



World Simmental  
Fleckvieh Federation

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# E-journal@

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European  
Simmental Federation

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## Dear Simmental-Fleckvieh breeders,



Dear colleagues and friends around the world. Another year is slowly coming to the end. The year 2012 was under the sign of extremely high demand for Simmental-Fleckvieh genetic from different parts of the world. Our breed is offering unique potential for dual-purpose or beef system in many countries around the globe.

Over the past months and years we learned to use the term "genomic selection" in our everyday work in the breeding. In January 2012 a big international research project Gene-

2-Farm was launched with an active participation of the European Simmental Federation. The WSFF is also supporting some other genomic projects.

In the year 2012 we made another step towards closer cooperation of our both international umbrella bodies - the European and the World federation of our breed. ESF Council meeting was held together with the World Simmental Fleckvieh Federation congress in a nice Bavarian city Landshut. On this occasion I would like on behalf of all participants to express our big "Dankeschön" to the honorary president of the ASR Franz Stürzer and the entire crew of the ASR.

We are very pleased to welcome two new members of the WSFF: Turkey and Poland, which joined the big Simmental-Fleckvieh family during the congress in Germany.

I am very pleased to inform you that WSFF become a member of the ICAR - International Committee for Animal Recording. Our active participation and expected establishing of a working group of world breed federations is for us opening a chance to actively participate on the ICAR & INTERBULL & INTERBEEF activities.

For the coming year 2013 I would like to express my best wishes to all of you and your families. To all the Simmental-Fleckvieh breeders. I wish you a successful and prosperous year!

Yours sincerely

Dr. Josef Kučera  
President EVF & WSFF

## World Simmental-Fleckvieh Congress in Germany - By Bruce Holmquist



The World Simmental Fleckvieh Federation (WSFF) is the umbrella organization that represents 26 member countries from

around the world and this year the WSFF Congress was held in the beautiful country of Germany. The pre-tour of the Congress began in Dresden and introduced the participants to German culture as well as the history and beauty that either survived or was rebuilt after the tragedy of war. Our trips to the surrounding regions led us to herds of Simmental cattle that were used for beef production and were more similar in composition and type to our cattle

than the dual purpose cattle that we would see later in the main portion of the Congress.

It was interesting to note that in several of the beef herds there was lower priority placed on fertility and calving interval than we are accustomed to in Canada. Herds were allowed to calve for several months of the year and when asked how they evaluated fertility in a system such as that one operator supplied the answer that calving interval was not a priority as selection for the polled gene was the focus of their selection criteria. With an answer such as that it was concluded by some that the \$170 (Can) per acre support payment paid to farmers from the German government has led to some distortion in selection criteria and less importance placed on traits that may be most economically important in the longer term.

Following the interesting beef focused pre-tour we traveled south to Landshut and the main portion of the Congress. In this beautiful city near Munich, we were treated to an old small town atmosphere in the downtown core as well as a beautiful venue in which to conduct the business of the WSFF. The WSFF Council Meeting and Regular Members Meeting over the next two days provided the



Delegates from two new member countries - Poland and Turkey: /from left/ Dr. Josef Kucera (CZ), Bruce Holmquist (CAN), Edgar Benes (PL), Camalettin Ozden (TR)

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[info@wsff.info](mailto:info@wsff.info)

[www.evf-esf.info](http://www.evf-esf.info)  
[info@evf-esf.info](mailto:info@evf-esf.info)

opportunity for member representatives to conduct the business of the WSFF. During these meetings there was follow-up to last year's discussions in Udine Italy on the breed code designation for Simmental/Fleckvieh through the International Council of Animal Recording (ICAR) and its subcommittee InterBull. A decision was also made for the WSFF to join ICAR as a member which provides Simmental a recognized presence within that organization and its various subcommittees.

Another topic that was discussed was the current structure of the WSFF of one member per country. It was unanimously



The new presidency: /from left/ Dr. Johan Kluyts (RSA), Dr. Josef Kucera (CZ), Fred Schuetze (USA)

decided that the status quo of one member organization per country should remain in place at this time. The members also directed the WSFF to continue dialogue with the European Simmental Federation to work more closely in all ways possible. Through the committee reports information was shared on various research and breed improvement initiatives around the world including the Simmental Innovations project being conducted by the CSA.

