



World Simmental Fleckvieh Federation
www.wsff.info



European Simmental Federation

E-journal@
issue 20. May 2020

Fellow Fleckvieh Breeders,

I hope that each of you, your family and friends are all surviving the isolation created to the coronavirus and that you have started to adapt to the situation.

I hear the question asked, every day;

WHEN WILL WE GET BACK TO NORMAL and my response is: WHAT WILL THE NEW NORMAL BE AND HOW DO WE ADJUST TO THE NEW NORMAL?

The closest item that comes to mind is 911 and how it changed all of our lives; but as a society we adjusted to the new normal and so too will we adjust to what ever the new normal will be after this event.

As a group, we have seen the cancelation of one of our great FLECKVIEH events; **The World Congress**. An event that all of us look forward to in order to visit with friends and fellow breeders from around the world while discussing items that effect our Fleckvieh business along with taking care of Federation business. Other great events such as the **Calgary Stampede, the State Fair of Texas, the Royal Melbourne Show along with countless other events and activities including church services**.

As we move forward, I would like to thank the Austrian Simmental Society and Auernig Sebastian for all the work that had been done for the 2020 Congress with special thanks to them for agreeing to host this great event in 2021. I would also like to thank the WSFF Board for all the support given me along with Kristyna Skopalova during my term as president.

The Board will meet during the first weeks of May to discuss how we move forward in preparation for 2021 along with other business items on the agenda.

So, until we meet in Austria please stay safe and well and continue with the task at hand of keeping Simmental FLECKVIEH as the most prosperous Bos Taurus breed in the World.



Fred Schuetze
President

World Simmental-Fleckvieh Federation



Dear Simmental Fleckvieh Breeders,

Few months ago, no one from us would expect how drastically our lives will be changed due to a small enemy called COVID-19 virus. All our planes and schedules have been quickly re-organized due to different national measures adopted by each country. Personally, closed borders remind me of my childhood with "The Iron Curtain" around the Czech Republic. All of a sudden, everything around us slowed down. Empty diaries, less traveling and more remote meetings and video conferences became everyday reality of the "COVID-19 era".

Often, we read and hear about the courageous heroes in the first lines - our doctors and the medical staff, about all rescue services, including police and military. However, not many politicians and journalist have mentioned one, also very important group for our civilization: farmers, who are ensuring daily supply of all products, especially milk and beef. Let me express my deep respect to all of you, Simmental-Fleckvieh breeders, for your contribution in the war with the COVID.

The impact of COVID-19 on our lives is huge and it has affected many events scheduled for this year. Many congresses, shows and fairs were cancelled or postponed. Therefore, the ICAR congress 2020 in Netherlands will take a place one year later, in April 2021. A lot of preparation work has been done in Austria by Sebastian Auernig and his crew for the international Simmental Fleckvieh highlight of year – the WSFF Congress 2020. We fully understand and agree with the decision to postpone this event by one year and we are looking forward to meeting you in Austria in September 2021.

I would like to express my gratitude to Vlada Pantelic and his team from Serbia for their willingness to change the date of the European Fleckvieh Congress scheduled originally for October 2021. Having two such big events in a short time would not be a suitable solution, therefore the EVF is now working with the Serbian colleagues on a new date, most probably towards April 2022.

We are still not at the end of the "COVID-19 story", but we can already see the big impact on the production, supply and processing of the main products. The outbreak of COVID-19 and the subsequent measures implemented by governments of EU to contain it have resulted in abrupt closure of most continents' food services, negatively impacting suppliers from these services from across the agricultures sectors, stated recently COPA-COGECA. In other words: closed hotels, bars and restaurants are causing big damage to many dairy plants in the Europe, which leads to high pressure on the price of milk. Similar situation can be seen on the beef market.

The future of agri-food sector in the Europe now depends on how fast the support schemes to assist the sector are implemented.

I am hoping to see many of you face-to-face soon, not via videoconference platforms only.

I wish you and your families good health and all the best!

Yours sincerely,



Josef Kučera
European Simmental Federation



World Simmental Fleckvieh Congress Austria 2020 postponed to 2021.



Dear Friends of Simmental Fleckvieh!

Due to the worldwide development of the Corona crisis, the World Simmental Fleckvieh Federation and FLECKVIEH AUSTRIA have decided to postpone the World Simmental Fleckvieh Congress in Vienna, planned for September, by one year. In addition to the meetings, we had planned many other interesting additions and excursions. The finale should have been the National Fleckvieh Exhibition, a show at which the best Fleckvieh cows in Austria would be presented.

