

Globally Holstein Associations are facing new challenges in parentage recording as genomic data becomes more widespread and the information it contains far more comprehensive. Holstein Associations are responding by changing the way recording services are administered, in many instances forming alliances to become fully integrated into national recording programs. This was one of the topics of discussion at the WHFF 31st Council meeting in Tokyo where council also considered a number of other important factors in the on-going developments of the Holstein breed and the 2016 General Assembly and Conference.

WHFF WORKING GROUPS

Working Groups have been key factors in the historic success of WHFF. WHFF has been fortunate to have extremely active group membership complimented by excellent and hard working chairperson's to ensure all tasks are completed.

The 2016 General Assembly will bring to an end the chairmanship of Arie Hamoen, chairman of the Type Harmonisation Working Group, as he retires from his position. WHFF and its members are indebted to Arie for the work he has completed on their behalf and may we all wish him continued success for the future in his retirement.

Council have considered the requirements of the working group and concluded that an additional scientist would be beneficial, however the new chairman of the group should be a Head Classifier from one of the WHFF member countries.

The Registration Working Group has developed new reporting procedures for the identification of specific traits. Full details of the procedures, which came into force on 1st January 2015, are available on the WHFF web site.

Council endorsed the development of Showing Rules to address issues relating to consumer confidence and animal welfare. The work on producing the rules has been exhaustive, however the final version is almost complete and will be available for the 2016 General Assembly and Conference.

It was reiterated that WHFF was not attempting to establish a world standard, but set the principle of acceptable showing practices, which included health and welfare issues.



HERDBOOK ASSOCIATIONS - The Future

Council evaluated the international situation in respect of the future for Herdbooks in the genomic era. As with all challenges there is not a 'fit all' solution, mainly the result of the different operational structures of Holstein Associations. Council considered the biggest challenge was to independent Holstein Associations that are not integrated into the country's national recording and genetic evaluation systems. For Associations that are part or fully integrated there are excellent prospects of continuing the important role within the development of the Holstein breed. It is an extremely important subject for WHFF members and the topic will be fully discussed at the 2016 General Assembly.

WHFF TYPE CLASSIFICATION SURVEY

The importance of type evaluation has never been greater, as the demands for information intensify as the industry moves rapidly in the era of genomics.

The historical success of the WHFF linear harmonisation program is well known, however advances in collection methods have seen the evolution of weighted composite and linear traits being used to calculate final score and class. The WHFF survey enquires as to the system used in each member's country and the method of calculating the final class and score. The survey has been sent, in a separate email, for all members to complete.

ICAR

WHFF President Matthew Shaffer has been appointed as chairman of the ICAR World Breeds Federation Task Force. The main aim of the group is to ensure the views of international breed associations are represented at ICAR and ever-closer working relations are forged for the future, helping to avoid duplication of work.

PROPOSED INTERBULL SNP DATABASE – GENOEX-PSE

As reported in the last Newsletter Interbull is proposing the introduction of a SNP parentage database. The service is called GENOEX-PSE.

The concept and business model are still under discussion by an expert group of which WHFF President Matthew Shaffer is a member representing the interests of Herdbook Associations. WHFF is broadly supportive of the initiative, however there have to be clear business rules for participation, information ownership, access to data, fees and strict definitions on how and by whom the information may be used.

MEMBERS SECTION WHFF WEB SITE

Remember that the linear training program 'Virtual Cow' is available in the member's section of the web site. There are also specific articles for all Herdbook organisations together with information on the Holstein breed.

NEW WHFF SECRETARY GENERAL

David Hewitt, the current Secretary General, retires at the 2016 General Assembly and WHFF are pleased to announce the appointment of Suzanne Harding as Secretary General of WHFF. Suzanne will commence the role with effect from the 2016 General Assembly. Suzanne is currently Secretary General of the European Holstein and Red Holstein Confederation. (EHRC)

14th WHFF WORLD CONFERENCE AND GENERAL ASSEMBLY.



Programme of Events

March 25th

Pre Conference Tours
Return to Buenos Aires March 29th

March 28th

Welcome reception (Classifiers and Youth)

March 29th

World Classifiers Workshop
Holstein Youth Meeting

March 30th

Farm visits
WHFF Board Meeting
World Classifiers Workshop
Holstein Youth Meeting
Auction and 'Gaucho dinner'

March 31st

WHFF Conference
Expo Holstein 2016 (Junior Classes)
International Dinner

April 1st

Conference
WHFF General Assembly
Expo Holstein 2016 Holstein Show
Auction and Social Dinner

April 2nd

Expo Holstein 2016
Holstein Show (Senior Classes)
Award dinner

April 3rd

City Tour.
Holstein Show
Post -Conference Tours

Information updates will be available on the WHFF web site and on the WHFF Facebook page.

For information about the Conference and visitor programme please contact:

<mailto:secretaria@holstein2016>



Contact Details:

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A truly international event for all Holstein enthusiasts!!!!