

PREFACE

Along with the increasing need for international use of sire proofs across countries it has become an important objective of INTERBULL to provide information on the sire evaluation procedures of different dairy countries and to give guidelines on how to interpret and utilize sire proofs for international purposes.

In order to provide standardized information about the sire evaluation procedures practised in 25 major dairy countries INTERBULL published in 1986 such information about the situation in 1985 (Bulletin No. 2) and an updated version for 27 countries in 1988 (Bulletin No. 3). An update for 1990 is presently under way. Generally, this documentation has shown a great need for more standardization of the evaluation procedures or expressions of proofs in order to obtain more easily interpreted and in some cases more accurately estimated genetic values.

In another publication the methods for utilization of proofs across countries were reviewed (Bulletin No.1). Modifications of the generally accepted IDF-procedure (IDF Doc A-64, 1981) for estimation of appropriate conversion factors have been proposed and tested scientifically as well as under practical conditions. The steering committee of INTERBULL has reviewed the international work in this field and has recognized a number of problems and conditions that have to be considered in different situations when sire proofs are going to be used internationally. Discussions and work at a series of meetings and work-shops arranged by EAAP, IDF and INTERBULL during the period 1984-90 have resulted in the following official recommendations. These have been adopted by the INTERBULL steering committee and give guidelines on the methods to use in different situations when sire proofs have to be used outside its country of origin.

INTERBULL proposes that sire evaluation centers and organizations trading genetic material internationally follow the recommendations given as regards the information to be published on the methods in general, and on the individual bulls in particular when such are marketed internationally, and finally on bulls for which converted proofs are presented. The word "should" is used in this Bulletin to indicate procedures to be followed in order to be in full compliance with recommendations. The stronger word "must" has been avoided in consideration of the cooperative spirit of this joint effort.

It is the view of INTERBULL that further improvements in the methodology to convert or utilize genetic values across countries will come as a result of present and future research as well as empirical experience. However, our presently recommended procedures would greatly facilitate correct interpretations and evaluations of the sire proofs beyond the domestic borders and enhance the improvement in any breeding programme utilizing global genetic resources.

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