



WORLD HOLSTEIN FRIESIAN FEDERATION

15 Uxbridge Road, Rickmansworth, Herts, WD3 7DH

worldholstein@gmail.com

www.whff.info

Event: 52nd WHFF Council Meeting
Venue: Puy du Fou, France
Time and Date: 20th November 09.00 CET

MINUTES.

Present:

Cherilyn Watson (President)	New Zealand
László Bognár (Vice President)	Hungary
Sartaj Sarkaria	Canada
Thierry Menard	France
Stephan Schneider	Germany
Martino Cassandro	Italy
Jun Kurita	Japan
Jos Buiting	Netherlands
Lindsey Worden	USA
Suzanne Harding	(Secretary General)
Izumi Furuta (Translator)	Japan

1. Welcome and Apologies for Absence.

- Cherilyn as President welcomed the Council to the meeting. She especially welcomed Stephan as it was his first meeting.
- Apologies had been received from Luis.

2. Approval of the Agenda.

- The agenda was approved with no changes.

3. Previous minutes of the 51st Council meeting by Zoom (WHFF 5203 51st Meeting minutes 2023 v2)

- The minutes were approved by Lindsey and seconded by László.
- The minutes were signed by Cherilyn.

4. Previous actions of the 51st Council meeting by Zoom (WHFF 5204 51st Council Meeting Actions v1)

- Item 13. Martino said that, due to the illness of Toine Roosen, he had contacted Matthew Shaffer about the possibility of INTERBULL supplying inbreeding data. Jos commented that Gerben de Jong had said that only a short pedigree is sent to INTERBULL, not the long pedigree required for inbreeding analysis. Martino replied that maybe we could use genomic data.
- The actions were approved.

5. WHFF Conference 2023 update

- Update on Conference plans/program presented by Thierry Menard
 - Thierry reported that tonight there would be a cocktail and finger food reception to welcome the participants.
 - There would be one speech at the beginning of the Conference by the President of Prim Holstein Céline Le Ru Le Laurent.

- iii. The representative of Interbev, Alexandre CHEDEVILLE, will give a presentation on Thursday following the Conference.
 - iv. Buses will leave for the Gala dinner on Wednesday at 6.45pm from outside the hotel.
- b. Update on Speakers presented by Suzanne Harding (*WHFF 5205b 2023 WHFF Program_speakers fv*)
- i. Some of the German participants are unable to attend due to the French air traffic control strike. One speaker Herman Swalve is affected. Thierry will set up a Teams call so Herman can present virtually.
- c. General Discussion topics at General Assembly (*WHFF 5205c General Discussion topics at the General Assembly*) There will be a slide with these topics for the General Assembly.
- i. There was a discussion about the topics for the General Discussion at the General Assembly.
 - ii. Topic 2 - WHFF should be proactive in defining and naming new Genetic traits eg CDH. Lindsey will take questions on this topic.
 - iii. Topic 3 - WHFF Biodiversity study. Martino will make a presentation.
 - iv. Topic 1 - Calculation of breeding values - Michel will be asked to clarify the question. László commented that production is harmonized by ICAR and type classification by the Herd Books.
Jos said that ICAR is the centre of responsibility, but the Herd Books are responsible for data quality and for the collection of data.
Jos, László and Martino will take questions.
 - v. Topic 4 - Data transfer using APIs.
Lindsey said that APIs are difficult to implement as all database structures are different. It is a great idea but not practical.
László stated that in the EU a Zootechnical Certificate must follow each animal, but for data updates we need a better process.
Jos thought that APIs could be needed for old data. Breed evaluations are available from INTERBULL, we should focus on the Zootechnical Certificate as that has the data that is required, and it is the EU standard.
Moving to APIs for exchanging data is expensive for Herd Books. Herd Books can set up protocols between themselves.
Lindsey agreed to take any questions.
Martino asked whether in countries where there was more than one Breed Association, should they be obliged to exchange data? In the EU data all that is available on the Zootechnical Certificate must be exchanged.
Jos agreed but said this is a European question.
 - vi. Topic 5 - Climate action
Jos said that this was answered at the 2023 ICAR Conference. There are many international groups working together to solve this problem. There is also a big group working on Resilience and on methane emissions. He thought that we need to watch the progress of these groups.
Jos agreed to answer any questions.

6. WHFF Working Groups Reports

- a. WHFF Type Harmonisation Working Group report.
A report had been received from Gerben de Jong and had been circulated to the Council. Thierry presented the Working Group report.
Stephan stated that Stefan Rensing is retiring.
Cherilyn said that the composition of the Working Group will be discussed in the 53rd Council meeting after the General Assembly.
Martino said that he is deciding upon the farm for the 2024 Type Harmonisation Workshop. It will be one of the best farms in Italy.
The forms for the workshop will be sent out within the next two weeks.

