

Memo

To Board WHFF
From Gerben de Jong
Date November 16, 2023
Subject Update on Harmonisation Working Group
Attachment(s)

After the workshop in Morges, two meetings via Teams were organized, on 1 December 2022, 18 May 2023, 29 September 2023. Next on line meeting will be 21st December 2023.

Topics on the agenda are/were:

1. Survey on extra traits scored on countries

Before the workshop in Morges a survey was carried out among the WHFF members on extra traits scored beside the 18 standard traits. Based on this survey the WHFF type harmonization working group has indicated six traits which are commonly scored or countries will start to score coming period. To support the harmonization of linear traits, the working group has carried out another survey (January 2023) to collect extra information on these 6 extra traits on the trait definitions applied, heritability and correlations with other traits (linear conformation traits and functional traits).

Approach is that we should not force all countries to score these traits. We could think of making them not official but try to harmonize. This could be very helpful for a rather new trait like front feet orientation. But we also should know if those traits have added value compared to the traits we currently have in the WHFF trait list. It is good to have at least a common trait definition.

The extra traits the working group is looking at:

- rear udder width
- bone quality
- udder balance
- top line
- udder texture
- front feet orientation

The results of the survey will be shared and discussed during the next workshop in 2024 and will serve to make a document with trait definition and pictures.

At the same time the working groups has formulated criteria to determine if a trait is candidate for the official WHFF trait list. Based on these criteria there are two candidate traits.

This all will be discussed during the next workshop with all members.

2. Conformation defects

From the survey shared during the workshop in Morges with more than 120 defect names a list was made with 20 defects which are commonly used by countries. Of this 20 defects 14 defects are in common with the ICAR list.

The next step was to collect and define the descriptions of these defects. This has been done for 20 defects. A document is in preparation for the next workshop. The first version was discussed in September meeting, the 2nd version will be discussed during the December meeting. This information will be shared during the coming workshop and will help to understand what every organization is doing and can help in the harmonization of names and definition.

3. Review trait description list

The description of some standard traits were discussed based upon some discussion during the workshop in Morges. It was decided to make no changes in the documentation.

4. Evaluation of the workshop Morges

Points for improvements for next time:

- Having 4 cows per group during the training sessions is a good number.
- Making a binder with all material is a lot of work. Better approach is to have all material available in an electronic way one day before the meeting for all participants.
- We should have time at the start of the workshop to harmonize the instructors -> have half a day extra before the meeting to visit a farm and have a brief training of the working group.

5. Workshop Italy 2024

The next workshop was discussed during the September meeting. The dates are 16 and 17 April 2024. The working group will discuss the program in detail during the December meeting with ANAFIBJ.

Topics will be:

- practical training
- conformation defects
- harmonisation of six extra traits
- virtual cow
- added value of classification for the dairy farmer
- correlation among countries
- phenotypic correlation among traits
- update from countries