



ICAR NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2015

Martin Burke appointed as ICAR CE

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Welcome to the new Chief Executive- A word from the President

The ICAR Board is pleased to announce the appointment of Martin Burke as ICAR and Service ICAR Chief Executive. Service ICAR is the wholly owned subsidiary of ICAR responsible for the delivery of service, testing and certification programs for ICAR.

Martin brings extensive senior management experience in both the private and public sectors. His key technical experience includes animal recording processes and Quality Certification. During his career, Martin has been a Quality Manager with Philips and Motorola, a Breeding Information Manager with the Irish Cattle Breeding Federation and for the past year he has been the Director/Owner of Lean Consultancy QPlus. In addition, Martin has been the Chair of the ICAR Recording Devices Subcommittee from 2010 to the present.

"I know that with the Board's guidance we will be able to bring tangible and sustained improvements in ICAR processes and raise ICAR's profile during the next 5 years. I am looking forward to this exciting new challenge!" Martin stated.

With Martin's appointment ICAR has now, for the first time, a full time Chief Executive. This new full-time position will lead the execution of the strategic plans which are expected to raise ICAR visibility, offer new services to our customers, improve our current services and the reach next level of service and professionalism. The ICAR Board is confident that Martin is the right person to guide and lead us through these to the next level.

Martin will assume his new responsibilities on February 3, 2015, at which time Brian Wickham will cease as Acting Secretary General. Brian will continue as the coordinator for the ICAR's groups and the ICAR Board would like to express their sincere thanks to Brian for the excellent work he did as Acting Secretary General. In the short time since June 2014, Brian has managed the ICAR team well and established excellent cooperation with ICAR and Service ICAR Boards. Brian was the right person to help with the transition to a more independent ICAR.

Hans Wilmink
(On behalf of the ICAR Board)



The new ICAR Chief Executive, Martin Burke

Activities of the ICAR board

At its meeting held on 27 January 2015 the ICAR Board approved draft amendments to the ICAR statutes. The draft amendments will be sent to ICAR members for comments and then presented to the Extraordinary General Assembly for approval. The board also reviewed ICAR's financial position and endorsed the decisions of the Service-ICAR Board.

Amendments to the ICAR statutes

The draft amendments to the ICAR Statutes define the International Committee for Animal Recording (ICAR) is a non-profit international organization with membership consisting of public and private entities accepting these Statutes and active in animal identification and in the recording and evaluation in animal production.

The new proposal introduces the involvement of ICAR in identification, recording and evaluation of characteristics of production systems and their bearing on animal health, welfare, productivity, food safety and the environment as new fields of activity of ICAR Members. Recording and evaluation of characteristics of production systems represent new challenges and opportunities for expansion of services ICAR Members provide and offer to their clients.

The proposal is based Future ICAR strategy and on developments in programs and activities of a number of ICAR Members in the field of animal health and functional traits recording, very good and encouraging activities of the ICAR WG Functional Traits and the establishment of the WG Animal Welfare. It fits well within the image and the role of ICAR as a global provider of information for business decisions related to genetic improvement and farm/herd management.

News from Krakow 2015

News from Krakow (Poland) Technical Workshop, 10-12 June 2015 - Reminder of early bird registration

Only four months ahead the ICAR Technical Workshop and the Annual ICAR General Assembly 2015 is going to happen in Krakow, Poland! Preparations for this event are well under way and we are pleased to remind you that registration has been opened.

Please visit our homepage <http://www.icar2015.pl/registration>

The deadlines for registration are as follows:

Early bird:	until 15 March 2015
Regular:	16 March - 30 April 2015
Late / on site:	from 1 May 2015

During your online registration you will have the possibility to book accommodation for your conference stay. The organiser prepared a list of suggested hotels for you including the Conference hotel. Remaining hotels are located in a walking distance from the Conference hotel. Please note that the early bird registration deadline will not be extended and there is a peak of tourist season in June. Therefore we advise to take the chance of saving your personal discount by registering early and making your arrangements for accommodation at the same time.