- b. WHFF Monogenetic Traits and Registration Working Group presented by Lindsey Worden (*WHFF 5206b 2023-08-02 WHFF Monogenetic Traits WG Meeting notes; WHFF 5206b New Genetic Trait Reporting Process V2 August2023; WHFF 5206b Guidelines for Interpreting New Evidence on Potential Monogenetic Traits Final August2023; WHFF 5206b Request from ICAR to the Monogenetic Traits Working Group; WHFF 5206b Monogenetic Traits and Registration Working Group Report*)

Lindsey spoke to the reports.

- i. WHFF Guidelines for Interpreting New Evidence on Potential Monogenetic Traits
Jos commented that if we put a 'stamp' on a bull it may affect the marketability, but we need to also avoid breeding defects, etc. This document is only indicating marketing for AI.

Lindsey responded that the Working Group assumed that breeding out defects was understood, but she would add it to the document.

Martino said that muscle weakness was increasing in the population in Italy, and we need a definition from the Working Group.

Lindsey said that the haplotype test will be available from December 7th. The US will evaluate in February, then the Working Group will look at the haplotype data on muscle weakness.

Stephan asked about frequency.

Lindsey replied that the genetic test returned 10% as carriers but it is probably more like 5% in the population. They have not completed any across population testing.

Stephan asked if there was a patent on the test.

Lindsey said there was a patent from Penn State University.

Stephan said that in Germany they are using an unofficial test with different SNPs.

They will run the official test and expect to have a frequency of 0.08 (8%).

Martino said it was the same in Italy.

Jos stated that the economic damage of 5% frequency is too high in the document.

Lindsey explained that it states in two or more countries as make sure the trait is across countries not regional. 5% is a threshold – these are guidelines for being on the 'master' list. Have general conditions to be on the 'discussion' list. If we label animals that can affect trade values. For example, the US have homozygous animals for muscle weakness that are perfectly ok. It isn't completely understood. We need to establish categories of interest.

László said that there is a frequency of 0.03 BLIRD in France.

Martino believes that muscle weakness will increase to a frequency of 22%.

Lindsey said that in the US it was originally 17% but was inaccurate with many false positives. They have 11 homozygous carriers that are ok and they need more data.

Action: Lindsey will expand the wording in the document as required from the discussion.

Decision: With the additional wording, the WHFF Guidelines for Interpreting New Evidence on Potential Monogenetic Traits were approved.

Action: Lindsey to send the new version of the document to Suzanne.

Action: Suzanne to send to members and place on web site.

- ii. Request for Investigation of Newly Observed and Previously Unknown Genetic Trait – updated document. This was discussed again in iv. below.

Decision: approved

Action: Suzanne to send to members and place on web site.

- iii. Muscle Weakness – MWF – free, MWS, MWC

Decision: approved

Action: Suzanne to inform members and place on web site.

- iv. October meeting

The process for dealing with new monogenetic traits is now a clear process.

Jos was concerned that WHFF needs the coding defined as countries are already testing and the coding needs to be harmonised.

Lindsey stated that the delay has been due to the length of the scientific process. Stephan said that an official test is needed. In Germany they have labelled traits, and then may have to change to agree with WHFF coding.

Lindsey said that in the update process, if an official test is available, the Working Group will set a code.

Jos thought that perhaps the Working Group could set the coding and send by email to the Council for approving.

Lindsey will amend the document.

Action: Lindsey will amend the document and send to Suzanne.

Decision: New Genetic Trait Reporting process document was approved

Action: Suzanne to send to members and place on web site.

v. BLIRD

The scientific document was published in September and is now in peer review process. They want to open up the comment period for members. The Working Group plans to meet in the early new year to discuss BLIRD and MW.

vi. SLICK

Netherlands have requested a code for SLICK.

Lindsey said it will be S with a variant number. In the US it is mostly used when exporting to tropical countries.

László asked why we have it in Holstein Bulls as it comes from beef. Is this gene editing or where beef is in the back pedigree? In the EU gene editing is not allowed. Stephan said there is a high demand for this code. The animals can be in the German Herd Book main section as the beef bull may be more than four generations back in the pedigree.

László said that in Hungary, beef is not allowed at all in the back pedigree.

The codes for SLICK were approved.

Action: Lindsey - Need a new document of genetic codes for the web site.

Action: Suzanne to send to members and place on the web site.

vii. Master list categories – removing some codes from the Master List. If there isn't any testing or if the frequency is very low, the trait will be archived. There will be a 90-day period to provide comments.

Action: Lindsey to send Suzanne wording asking the Members for comments on removing Factor XI and Citrullinemia from the master list and adding BLIRD and MW to the Master list.