During the Regular Members Meeting, a new Executive was elected due to expiring terms. The current WSFF Executive now consists of Josef Kucera, Czech Republic as President; Johan Kluyts, South Africa, 1st Vice President and Fred Schuetze, USA the new 2nd Vice President. This marked the end of my time as President of the WSFF and I was extremely honored to receive the WSFF Golden Book award along with Josef Kreiling, Hans Häckel, and Dr. Alfons Gottschalk who all played large roles in the advancement of the Simmental

breed in the world and specifically in their home country of Germany.

Canadian Simmental breeders and the Canadian Simmental Association (CSA) have always had an important presence in the development of the Simmental breed domestically as well as in other parts of the world and it was great to see a strong delegation of Canadians from all regions of the country attend this WSFF Congress. The contacts made as well as the many friendships which were renewed all play a role in the success of Canadian Simmental and the promotion of Canadian Simmental genetics on the world stage.



ZLF in Munich, Germany

## Pre-Congress Tour - By Laura Robson



I had the opportunity to attend the World Simmental Fleckvieh Federation (WSFF) Congress held in Germany from September 16th to 25th, 2012. The congress began

with a pre-tour of the Eastern part of Germany where we travelled among three German states; Saxony, Saxony-Anhalt, and Thuringia. We started our tour in the capital city of Saxony State, Dresden, then made our way out into the rural setting. The majority of farms in these regions are located within their villages. As we travelled from village to village we saw agricultural land however little infrastructure except the road or wind turbines, until you entered the villages or in some cases the farm itself. We later would see farms, in the Southern part of Germany, scattered apart similar to what we see in North America.

Our first evening with the WSFF pre-congress we met in Dresden then travelled up the slopes of a neighbouring town to the Spitzhaus Restaurant. The view was spectacular, overlooking vineyards on the hillside down to the Valley of Radebeul. They provided us

with an excellent welcoming evening to get a taste of their country's culture.

Before we left the city for our rural tours, we were given a walking tour of the historical city of Dresden. This capital city of the German state of Saxony is over 800 years old that had undergone major reconstruction after the World War II bombing in 1945 where 90% of the city centre was destroyed. It was fascinating to see a large mural of thousands of porcelain tiles, which had minimal damage during the bombing. On the side of a building showed the procession of princes called the "Furstenzug". There are portraits of the 35 margraves, electors, dukes and kings shown on horse back with their name and years they ruled for the state of Saxony stated beneath their portrait. The site of these historical buildings throughout the city was very interesting to look at and to learn the history behind them.

Soon after leaving the city we saw a pasture of Simmentals, all Fleckvieh. The farms we visited ranged in size from 20-35 suckler cows (family farms) up to 150-270 suckler cows (cow/calf operations). These farms in East Germany are strictly for beef production with the Simmental-Fleckvieh compared to the dual purpose Fleckvieh in the southern region of Germany that we later toured with the main WSFF congress and Young Breeders

Program. For both of these large and small

scaled farms, approximately 70-100% of the land used for crops and grazing is leased. Most of the farms are located within or on the edge of their village; one that we visited had an entranceway through a section of their barn to a courtyard created by the barns attached to one another and their house.

Our last evening for the WSFF pre-tour was quite eventful. The producers of the National Association of Thuringian Cattlemen put on a cattle show and breeders evening at their marketing centre in Laasdorf. We were presented with some of the cattlemen's best from their herds and enjoyed live band entertainment after the cattle show.

After our last tour and meal in East Germany, we set out for a tour through central Germany's forest terrain to the city of Landshut where the main congress was held and where both Katie and I participated in the Young Breeder Program of the Congress. With no time to spare we arrived for the WSFF congress opening ceremonies that evening of the 19th of September. My entire time in Germany made for a great experience and allowed me to meet and connect with Simmental breeders from all over the world.



