



INTERBULL

1. HISTORY

INTERBULL was the result of co-operative efforts which started in 1983 between the International Dairy Federation (IDF), European Association of Animal Production (EAAP) and ICAR.

In 1988 it was agreed that ICAR would establish INTERBULL as one of its permanent committees effective from 1st January 1989.

Involvement in the activities of INTERBULL by international bodies such as IDF, FAO and EAAP is through membership of INTERBULL. In this way it is possible to ensure the involvement of all countries with an interest in the activities of INTERBULL.

2. OBJECTIVES

The overall objectives of INTERBULL are, to co-ordinate and to assist participating countries in the international evaluation of cattle by:

- a) Facilitating communication
- b) Documenting evaluation systems
- c) Facilitating international genetic evaluations
- d) Providing genetic evaluation services to members
- e) Providing advisory services to members
- f) Co-ordinating international research
- g) Publication of information
- h) Formation of technical working groups

3. INFRASTRUCTURE

INTERBULL is a permanent committee within ICAR and is managed by an ICAR appointed steering committee.

INTERBULL currently has about 35 participating countries plus EAAP, IDF, and FAO as international member organisations.

The terms of reference set by ICAR for INTERBULL are as follows:

- 1) Participating countries of INTERBULL must be members or associate members of ICAR. ICAR can also accept international organisations as participating members of INTERBULL
- 2) INTERBULL is directed by a steering committee nominated by the board of ICAR, which also appoints the chairman and a secretary / co-ordinator.
- 3) Regular meetings are held at least on a biennial basis with representatives of participating countries
- 4) A status report including past and planned activities, finances and budget are presented to ICAR for approval.

4. RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

Through the International Data Base being established, a basis is provided for research and co-operation between member countries.

INTERBULL has been active in international research, eg: calculation of conversion equations and identification of genetic traits.

Research projects involving INTERBULL over the last two years include:

- 1) Evaluation of single and multiple trait methods to rank bulls internationally for milk production and other traits.
- 2) Direct vs indirect conversations of sire proofs across countries.

- 3) Developments of methods for estimating the level of connection between populations and breeds.
- 4) Assessment of connection across countries for different breed groups.
- 5) Evaluation of the potential for multi-country evaluations.
- 6) Appraisal of methods for validating genetic trends derived from national genetic evaluations.

5. GENETIC EVALUATION SERVICE:- INTERBULL CENTRE

The INTERBULL centre in Uppsala has been set up to: create an international database of bull evaluations and pedigree information, collate sire proof conversion equations, conduct and participate in research on international evaluations, provide technical leadership in the standardisation of information across countries and to assist individuals or groups of countries to implement joint evaluation schemes.

To date, milk, fat and protein yields are included in the routine biannually (February and August) international evaluations. Other economically important traits will be added upon successful completion of ongoing research.

Recent research conducted at the INTERBULL centre has made it possible to assess genetic correlations between different countries. These estimated parameters are used in the international evaluations.

Bull listings will be essentially "custom made" for each country, reflecting local market conditions.

Data based on daughters from imported semen will be included in the international evaluation for the breeds and countries where such information is now considered unbiased.

6. PUBLICATIONS

The proceedings of meetings are published in bulletins. Interbull has established documentation on sire evaluation systems through documented surveys of the methods of sire evaluation used in member countries.

Technical information on the most recent international evaluation, research results and detailed information on INTERBULL centre activities is presented in the INTERBULL newsletter.

7. FUNDING

Income is based on specific participation fees from each member country. A small membership fee, based on the number of milk recorded cows, is paid by members.

8. FUTURE WORK

The INTERBULL centre has a major role to play in facilitating the provision of information to enable bulls to be compared internationally. Substantial opportunities exist for research into aspects of international comparisons. The INTERBULL centre will be well equipped with data and contacts to both conduct and co-ordinate this type of research in the future.

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