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Director

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FAX

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Number of pages: 1+1

Subject: **Genomic evaluation for breeding purposes of pure-bred breeding animals of the bovine species (Council Directive 87/328/EEC of 18 June 1987)**

Dear Colleagues,

In accordance with Article 2(1) second indent of Council Directive 87/328/EEC of 18 June 1987 on the acceptance for breeding purposes of pure-bred breeding animals of the bovine species, a Member State may not prohibit, restrict or impede the acceptance for artificial insemination within its territory of pure-bred bulls or the use of their semen when those bulls have been accepted for artificial insemination in a Member State on the basis of tests carried out in accordance with Decision 86/130/EEC, now replaced by Decision 2006/427/EC.

The performance monitoring methods and methods for assessing cattle's genetic value for pure-bred breeding animals of the bovine species shall be those laid down in Annex I to Commission Decision 2006/427/EC of 20 June 2006 laying down performance monitoring methods and methods for assessing cattle's genetic value for pure-bred breeding animals of the bovine species. Part III of that Annex specifies the EU requirements for genetic evaluation of bovine animals for breeding.

Since the initial discussions about the inclusion of genomic information in international genetic evaluations of dairy breeds, it has become evident that the national Genomic Breeding Values (GEBVs) would need to be validated by Interbull, the EU Reference Laboratory for zootechnics, in a similar fashion that conventional Evaluations of Breeding Values (EBVs) have been validated as a pre-condition to participate in the Multi-trait across-country evaluations (MACE).

Following the decision taken by the Interbull Steering Committee during the 2010 ICAR/Interbull Meeting in Riga, Latvia, from May 31 to June 4, 2010, Interbull officially released the first validation procedure for national genomic evaluations (GEBVs) in June 18, 2010. This first test was restricted to the trait protein yield, and it was open to all populations participating in Interbull international (conventional) evaluations which have a genomic evaluation implemented.

Simultaneously with ICAR, Interbull published the results of the first validation of a method for the estimation of genomic breeding values under the following link on 9 August 2010:

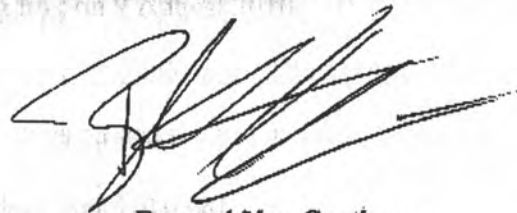
http://www.interbull.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=80&Itemid=114

Eight (8) systems for the genomic evaluation of breeding values passed the test which is technically described under the link:

http://www.interbull.org/images/stories/GEBV_validationtest_June2010.pdf

In the light of the discussion with the working group on breeding animals of COPA-COGECA, the Commission services consider that the breeding values which were established in accordance with the aforementioned approved systems comply with the requirements of Part III of Annex I to Decision 2006/427/EC and qualify bulls so tested for artificial insemination in accordance with Article 2(1), second indent, of Directive 87/328/EEC.

Yours sincerely,



Bernard Van Goethem

cc.: Interbull, EU Reference Laboratory for Zootechnics (Bovine breeding)