If you would like to present a paper under one of sessions, you have the last chance! The deadline for submitting the title + abstract has been extended by 10 February. If you are interested in, do not wait!

Please suggest a title (max 200 characters) and provide us with a short abstract (max 4,000 characters) by registering as a potential speaker at:
<http://symposium.pl/icar2015/index.php>.





Sub-Committees and Working Groups

ICAR/Interbeef workshop

These are the deadlines to keep in mind:

1. For the accepted speeches: Submit abstract and title by 10 February 2015.
2. Organisers and Chairpersons will notify the acceptance of the paper by 27 February 2015.

Your efforts in respecting the above deadlines will be very much appreciated. Please help us meet these deadlines and ensure a really enjoyable and informative conference for all delegates. We are firmly convinced that with your active participation the event will be even more fruitful for our community. Further details concerning paper submission can also be found on our homepage at: www.icar2015.pl

From ICAR Sub-Committees and Working Groups

Expanding international genetic evaluation of beef cattle: key outcomes from ICAR/Interbeef workshop Full members:

Some 80 people from more than 20 ICAR member countries who attended the ICAR/Interbeef workshop in Dublin, Ireland (25-26 November 2014) agreed that ICAR/Interbeef should:

1. Continue to expand its international evaluation service to include more traits and breeds.
2. Give particular focus to traits where there is significant interest in sharing internationally e.g. feed intake.
3. Host an 'international genotyped animal list' for potential sharing of genotypes amongst members.
4. Host a repository of genotypes (GenoEx) and standard exchange formats for potential sharing of genotypes amongst members.
5. Offer an imputation service for both parentage verification and genomic evaluations for its members.
6. Offer an international genomic breeding value service for members (based on shared genotypes and phenotypes).
7. Offer a range of services for members, depending on their particular needs and requirements (as per points 1-5 above).
8. Develop a service fee structure that covers the cost of providing the various services outlined above (as per points 1-5 above).
9. Revisit the original terms of reference of the beef working group as a means of re-engaging with all ICAR members interested in beef data recording and genetic/genomic evaluation.
10. Provide an increased lobbying role regarding the importance of collaboration in the context of international genetic/genomic evaluations. This is especially relevant for potential funding bodies (e.g. EU and national governments) and for future changes in relevant legislations affecting members.
11. Continue to organise networking events, such as conferences/workshops, as these facilitate greater collaboration in the areas of data, genotypes, software and knowledge.
12. Provide a forum for discussion on the application and implication of genomics on future breeding programmes and breeding goals.
13. Ensure slides, notes and questionnaires are posted on the ICAR/Interbeef website as soon as possible.



Jars

Jars – An important tool for milk recording

Recognising the importance of jars as important tools for milk recording in lower input production systems, the ICAR Recording Devices Sub-Committee has undertaken a review of jars that have ICAR approval for use in official milk recordings. The list of ICAR-approved models has been published on the ICAR website (www.icar.org) and all members are requested to send information on the jars they use in milk recording. Once all the information has been collected, the sub-committee will publish the complete list of approved jars.

Recording Devices SC

Recording Devices Sub-Committee

Testing and approval of new or modified recording devices and accurate sampling of same is central to the quality of data for both management and genetic evaluations. The ICAR Recording Devices Sub-Committee is charged with maintaining the ICAR recording guidelines (Section 11) as well as testing and approving the devices through three SERVICE-ICAR test centres in the Netherlands, France and Germany. Lists of approved meters are maintained on ICAR web site.

The Sub-Committee has good worldwide representation on the committee, with milk recording and DHI members coming from EU, North America and Oceania.

In addition to testing and approval of recording devices, the Sub-Committee also undertakes various improvement projects – some in conjunction with other ICAR groups. In past few years we have worked on:

1. AMS (automatic milking systems) universal sampler/data development
2. DataCal – using 365 electronic meter data for routine calibration
3. Carry-Over – test protocol development
4. Accuracy Task Force – reviewing standards guidelines and their application
5. Meter Approval webpage refresh (includes application details e.g. high line/ low line, S/W rev etc.).

