



PRESS RELEASE

EuroGenomics significantly improves reliability of Genomic evaluations

In autumn 2009, the EuroGenomics partners VikingGenetics (Denmark/Sweden/Finland), UNCEIA (France), DHV and vit (Germany) and CRV (Netherlands/Belgium) agreed on the exchange of genomic SNP marker data (Illumina Bovine SNP50 BeadChip). Each partner contributed the data of 4,000 proven bulls to further improve the reliability of genomic breeding values.

Starting March 2010 all partners will extend their reference population to a total of 16,000 bulls. This is one of the largest reference populations in the world, but more important is its unique quality. All EuroGenomics partners run breeding programmes based on the best available Holstein genetics in Europe and North America. Therefore the EuroGenomics reference population mirrors the full variation of international Holstein genetics very well.

Conventional daughter breeding values of the EuroGenomics bulls all result from sophisticated data collection systems and herd book registration including comprehensive fertility data. Thus, data recording includes not only milk production traits (i.e. 19 million cows as daughters of the EuroGenomics bulls) but also functional traits. This is key to further improve the reliability of genetic evaluation. **The new approach results in reliabilities that exceed current reliabilities of genomic proofs by about 10%.**

The high quality of genomic breeding values, based on more than 16,000 reference bulls in EuroGenomics, will be certified in the current new Interbull validation for national genomic evaluation systems once it is offered for official use.

The partners of EuroGenomics all use the same EuroGenomic reference population. The national genomic formulas are still individual country-based. Conventional (MACE) daughter proofs used for deriving national genomic formulas are different on the four country scales and the national indices reflect different breeding goals.

Within EuroGenomics best practices are being shared in the field of R&D together with the research partners. This EuroGenomics project is a good example for the effective cooperation of European countries setting new international standards for the benefit of the dairy farmers.

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