

3 GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Interbull recommendations presented here are based on the latest Interbull survey, published as IBB 24, with information on GES in 36 organizations from 31 countries, and titled “National Genetic Evaluation Programmes for Dairy Production Traits Practiced in Interbull Member Countries 1999-2000” (also available through www.interbull.org). As such, these recommendations are concerned only with production traits. However, we have attempted to write it in such a way that it can be of use for other traits as well. At least, the same principles can in most cases be equally well applied to other traits.

Interbull and its parent organization ICAR are continually contributing to the development of guidelines for various stages of genetic evaluation systems. All Interbull member countries are recommended to follow Interbull and ICAR documents (also available through www.icar.org and www.interbull.org). It is recommended that countries that do not yet fulfill these standards move towards these as they change national GES. However, if ICAR and Interbull documents are silent about any matter, it is recommended that other international bodies be consulted before any decisions are made. In cases where no internationally recognized recommendation exists, adoption of procedures similar to those used in other countries is recommended. Of course, in any case detailed documentation of the adopted procedures cannot be overemphasized.

Interbull Recommendation

National genetic evaluation centers should update their GES in a cost-effective manner as the theoretical developments and computer capacity permit. They should also keep official, up-to-date and detailed documentation of all aspects of their GES on the Internet and also update their information on the Interbull web site as soon as any change has taken place.

Further, bilateral and multilateral cooperation between genetic evaluation centers is highly recommended. Cooperation may happen at a low level such as the sharing of computer codes or at a high level such as shared ownership of the genetic material and genetic evaluation systems.

Recommendations presented here should also be viewed holistically as a coherent system. Every specific recommendation pre-supposes acceptance and adherence to many other such specific recommendations. Therefore, and as an example, when “unique identification of all animals” is recommended in one section, then all further reference to “animals” is to be interpreted as “uniquely identified animals”.