# World Simmental Fleckvieh Federation Young Breeders - Program - By Katie Wood



H a v i n g never traveled to Europe, I was curious to see how animal production differed from here in Canada. We always hear about the many differences there are between North

American and European agriculture and I was looking forward to seeing these differences first hand. By traveling with the World Simmental Fleckvieh Federation (WSFF) Congress we were able to see a variety of types of farms you normally would not see if you went to Germany as a solo traveller.

The WSFF Young Breeders Program (YBP) took place primarily in the Province of Bavaria, in the southern part of Germany. In this region beef production is rare and the majority of Simmental/Fleckvieh are dual purpose type. Both Laura and I were excited to see the milking side of the Simmental breed.

Following the pre-congress tours, on Thursday morning we drove north to Neustadt a.d. Aisch to a bull parade of top AI sires. Many of the sires presented were unproven bulls selected for their genomic potential. In the afternoon we toured a farm and visited the medieval town of Rothenburg, which was featured in the scenes of Diagon Alley in the Harry Potter Movies.

Friday was the start of the YBP, where we travelled south to the town of Mühldorf. We met other young breeders from Australia, Scotland, Wales, Austria, Mexico and of course Germany. Our afternoon consisted of relay games to get to know each other. In the evening a progeny show was put on by CRV genetics. This show featured traditional Bavarian dancers and whip crackers to entertain the delegates. In the middle of the show all the young breeders were called into the ring for a surprise game of musical chairs/scavenger hunt...much to the crowd's delight. It ended with a face off between a Scotsman and an Austrian girl in a game of who can hold up a full stein the longest. After the show, there was a big barn party enjoyed by all. The second day of the YBP was to be a raft trip in the river, however due to heavy rain we ended up touring a few farms and the CRV AI collection station, before returning to Landshut for the gala dinner.

Sunday we returned to the main congress group and headed north

to Ilshofen to see a cattle show in a beautiful agriculture facility. Shows are definitely different in southern Germany, with mainly cows shown with very few young stock. While in Ilshofen we toured a small feedlot with a biogas plant. At this operation they purchased bull calves from the local auction and finished them for the high-end steak market, marketing their bulls at about 14-15 months of age. The manure from the feedlot was used in the biogas plant, which generated power, heat and steam for the surrounding village.

Monday was the big trip to Munich and Oktoberfest. In the south section of the Oktoberfest was the Das Jubiläumsfest, - the Central Bavarian Agriculture Festival, with equipment dealers and a livestock show. No Wrangler jeans here, breeders showed cattle in traditional dress, which meant Lederhosen for men and Dirndl dresses for ladies. We watched the livestock show which included a Simmental beef class, before heading into Oktoberfest. The Young Breeders had a table in the Hofbräuhaus and enjoyed a social evening taking in the local culture.

Tuesday, the final day of the congress, we headed south of Munich to Poing/Grub to the LfL Bavarian State Research Centre for Agriculture where they

were conducting research in beef cattle nutrition as well as dairy housing systems and nutrition. It was a unique experience to see a Simmental cow in a robotic milker. We said our goodbyes to many new friends over lunch and headed back to Landshut before our return home.

Traveling to Germany and seeing the European side of cattle production was really interesting. Many aspects of production were different and many the same, but one thing we all had in common was a great passion for the Simmental/Fleckvieh breed. Thanks to all the conference organizers, the many host farms, WSFF and many more for the great hospitality.

Having been fortunate to have also attended the Calgary WSFF congress, I knew how great an event the WSFF congress can be. Having the opportunity to repeat that experience in a foreign land, made this experience a once in a lifetime event.

I would strongly recommend any youth to attend a world congress. It is a rare opportunity to meet Simmental producers from around the world and get the chance to learn how their production system works. The next World Congress will be in Columbia in 2014 and I highly encourage young breeders to attend.



# WSFF become a member by ICAR



The Board of ICAR at its meeting of November 8, 2012 accepted the application of the WSFF for full membership.

Facts about ICAR (International Committee for Animal Recording)

The aim of ICAR is to promote the development and improvement of the activities of performance recording and the evaluation of farm livestock.