Animal Identification SC

Improving quality of identification devices

The ICAR Sub-Committee for Animal Identification, composed of animal ID specialists from all parts of the world and in consultation with the best scientists in this area, has worked intensively for the past couple of years to produce the new animal ID guideline. ICAR believes that this will be positively welcomed by both manufacturers and authorities responsible for the criteria of choice and procurement of ID devices. The result is an important step in the development of a comprehensive ICAR quality management system of ID devices. The key points of the new testing and certification procedure can be found at the ICAR web at: http://www.icar.org/pages/ICAR_Certified/New%20Testing%20and%20Certification.

New Members

New ICAR Members

Dairy Association of China

Dairy Association of China

As published in the December 2014 issue of the ICAR Newsletter, the Dairy Association of China (DAC) has become a full ICAR member.

DAC is an independent social corporate body and is a non-profit organisation consisting of members from enterprises, agencies, organisations or institutions involved in dairy cattle breeding, dairy processing industry and relevant fields. Its business activities include technical communication, international cooperation, business training, publishing books and periodicals, advisory services, publicity and promotion, organisation of conferences and exhibitions.

China is paying increasing attention to the dairy industry, with dairy cattle breeding gradually becoming standardised. The number of registered dairy cattle is currently close to 1 million.

In welcoming the new ICAR member, we quote the statement from the DAC application for ICAR membership: *"We hope that after joining ICAR, through international communication and cooperation, we can improve the overall level of China's dairy cow variety registration and DHI work."*

AgTags Ltd.

AgTags Limited (Associate Member)

AgTags Limited are the Australasian agent for Soartech Electronics RFID livestock products. Based in Wanganui, New Zealand the operation is currently applying for NAIT approval for the cattle and deer tags produced by the Company. The coding and etching of the tags will also be completed in Wanganui plant using automated equipment supplied by Soartech. The aim of the Company is the optimisation of the production in the agricultural field.

Service-ICAR

News from Service-ICAR s.r.l.

Service-ICAR s.r.l. (SI) – the commercial company owned by ICAR – as a part of the ICAR family provides specific products and services for ICAR members and other interested entities active in fields of ICAR competence upon their request. These services complement those open to all members and covered by membership fees, such as participation in the joint development of guidelines and standards for animal identification and recording and evaluation in animal production, exchange of experiences and dissemination of information.

In the past, SI activities have been presented in reports submitted by ICAR presidents to the General Assembly but were never presented to the broader public. The SI Board considers that informing the broader public of SI products and services could enhance the transparency of ICAR operations and the visibility of the company, both among its present and its future customers. Therefore, it decided to establish 'NEWS from SERVICE-ICAR s.r.l.' as part of the ICAR Newsletter.

In this issue, we present some of the SI products and services.

New procedure for ID devices

Service-ICAR new testing and certification procedure for ID devices

New guidelines for testing and certification of animal identification devices have been approved by the ICAR General Assembly and are coming into effect in 2015. Service-ICAR will offer new services to manufacturers and users of ID devices, in addition to the role ICAR has as Registration Authority of ISO.

The procedure for publishing registered devices on the ICAR webpage remains the same, but the term 'ICAR approved' will be replaced by 'ICAR registered' to comply with the terminology of the Registration Authority agreement between ISO and ICAR.

ICAR certification will be an additional service. Certification of RFID devices will be valid for five years. At the end of five years, the manufacturer is invited to recertify the product. The voluntary RFID recertification will be based on the limited test procedure of ISO 24631-1 and ISO 24631-3 (performance test) and ICAR Guidelines (Section 10).

For permanent external RFID devices, ICAR offers a completely new test protocol on device composition and environmental performance. In 2015 only, ICAR offers

an extra sixth (6th) year of certification for the RFID devices that on 1 January 2015 are in their fifth year from a previous test. This arrangement is offered to facilitate a smooth transition to the new system (for more details, please browse the website at www.icar.org).

