**

The Board endorsed a concept note for the organization of a workshop on animal identification and traceability of animals in South Africa presented by Badi Besbes, Chairman of the Developing Countries Working Group. The workshop would be attended by representatives of governments, associations, academic institutions, international organizations and potential donors. Organizers would be FAO, ICAR, Agricultural Research Council and Department of Agriculture of South Africa. The event would be co-financed by FAO and ICAR/SERVICE-ICAR Srl following the model of the Santiago de Chile workshop. The financial support of ICAR would be discussed once the budget of the workshop has been presented by the WG Developing Countries.

## **ACCURACY TASK FORCE**

A core element of ICAR mission is ensuring that the animal data collected by its members is accurate and suitable for use in animal breeding. The challenge faced by ICAR and its groups is to establish standards, guidelines, and services which enable animal farmers to achieve greater

efficiency and long term sustainability. Accuracy is a core concept in determining the usefulness of a potential new tool or technique. It provides a measure of the extent to which a measurement or prediction corresponds with the “true” value. For these reasons, the ICAR Board agreed to establish the Accuracy Task Force to develop ICAR accuracy guidelines in collection of animal recording data to be used in breeding, farm management, traceability (including quality assurance) and animal health and welfare. The TF is expected to produce statistical tools and guidelines for use by ICAR Sub-Committees and Groups in establishing accuracy guidelines relevant to their field of competence and responsibility.

## **ICAR DELEGATION IN TURKEY**

Upon the invitation of the Cattle Breeders Association of Turkey (CBAT) a two member ICAR delegation - Uffe Lauritsen and Milan Zjalic - visited Turkey from 22 to 26 September 2013.

Dr. Mehmet Mehdi Erol, Minister of Food, Agriculture and Livestock and Uffe Lauritsen, president of ICAR, attended the milk analysis laboratory opening ceremony in Balikesir. The ceremony was connected by video link with ceremonies in Ankara, Bursa, Tekirdag and Izmir and presented in Turkish television. The delegation visited Ministry of Agriculture, a provincial and the central office of the Turkish Cattle Breeder's Association and the Sheep and Goat Breeders Association of Turkey in Ankara.

### **Meeting with CBAT - ICAR Member**

The ICAR delegation met with Cemeletin Ozden, President, and Husein Velioglu, Secretary



The ICAR delegation in front of the Ministry of Agriculture in Ankara.

General of Cattle Breeder's Association of Turkey (CBAT) and several officials from the central office in Ankara. CBAT has over 136.000 members and offices in 83 Turkish provinces. 2/3 of milk produced in the country comes from members of the Association. They provide for animal ID, milk recording, herd bookkeeping, AI, training of farmers, advisory services, input supply, sale of genetic material. After the workshop in Kusidasi in March 2012 (an EU-CBAT-ICAR project), they joined Interbull and have already started to export genetic material in Central Asian countries. The main themes of discussion with the Turkish Member were the participation of Turkish experts in ICAR technical bodies and the use of ICAR approved ID and recording devices.

### **Meeting with the Minister of Agriculture**

Uffe Lauritsen referred to the opening of five milk analysis laboratories as a big step forward in modernization a development of the milk production in the country. He underlined that the exchange of experience and information leading to guidelines and standards represent the core of ICAR activities. In this respect, he referred to Turkish experience in sheep and goat production as the wealth to be shared with other ICAR members. The Minister underlined that the Ministry is regulatory and the control body while breeders associations were entrusted with the implementation of measures and the field work. Referring to the project on small ruminants ID and registration that would start in February 2014 the Minister recommended the establishment of contacts between ICAR and the Sheep and Goat Breeders Association of Turkey.

### **Meeting with the Sheep and Goat Breeders Association of Turkey in Ankara**

The delegation had a meeting with the vice-president and secretary general of the Sheep and Goat Breeders Association of Turkey in Ankara. The association has 350.000 members. It developed and implements the goat breeding program. They would like to join ICAR but need more information. It was agreed that Milan Zjalic would be the contact person in the ICAR Secretariat and Ms. Emine Dilan Sahin the contact person for CBAT.

## **MEETING WITH CHINESE OFFICIALS INTERESTED IN ICAR ACTIVITIES**

Andrea Rosati during his visit to China and Taiwan on the occasion of the World Congress on Animal Production met with a large audience of relevant Chinese policy makers, high functionaries of the Ministry of Agriculture, technicians, members of breeders organizations and veterinarians. The hosts presented the cattle production in China and their plans for improvements aimed at meeting the growing demand for animal products. They plan to translate ICAR guidelines in Chinese and to disseminate it to their technicians.

The visit to Taiwan in Taipei was a very interesting to discuss with a very efficient organization, the Livestock Research Institute of the Council of Agriculture in Taipei. The level of dairy production is very high and the applied technology was certainly advanced. The Livestock Research Institute

was considering to apply to the ICAR Certificate of Quality for some of the carried activities.