1. The Object of ICAR, an international or non-profit body, shall be to promote the development and amelioration of performance recording for farm animals and their evaluation, such Object to be achieved through the establishing of definitions and standards for measuring characteristics having economic importance.
- a) ICAR establishes rules and standards and specific guidelines for the purpose of identifying animals, the registration

of their parentage, recording their performance and their evaluation, and publish the findings.

- b) It provides incentives for concentration and collaboration in all activities



having to do with animal performance recording and evaluation within and among international organizations, public authorities and industry;

- c) It encourages the use of the findings of performance recording for the purpose of assessing the value

of animals and establishing specific codes of conduct, given that both aspects have a bearing on the profitability of animal production.

- d) It facilitates the interpretation of findings at the practical level by publishing reports showing the results obtained through the application of methods of performance recording and evaluation.
2. The association has also as its aim the drafting of articles, publication and distribution of journals and books, the organisation of seminars and workshops, and granting scholarships to selected researchers or students.
3. Within the scope of its activities, the association can enter into any transaction having to do with movable or immovable property where such transactions are in pursuit of its aims.

## About Interbeef

The Interbeef story began in 2001 with the initiative of the Irish Cattle Breeder Federation (ICBF) to develop a European joint genetic evaluation of beef breeds in order to enlarge their choice of breeding animals based on objective method. The European BEef EV ALuation (EUBEEV AL) project has then been conducted through a collaboration between ICBF, the French National Institut for Agronomic research (INRA) and the Institut de l'Elevage (IE), the British Meat and Livestock Commission (MLC), the Australian University of New England (AGBU) and ICAR: Quintanilla et al. (2002) and Renand et al. (2003) from INRA showed the feasibility and the potential benefit of a common genetic evaluation between France, Ireland and United Kingdom but also pointed out the need of a better genetic link identification between the participating countries. Phocas et al. (2005) from INRA but on secondment to AGBU determined that the best results in case of beef cattle data are obtained with an animal model with maternal effects applied on rough data and allowing heteroscedasticity for genetic, maternal and residual variances along with associated genetic correlations between countries.

On the basis of these results and new datasets provided in 2005 by ICBF to INRA, Venot et al. (2006) estimated new genetic parameters between France and Ireland for Charolais and Limousin breeds: these works have shown different data structure and quality between countries, a lack of information to precisely estimate maternal (co)variance components, but also confirmed the feasibility of common beef cattle genetic evaluation with rather high genetic correlations between countries. Another practical outcome from these first studies is the standardisation of the file exchanges between countries (performances, pedigree and fixed effects files), leading to general guidelines for international exchanges of beef cattle data (Pabiou et al., 2007).

In 2005, the International Committee for Animal Recording (ICAR) identified, through a general survey, a need of international beef genetic evaluation: several countries expressed their interest and France, Ireland, United Kingdom, Denmark, Norway, Finland and Sweden even agreed to a financial contribution in the development of this evaluation. ICAR therefore decided in 2006 to establish a new Interbull service dedicated to beef cattle genetic evaluation, called Interbeef (Journaux et al., 2006)



Current countries and breeds in the INTERBEEF project:

Country	Weaning Weight	Carcass conformation	Carcass weight	Calving ease
Denmark	CHA LIM	CHA LIM	CHA LIM	CHA LIM
Czech Republic	ALL	ALL	ALL	ALL
Finland	CHA LIM			
France	CHA LIM			CHA LIM
Germany	ALL			ALL
Ireland	CHA LIM	ALL	ALL	ALL
Spain	LIM			
Sweden	ALL			
United Kingdom	LIM	LIM	LIM	LIM

Source: Interbeef in Practice: Example of a Joint Genetic Evaluation between France, Ireland and United Kingdom for Pure Bred Limousine Weaning Weights. E. Venot<sup>1\*</sup>, T. Pabiou<sup>2</sup>, M.-N. Fouilloux<sup>3</sup>, M.. Coffey<sup>4</sup>, D. Laloë<sup>1</sup>, J. Guerrier<sup>3</sup>, A. Cromie<sup>2</sup>, L. Journaux<sup>3</sup>, J. Flynn<sup>4</sup>, B. Wickham<sup>2</sup>

More info: [http://www-interbull.slu.se/Interbeef/General\\_info/framesida-general.htm](http://www-interbull.slu.se/Interbeef/General_info/framesida-general.htm)

# Next generation European system for cattle improvement and management

Gene2Farm project for non Holstein breeds unites 18 different breeding organizations/institutes; the project is at its beginning.