CoQ

Auditing the implementation of the ICAR guidelines – Certificate of Quality

Service-ICAR s.r.l. (SI) carries out auditing of identification, recording and evaluation methods and practices upon request from interested ICAR members. Reports prepared by SI auditors selected from outstanding professionals within the ICAR family are presented to the audited organisations with comments and, if required, with recommendations for improvements.

Reports are also presented to the ICAR Board, which decides whether the member concerned merits the ICAR Certificate of Quality. Auditors' reports serve also as an orientation to ICAR sub-committees and working groups for updating and improving the ICAR Guidelines. 'News from Service-ICAR' will publish extracts from auditors' reports as an SI product and also to advise of the services and activities of ICAR members.

Auditors' Reports

From summaries of Auditors' Reports for the Certificate of Quality

Växa Sverige

Växa Sverige

Sweden has an obligatory country-wide identification system in place. All cattle have a unique identity and two living animals can never have the same ear tag number. The identification system is run by a state agency and the data is copied to the milk and beef recording and pedigree database.

Milk samples are for the most part transported by milk lorry to the dairies. In a few areas, recording technicians collect them. The laboratory service provider Eurofins provides a collection service from the dairies to the laboratory. Animal identification, data extraction and sample management are all completed very professionally. The milk meters, cow IDs, recording process and data capture were inspected and seen to correspond to ICAR guidelines.



The lab has a good quality control system and is regularly controlled by Växa Sverige. The data processing system is efficient and quick. A lot of reporting is done to create added value to the farmers and to make it more interesting to be in milk recording. The breeding values for the main dairy breeds are calculated in NAV and for the other breeds locally but according to the same principles. Sweden participates in Interbull and Interbeef and data quality is known to be high.

The Swedish system works very well in general. Typically for very old and well-established milk recording systems, there are some instances where new or changed ICAR Guidelines have not been implemented. This serves to show how necessary it is to provide a regular audit of longstanding ICAR members

Czech Moravian
Breeders' Association

Czech Moravian Breeders' Association

The Czech-Moravian Breeders' Corporation is responsible for managing the national animal identification system in the Czech Republic and maintains the national central animal register, records holding facilities, animals and animal movements nationally and labels and distributes the ear tags to the farmers.



Českomoravská společnost chovatelů, a.s.

Ear tags from four manufacturers are used – all manufacturers are ISO- and/or CTIM-certified and the ear tags are tested and approved according to ICAR and/or Institut de Élevage and/or national guidelines. All the relevant procedures are in accordance with the applicable national and EU regulations and fully conform to the relevant ICAR Guidelines.

All weights for beef cattle production recording are taken according to Method A. Several beef cattle herds were visited and the relevant procedures and practices were observed and were found to be in accordance with the relevant ICAR Guidelines. Weights are taken and production recorded by approved technicians from the Beef Cattle Breeders' Association and other approved organisations and an extensive system of supervisory checks by the applicant and the governmental Czech Breeding Inspection Service is in place. All the relevant procedures fully conform to the relevant ICAR Guidelines.

Breeding Service of The Slovak Republic (PSSR)

Breeding Service of The Slovak Republic (PSSR)

The PSSR is responsible for the national animal identification system in the Slovak Republic and



Plemenárske služby Slovenskej republiky, š.p.

maintains the national central animal register, records holding facilities, animals and animal movements nationally and labels and distributes the ear tags to the farmers.

All the relevant procedures for beef cattle are in accordance to the relevant national and EU regulations and fully conform to the relevant ICAR Guidelines. A-Methods are used exclusively for beef cattle production recording. The relevant procedures and practices were observed and were found to be in accordance with the relevant ICAR Guidelines.

The testing for scales were discussed and the relevant procedures were observed. All scales are owned by the PSSR and are subject to compulsory annual recalibration. The data processing centre uses an integrated database where all the records from the national animal identification system, production recording and herd book data are functionally inter-related. All the relevant procedures are in accordance with the ICAR Guidelines.