

Recommendations on implementation of a simultaneous bull evaluation scheme across European Community (EC) countries at the INTERBULL Centre

1) Method:

The linear model method described in this study is considered a significant improvement over the currently used conversion method as long as suitable data are used. Implementation of the linear model method at its present stage of development can be readily initiated including EC countries that wish to participate and whose data fit the basic requirements, while further potential refinements are addressed in pertinent research projects.

2) Participating countries:

Any EC country able to provide animal model national proofs and daughter yield deviations is encouraged to participate. Countries entering the scheme would be requested to provide, in addition to data in the agreed format, a description of methods to obtain daughter yield deviations and number of effective daughters. Prior to entering the EC evaluation, individual countries should validate the estimation of yearly change in average bull national evaluation and provide a description of the validation procedure. Further checks on consistency of results across country will include common young bull and sib correlations as well as checks for existence of genetic ties with the other participating countries.

3) Data from national evaluations:

Daughter yield deviations only in bulls' country of first random artificial insemination sampling will be used. Bulls will be considered in the EC analysis only if they have daughters in at least 10 herds in the country of first sampling.

4) Publication of EC proofs:

Individual countries will be responsible of publishing EC proofs in their own reference base and unit equivalent according to their specific criteria for official publication of genetic evaluation results.

5) Breeds and traits:

Although Black-and-White was the only breed considered in this pilot run, other breeds (Brown, Red etc) should be included. Also research should be further conducted to investigate the feasibility of EC bull rankings for non-milk-production traits.