## Gene2Farm Overview

- Addressing the needs of the cattle industry, in particular of the SMEs and end users, for an accessible, adaptable and reliable system to apply the new genomic knowledge to underpin sustainability and profitability of European cattle farming.
- Carrying out a comprehensive programme of work from statistical theory development, through genome sequencing, to address new phenotyping approaches and the construction of tools, that will be validated in conjunction with SMEs and industry partners.
- Optimization and customization genomic selection, breeding and population management and between breed predictions.
- GENOME SEQUENCING
  - key animals and exchange data with other international projects to create the most comprehensive bovine genome sequence database.
- EXTENDED PHENOTYPIC DATA COLLECTION
  - Exploring opportunities for extended phenotypic collection, including the use of automated on farm systems and will develop standardisation protocols that, in consultation

with ICAR, could be used by the industry for data collection and management.

## EDUCATION & TRAINING

- Finally a dissemination programme will ensure that training needs of the industry are served from an entry level training programme for farmers to advanced summer schools for the SMEs and expert user community.

## Gene2Farm Objectives

- to derive complete genome information to understand genome structure and to design high and low density genotyping panels.
- to develop the tools to impute higher density genome information from lower density genotype data and to make exchange information easier.
- to address the needs for measuring a wider range of biological variables underlying important commercial traits, in order to provide data on additional important traits for use in selection.
- to develop appropriate statistical models and applications for using the genomic and phenotypic information in order to optimise and customise genetic selection strategies.
- to disseminate the information to the SMEs, the wider cattle breeding industry and to end users.

Projected start date	1st January 2012
End	31st December 2016

# bundes fleckvieh schau 2013

There will be the Bundesfleckschau in Rotholz, Austria - 6. - 7. April 2013

This great national event takes place every two years in Austria. About three quarters of the Austrian cattle belong to the Fleckvieh breed. There are about 16,000 breeders with 270,000 registered Fleckvieh cows in Austria. Therefore, it is the most important national breed show in Austria.

## Preliminary program:

### Saturday 6th April 2013

13:00 International Fleckvieh Forum  
 19:30 Judging Young Breeders  
 20:30 Opening Ceremony - Show Progeny Groups  
 22:00 Judging Young Breeders Final

### Sunday 7th April 2013

10:00 Fleckvieh Judging  
 13:00 Judging Genomic Cows  
 13:45 Presentation of Daughter Groups  
 14:15 Presentation of Champions from the Young Breeders Competition  
 14:30 Elite Auction

Do not miss this opportunity to visit Rotholz from 6th to 7th April 2013!



## ESF Congress 2013

The 30th Congress of the European Simmental Federation will be held in Ptuj, Slovenia from 17th to 21st September 2013. Detailed information coming soon!



# New General Manager of the CSA



Calgary, Alberta, Canada - In order to streamline operations, the Canadian Simmental Association (CSA) Board of Directors has made a change within the management structure of the CSA. Effective Dec. 1, 2012 Bruce Holmquist has been promoted to the position of General Manager of the Association and Barb Judd has moved into the position of Office Manager.

"The Directors are confident this transition will be a seamless one that will only improve the efficiency with which the CSA serves its members and collaborates with the entire beef industry," stated Ron Nolan, CSA President.

"I am very pleased to continue to work with the CSA and especially Barb who continues to provide her considerable industry knowledge and experience to the Association," stated Holmquist. "The CSA is equipped with experienced and dedicated staff which is complimented by a skilled group of support personnel. We have a variety of dynamic and aggressive programs under way and I look forward to growing those and to continue to work in moving the CSA forward on behalf of its membership."

Congratulations on behalf of the WSFF!

Merry Christmas  
and a  
Happy New Year!

PF 2013

on behalf of the WSFF & ESF

