

# NAAB Uniform Coding System

The purpose of the NAAB Uniform Coding system for Identifying Semen is to provide a unique code number for each bull that includes:

- Identification of the source of the semen (the organization that processed the semen).
- Identification of the breed of the bull.
- A code number identifying each respective bull within breed within each AI organization.

It is recognized that the registration number for each bull is a unique number. However, it does not identify the source of the semen and in some cases is not readily recognizable by the breed.

Experience has proven that individual herd owners, managers, and technicians prefer to use a more familiar code number instead of the registration number when identifying a sire used. The NAAB uniform code number will in many cases be seven or eight characters, which is equally as long as a registration number. However, since different segments of the code number have specific meanings, the entire code is much easier to remember and more acceptable by people in the field than is the registration number. In addition, by eliminating all blanks and leading zeros, the code number when written, will often be shorter than most registration numbers.

The NAAB uniform code number was originally developed for use by commercial AI organizations for identification of dairy and beef semen as it is exchanged and sold throughout the industry. In addition, the requirements of the Purebred Dairy Cattle Association require a code identifying the source of dairy sire semen on each individual unit. Certified Semen Services (CSS) also requires all participating AI businesses to label each breeding unit of semen

produced by them with the elements of the NAAB Uniform Code. Logically, there are other needs for a code number identifying the source of semen. It would not be feasible to print a different code number for each of these and other purposes on each unit of semen in view of space availability and unnecessary duplication.

In certain circumstances NAAB may assign a Marketing Code number that can be substituted for the NAAB-ICAR Stud Code number in the NAAB Uniform Code. When the Marketing Code number is used in the NAAB Uniform Code, the NAAB-ICAR Stud Code number must also be printed on the straw separate from the NAAB Uniform Code and standing alone.

Incomplete sire identification by registration number in Dairy Herd Improvement (DHI) records has for years been a concern because of the significant loss of records that otherwise would be available for sire evaluation. Many herd owners and managers use bull code numbers instead of registration numbers when completing production record forms. Thus, it is logical that the code number be a unique number that can be uniformly converted to the correct registration number by use of a cross reference listing of each bull (i.e., the bull's uniform code number cross referenced to his registration number).

For this purpose the entire code number, including stud and breed identification and individual bull number, is necessary for the number to be unique for each bull.

This system is being employed by the Dairy Record Processing Centers and there is little doubt that such a system will be useful in beef performance record programs. The NAAB Uniform Code for Identifying Semen consists of a maximum of ten characters according to the following combination scheme:

**NAAB-ICAR Stud (AI Center) Code** - Indicates the semen producing organization (stud) that collected and processed the semen. Stud code numbers are assigned by the NAAB to its member organizations and other semen producing organizations where warranted. It is comprised of one or more numeric characters. These numbers will be 499 and lower. [Maximum of three characters].

**NAAB Marketing (Controller number) Code** - Identifies a business listed as Controller of a bull in the NAAB Cross Reference databases or a qualifying marketing organization. These numbers will be 500 or greater. [Maximum of three characters]. Note: Any individual or business applying for a Marketing Code must first obtain a Stud Code number if they so qualify.

**Breed Code:** Indicates the breed of bull. Dairy breed codes are two alpha characters and consistent with codes designated by USDA for the DHI program. Changes in dairy breed codes should be made only upon mutual agreement of the NAAB, USDA and DHI computing centers. Beef breed codes are two alpha characters and are assigned by NAAB in conjunction with Agriculture Canada and the Canadian AI industry. [Maximum of two characters].

**Bull Code:** Indicates the respective bull's number assigned by the AI organization collecting and processing the semen. Bull codes should be numeric codes with a maximum of five characters from 1 to 99999. All leading zeros and blanks should be omitted.

If a bull is transferred to a second AI organization for collection, a different code number should be assigned to the same bull. Since the stud code is different for each organization, it is not necessary to retain the same individual bull code when a bull is moved to a different stud. [Maximum of five characters].

## Examples:

### **1HO777**

- 1 = Stud code for Cooperative Resources International
- HO = Breed code for Holstein
- 777 = Bull code for Coastal Cleitus Andrew, US Registry ID No. USA2110495

### **109SM284**

- 109 = Stud code for Reproduction Enterprises, Inc.
- SM = Breed code for Simmental
- 284 = Bull code for Black Knight U2, US Registry ID No. 1138189

### **507HO6685**

- 507 = Marketing code for Select Sires
- HO = Breed code for Holstein
- 6685 = Bull code for Roylane Patron Bryce-ET, US, Registry ID No. 127955364

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Ref: <https://www.naab-css.org/naab-uniform-coding-system>  
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