### **Cattle production in China**

In China there are around 14 millions of dairy cattle. There are many new large dairy farms to satisfy the increasing request of milk. They also have farms with 35000 animals in the same site. There are also many small family farms, with one or two cattle, often multipurpose. The cattle are all identified by microchips. Every province has a database, which is coordinated with the central one that stays in the Ministry of Agriculture. The national legislation tells that cattle must be identified by microchip with identification numbers assigned by the Ministry of Agriculture.

When live animals are imported, they keep the original number plus an identification number to inform about the country of origin. All utilized microchips are made in China and they also make preference for those ICAR approved, but approval is not strictly required. They plan in the near future to establish also visual tags.

### **Animal recording**

The collection and management of performance records are not organized at central level, despite the existence of some breeders organizations. Some of this activity is done at herd level. Especially large herds have automatic facilities to take records. They plan to collect and manage centrally the performance records in future. No selection scheme has been planned neither genetic evaluation is performed. They are net importers of semen, mainly coming from USA and Canada.

### **NEW ICAR MEMBERS**

Since the Aarhus meeting the Board approved full membership of:

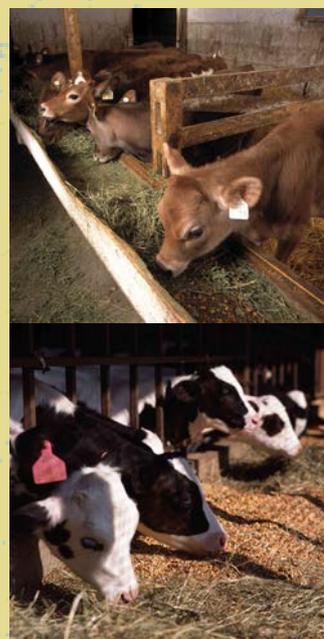
- VIT, IT-solutions for Animal Production (Germany)
- FEAGAS (Federación Española de Asociaciones de Ganado Selecto - Spanish Federation of the Selected Livestock Associations) replaces Ministry of Agriculture, Nutrition and Agriculture (Spain)
- The Breeding Cooperative Impuls (Czech Republic)
- Romanian Holstein Breeders Association (Romania)
- Shanghai Dairy Breeding Centre Co. Ltd (China)
- Impuls (Czech Rep.)

It also approved the Associate Membership of

- Lely industries (The Netherlands)
- Rezare Systems Ltd. (New Zealand)

### **CERTIFICATE OF QUALITY**

On the basis of reports received from the ICAR Auditors the ICAR Board granted the Certificate of Quality to the following Members and for the following fields of activities:



1. VIT, IT-solutions for Animal Production (Germany): Genetic Evaluation dairy and beef cattle.
2. Italian Animal Breeders' Association - AIA (Italy): ID dairy cattle, beef cattle, buffalo, dairy sheep and goats. PR dairy cattle, beef cattle, buffalo, dairy sheep and goats, lab analysis.
3. Slovak Breeding Services (Slovakia): ID dairy cattle, Production Recording in dairy cattle, Genetic Evaluation of dairy cattle and lab analysis.
4. Polish Cattle Breeders (Poland): ID dairy cattle, Production Recording dairy cattle, lab analysis, data processing.
5. The Croatian Agricultural Agency for: ID of dairy and beef cattle, dairy sheep and goats; Production Recording in dairy cattle, sheep and goats; Genetic Evaluation of dairy cattle and other species; Laboratory analysis and data processing.
6. ZAR (Austria): Production Recording dairy and beef cattle.
7. Czech Moravian Breeders (Czech Republic): ID dairy cattle, Production Recording dairy cattle, Genetic Evaluation dairy cattle, linear classification dairy cattle, lab analysis, data processing.
8. State Agency Agriculture (Latvia): ID dairy and beef cattle; ID dairy sheep and goats; PR dairy and beef cattle; PR dairy sheep and goats; GE dairy cattle, data processing.

On-going auditing is carried out at the following organizations:

- France Génétique Elevage (France)
- Danish Cattle Federation (Denmark)
- ASR (Switzerland)
- CONVIS (Luxembourg)
- CIS (UK)
- ICBF (Ireland)
- SAC/EGENES (UK)

## TASK FORCE OF BREED FEDERATIONS

The ICAR Board appointed M. Shaffer as convenor of the Task Force Breed Federations and Josef Kuçera, ICAR Inspector, to represent ICAR in the TF.

## NEXT 39th ICAR BIENNIAL SESSION

The 39th ICAR Biennial Session will be held in Berlin 19–23 May 2014.

# 2014

IDF/ISO Analytical Week and  
ICAR/INTERBULL Conference



Germany | Berlin

IDF/ISO 15–20 May

ICAR 19–23 May

Interbull 20–21 May

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