



Press release

Arnhem, 11 September 2015

Field study makes breeding results visible

Study started into selection for efficiency and health

CRV, Wageningen UR Livestock Research and Dairy Campus are starting a research project in the Netherlands to make the effect of selection for efficiency and health in the herd tangible. The study is an innovation project and will take about four years. This allows the researchers to follow several generations.

In practice, efficient, healthy, easy-to-manage cows are needed. To make bull selection easier in this respect, CRV introduced two breeding indicators in 2013. These indicators - Better Life Efficiency and Better Life Health - allow farmers to easily select both bulls and cows that score well on these traits. The aim of the study is to measure the effect of the introduction of these breeding indicators on the practical performance of the herd.

Study design

For the study, at Dairy Campus, two groups of cows have been selected, an 'efficiency group' (animals with the highest scores for Better Life Efficiency) and a 'health group' (animals with the highest scores for Better Life Health).

Both the genetic predisposition and the practical performance of these animals, including their performance with respect to production and health traits, will be assessed. The same applies to their descendants that will come into milk production during the study.

High practical relevance

Because the study is highly relevant for the people in the field, dairy farmers will regularly be given the opportunity for an excursion at Dairy Campus during the study to be informed about current developments in the ongoing investigation.

With this study, CRV, Wageningen UR Livestock Research and Dairy Campus aim to support breeding efficient, healthy and easy-to-manage cows and to share the results directly with the people in the field.

The study will be carried out as part of the 'Innovation Program Dairy Campus' and is an excellent example of cooperation between business and research.

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Note: Innovation Program Dairy Campus

Dairy Campus aims to increase the innovation power of cattle farming and has therefore started the "Innovation Program Dairy Campus" in 2014. With the Innovation fund, enterprises are offered the possibility to carry out innovation projects on specific themes with financial support.