

**The WHFF Council met in Hamilton, New Zealand in February 2018** for the 35<sup>th</sup> WHFF Council meeting, timed to coincide with the ICAR Conference in Auckland. The Council had many topics to discuss, including the 2020 Conference in Switzerland, data and updates from the WGs.

Data is always a hot topic – data exchange, data ownership, data presentation, data analysis and data gathering. From Genetic Data Exchange, to GDPR (a new EU data law) protecting data rights of individuals, through to analysing data provided by WHFF members to give an insight into the worldwide developments of the Holstein breed.



**WHFF / ICAR Genetic Data Exchange** was discussed at length; this data exchange is now available through the Interbull Centre. A procedure is being written for members to explain the process for data exchange and how to manage conflicting results. This will be sent out to you once it is approved. The Council formally agreed to support the data exchange subject to the availability of this procedure.

**The exchanging of data using the WHFF format files** was the subject of a survey sent out in 2017. Analysing the responses, it seems that many WHFF members are not utilising the formats as they are out of date or irrelevant to their business.

**Data Ownership** is a big topic in Europe due to the new data law. How do you handle data ownership in your organisation? The Council would be interested in your views – email [worldholstein@gmail.com](mailto:worldholstein@gmail.com)

**Analysing data** from you, the members of WHFF was also talked about. At every General Assembly there will be an insight into the worldwide developments of each of the main topics of interest to Holstein breeders: inbreeding, fertility, udder health and feed & legs. The Council discussed what traits were to be reported upon, and it was decided upon production, udder health (SCC and mastitis), workability (milking speed and temperament), fertility, legs and feet,

calving traits, and longevity. The Council are trying to streamline the way this data is obtained from WHFF members, by getting your permission to use data already gathered by Interbull. If you do not contribute to Interbull, you may be asked to send data separately. A specification for the work is being drawn up, and once approved, will go out to tender.

**At the meeting there were several changes to the names and composition of the WHFF Working Groups.**

**The Parentage Committee's** name was changed to the Parentage sub-committee. This is a dormant sub-committee which follows developments in two main topics - the Implementation of Geno-EX and the microsatellite to SNP parentage process. Both of these topics are reviewed by the ICAR DNA Group.

**The Fertility Task Force** Terms of Reference are being reviewed.

**The Registration WG** has had a name change to Genetic Trait and Registration WG – this better reflects the current work under taken by the WG. The Terms of Reference for the WG are being reviewed and will soon be available on the WHFF web site.

**Type Harmonisation WG** has had a review of the Terms of Reference – and these can be viewed at <http://www.whff.info/documentation/documents/WHFFToRTypeHarmonisationApril2018fv.pdf>.

The WG are holding a workshop in the UK in September for all head classifiers – a report will be emailed after the event. Two new members of the WG have been agreed - Thomas Ender of Switzerland and Cy Letter from USA. Finally and most importantly Gabriel Blanco, the current Chair of the WG is retiring next year, and so a new Chair has been selected by the Council; Gerben de Jong of CRV. Gerben has worked alongside the WG for many years and together with Stefan Rensing of VIT analyses your phenotypic data for WHFF. The

Council would like to wish Gabriel the best retirement and welcome Gerben into the role during 2019.

**Foreign Judges** - A question had been received by the Council regarding inviting foreign Judges to a National Show. The council's advice is that when inviting foreign judges to judge a show, the judge ought to be on the official list of their country of residence. The judge should sign a declaration stating that they are not banned, and state on which official list they appear.

**42<sup>nd</sup> ICAR Conference was held in Auckland, New Zealand, February 2018.** Topics covered ranged from Data, Data Standards and Data Exchange Protocols, Technologies & Tools - Sensor Devices to and a session on the Implications of Recent developments for Breed Associations. All presentations are available at <https://www.icar.org/index.php/icar-meetings-news/auckland-2018-home-page/>

**A big thank you** must go to the wonderful Holstein Friesian NZ farms visited by the Council and ICAR delegates. We were privileged to visit Westell Holsteins owned by Wendy and David Harker. Wendy is the current President of Holstein Friesian New Zealand. The Westell herd is milked under Mount Kakepuku, near Te Awamutu The 470 strong herd of which 90% is registered with Holstein NZ, is milked on 230 hectares. All young stock are grazed on the property.



The Council also visited Carse-O-Fern prefix owned by Doug and Lorraine Courtman. Doug milks 145 cows on 56 hectares near Otorohanga. The herd is 100% registered with Holstein Friesian NZ.



**The next newsletter topic will be genomics** – when to change from microsatellite to SNP, developments at ICAR concerning GenoEX and the new ICAR Guidelines for DNA Technology. Please send me any questions you may have about this subject and I will try and find an answer for you.

#### **WHFF Web Site**

Please remember to send in news stories, show details, pictures of your Holstein Champions for the web site. Website: [www.whff.info](http://www.whff.info)