Action: Suzanne to send to the Membership.

viii. Standard for the testing of genetic traits. We should collaborate with ICAR to do this. Maybe ask if a representative of the Working Group could join the ICAR DNA Working Group.

Action: Lindsey to speak to ICAR DNA Working Group and ask if a representative from the Working Group could join the ICAR group.

7. WHFF Inclusivity of more Production Data Task force presented by Lindsey Worden (report to follow)

- a. Report awaited from Holstein Canada about the ICAR AMS Summit as Brad has left the company. Documents kindly received from Steven Sievert, the Chair of the ICAR Measuring, Recording and Sampling Devices Sub-Committee. (*WHFF 5207a 202310 Presentation AMS Summit Summary; WHFF 5207a ICAR AMS Summary to ICAR Board October 2023; WHFF 5207a 20230921 ICAR AMS Summit Guidelines & Testing – Sievert*)

Lindsey gave the report for the Task Force. She said that the group have not met since the last Council meeting. Lindsey reported that Brad Eggink and Jens Baltissen have both left their respective companies. Brad did attend the ICAR AMS Summit in September 2023, but left Holstein Canada without submitting a report of the Summit. Lindsey questioned whether a Task Force was still required. If yes, then additional members are needed, and the next step is to decide what needs to be accomplished. Lindsey wished to step down from Chairing the group but would remain active.

There was some discussion.

Jos believed that the Task Force should continue as there are still many challenges.

Stephan said that the validation of robot data has not yet reached ICAR standards. He said he would join the Task Force.

- b. Discuss the composition of the Inclusivity of more Production Data Task Force (Jens and Brad have both left)

Sartaj agreed to Chair the Task Force.

Cherilyn suggested that Rohan Butler should be asked if he wished to join the Task Force.

Rohan originally brought this matter to the Council's attention.

Action: Cherilyn to ask Rohan Butler if he would join the Task Force.

Action: Suzanne to update the list of working group, inform the WHFF membership and place the list on the WHFF website.

8. Update on Research proposal on Biodiversity in Holsteins presented by Martino Cassandro (*WHFF 5208 1_Biodiversity_study_WHFF_kick-off_11oct2023; WHFF 5208 Guidelines_for_sampling_Biodiveristy_study_WHFF*)

Martino gave his presentation. He is asking for data in early 2024, so there is still the opportunity for WHFF members to participate. There is no cost to WHFF members as it uses SNP Genotypes that are already available. He has found that some WHFF organizations who are not participating have data published on scientific websites. These can also be incorporated into the study. The timetable shows that the project is due to conclude at the end of 2024. Martino will do a presentation to the Council at the end of the project. At the end of the project, he could start additional projects – e.g. analyse mitochondrial DNA, provide genetic analysis. There will be costs associated with these additional projects so they will need to be discussed at the WHFF Council. Martino thanked all participating countries. The Sampling Guideline will be sent out to all participating countries but should not be published on the WHFF website.

Stephan asked why Germany was not participating.

Martino replied that Jens had said that his Council did not wish to participate.

Action: Suzanne to send Stephan the forms.

Martino went on to explain that he hoped to find more information such as looking for kappa-casein in sub populations and that also inbreeding level in the population might be an outcome.

László discussed the performance of Chips – he suggested we need a translation method for PLINK (the North American format) – i.e. map PLINK to the European format. He continued asking how WHFF members should find 300 random samples to represent their country. For example in Hungary they have farms with only North American genetics and farms with only Italian genetics. Samples need to be random.

Cherilyn commented that she is still trying to get New Zealand to participate.

9. Clones (*WHFF 5209 EHRC emails about clones; WHFF 5209 EHRC Clones Draft Guideline v2; WHFF 5209 WHFF Guidelines for Registering Clones; WHFF 5209 EHRC Cloning letter from DJ Santo*)

Following discussion at the EHRC Committee Meeting on 17/10/23, it was requested that we discuss Clone naming and reporting. Canada only use ETA. The WHFF Guidelines need updating.

Jos explained that this topic had been discussed at the EHRC Committee and it was decided to bring it to the WHFF Council. He stated that for breeding programs the code ETN is most important, and that it is best if everyone uses the same codes. It is very important in the EU as ETN and ETA animals / offspring are not wanted. In Germany ETC is put against any animal with a clone in the last third generations in the pedigree. Jos continued stating that there isn't an official EU regulation for clones. He said that the zoo-technical certificate should show if a clone is present in the last three generations. It is the decision of Herd Books if they wish to show clones in past generations. Stephan said that AI importers are responsible for reporting clones.

Jos said that the letter from the EU Commission states that there is no differentiation between food from cloned and non-cloned animals. He continued asking whether we should inform our members.

He suggested that ETA and ETN should be used. If only going back to the third generation, and the clone has fallen off at the fourth generation - are farmers at risk?

Action: the Monogenetic Working Group will consider whether the Guidelines need to be updated.

László said that the issue of North American cloned bulls was the beginning of this discussion by the EHRC Committee. There is a big marketing issue but now consumers are also concerned.

Stephan said that the South American market is served by semen from clones. He thought we should recommend ETN for clones and the rest is a national issue.

Jos stated that ETS is very similar to natural twins.

Stephan explained that ETN1, ETN2 was where the number indicated the number of the clone if there are multiple clones available.

Martino said that when importing animals, Herd Books can ask that there are no clones in the pedigree. The importing organization must declare any clones.

10. ICAR

- a. ICAR Conference 2024 is in Bled, Slovenia. Do the Council wish Suzanne to attend representing WHFF.

Decision: The Council approved Suzanne attending ICAR 2024 in Bled, Slovenia.

11. Virtual Cow update

Suzanne updated the Council regarding the Virtual cow – there will be more changes after the 2024 Workshop in Italy. So far Holstein UK have not charged for any changes. They also have not been keen to give WHFF a version that we can amend.

12. Genetic Trends for Holsteins Update

- a. The Genetic Trends are available on the WHFF website. There will be a report from Gerben at the General Assembly.

Due to Gerben de Jong being unable to attend the Conference, Jos will give his presentation at the General Assembly.

Martino asked if the graphs could show the standard deviation over time.

Jos will check with Gerben.

Martino said that comparison within countries by traits would show which traits are being pushed more than others.

The next run will be before the next General Assembly in 2028.

Action: Suzanne to send permission forms to László, Lindsey and Cherilyn. Also send to any countries that gave permission previously and did not respond in 2023.

- b. Jos also mentioned the exchange of WHFF genetic traits at INTERBULL. He explained that there are still only three organisations signed up. Any differences in tests were resolved by the organisations doing the testing.

Action: Suzanne to look out the minutes to review the issue.

Suzanne commented that Toine Roosen had spoken about holding a webinar to publicise the data exchange. There might also be a small charge levied.

Action: put on the next agenda for discussion.

- c. Inbreeding – Toine Roosen (CEO) is ill, so we cannot get an answer at this time. Martino has emailed Matthew Shaffer.

13. Membership presented by Suzanne Harding

- a. FRIS.ITAL.I (*WHFF 5213a FRIS.ITAL.I membership*) It was agreed by email that according to the WHFF Constitution, this organisation can join WHFF if they make a presentation, and it is ratified by the General Assembly in November.
- b. Kazakhstan – it was agreed in the 51st Council meeting that Kazakhstan can join WHFF if they make a presentation, and it is ratified by the General Assembly in November.
- c. Lithuanian Black and White Cattle Improvers Association – It was agreed by email that according to the WHFF Constitution, this organisation can join WHFF if they make a presentation, and it is ratified by the General Assembly in November.

- d. Do we need a guideline for accepting new members.

Action: Suzanne to write a draft Guideline incorporating the procedure for becoming members of WHFF. It should also cover the circumstances where members are informed that they have ceased to be members of WHFF.

Martino asked if WHFF could get official data from the competent authority in a country. He is concerned that organisations might exaggerate their cow numbers. He continued that it would be good to have a second control for checking if there is a dispute.

Jos thought that Herd Books should send the data in to WHFF.

Martino said that it was important that WHFF have accurate data.

Action: Suzanne

- e. Membership 2023 (*WHFF 5213e WHFF Membership 2023*)

Suzanne presented the paper on WHFF Membership. There were no questions.

14. Finance presented by Suzanne Harding

- a. 2023 Accounts to date (*WHFF 5214a 2023 Accounts to date*)

Suzanne presented the 2023 accounts to date. There were no questions.

- b. Minute the approval of the 2022 WHFF Ltd accounts.

Decision: The approval of the 2022 WHFF Ltd accounts were moved by Jos, seconded by László and approved by the Council.

- c. Accounts have been filed at Company House UK

15. Website

- a. WHFF Presidents' spoof emails

This appears to have ceased.

- b. Website

Lindsey commented that there is some very old information on the Website. All the documents were taken from the old website to the new. She will let Suzanne know which ones can be archived from her Working Group's section.

Sartaj asked if the Council could have web usage data.

Action: Suzanne to send the October web report to the Council.

16. Any other Business

- a. Email received from Jan Vareka (Institute of Animal Science, Czech University of Life Science Prague), asking for type evaluation pictures to publish in thesis/book. Would this be possible so long as he recognizes WHFF as the author?

It was agreed by the Council that the images could be used, so long as WHFF was credited, and the images were date stamped.

Action: Suzanne to reply to Jan Vareka.

The meeting was closed at 16.10.

Signed for Cherilyn 19/3/24