Next year, after the time of crisis and restrictions is hopefully long over, the meeting in Vienna should be a great festival of joy and re-union. I would like to thank all those who have already given us strong support in the preparations and ask them to continue doing so next year.



On behalf of the WSFF and FLECKVIEH AUSTRIA, I would like to invite you already now. Until then - have fun with the Simmental Fleckvieh animals and stay healthy. See you next year!

Sebastian Auernig

World Simmental Fleckvieh Congress Austria 2020 verlegt.

Liebe Fleckviehfreunde!

Aufgrund der weltweiten Entwicklung in der Coronakrise haben Weltvereinigung und Fleckvieh-Austria entschieden, den im September in Wien geplanten Kongress um ein Jahr zu verschieben. Neben den Meetings waren viele interessante Beiträge und Exkursionen geplant und zum Abschluss die Bundesfleckviehschau mit den besten Kühen Österreichs.

Im nächsten Jahr, nachdem die Zeit der Krise und der Einschränkungen dann hoffentlich längst gut überstanden ist,

soll das Treffen in Wien ein großes Fest der Freude und des Wiedersehens werden. Wir bedanken uns bei allen, die uns in der Vorbereitung bereits kräftig unterstützt haben und ersuche sie, dies auch im nächsten Jahr zu tun.

Wir möchten schon jetzt herzlich dazu einladen und wünschen ein frohes und gesegnetes Osterfest.

Obmann Auernig, GF Tanzler und das gesamte Team von Fleckvieh-Austria

Congreso Mundial Fleckvieh Simmental Austria 2020 se pospone.

Debido al desarrollo mundial de la crisis del Coronavirus, la Federación Mundial de Simmental Fleckvieh y FLECKVIEH AUSTRIA han decidido posponer el Congreso Mundial Fleckvieh/Simmental de Viena que estaba previsto para este septiembre, para el año que viene. Además de las reuniones, habíamos planificado muchas contribuciones y excursiones interesantes; para así culminar con la Exhibición Nacional Fleckvieh con las mejores vacas de Austria.

El año que viene, después de que la época de crisis y restricciones haya pasado, esperamos que la reunión en Viena sea

una gran celebración de alegría y reencuentro. Quisiera agradecer a todos los que nos han dado un fuerte apoyo en los preparativos y de la misma forma pedirles que continúen haciéndolo el próximo año.

En nombre de la WSFF y de FLECKVIEH AUSTRIA, me gustaría invitarles desde ya. Hasta entonces, diviértanse con sus animales Fleckvieh Simmental y manténganse sanos. ¡Nos vemos el año que viene!

Sebastian Auernig



WORLD
**SIMMENTAL
FLECKVIEH**
CONGRESS
AUSTRIA 2020



Australian producers have seen some extreme weather conditions to test anyone over the last few months, from drought, fire and floods.

You may be aware that most states in Australia were going into their fourth or more year of drought compounded by the dry conditions we then had catastrophic fires from Queensland down to Victoria and across to South Australia.



Drought affected land

Lone Station Simmentals Based in (Queensland) Northern Australia is a good example of this. For the last four years this operation has experienced the impact of drought, bushfires and more recently extremely high rainfall and associated flooding.

Despite this, the stud manager, Steven Manwill remains positive and in his words, feedback from clients (commercial producers running High Bos Indicus content cattle, Brahman and Droughtmaster for the domestic and overseas markets) is that they are “fully aware of Simmentals performance for Hybrid Vigour and the impact on their bottom line”. But that more recently referenced is made that they are “continually impressed with the resilience of the breed”. This comes as no surprise to Simmental Breeders who are acutely aware that the breed is the second numerous in the world and is prevalent on all inhabited continents.

Genetic decisions made by Australian Simmental Breeders over the last forty years have also seen dramatic improvements in the breeds ability to lay down fat cover and in calving ease and this has further increased the breeds popularity with these producers. Decisions around selectively breeding for eye pigmentation (and color around the eyes) have also been important due to the prevalence of buffalo and other fly in the Northern beef industry.

Many of our members have lost livestock and are in the process of rebuilding fences and their herds. Some had to delay their sales



Fire is so close

due to either themselves or their buyers left with no feed or fences to hold their own stock, let alone buy in cattle.

There has been a huge rallying of comradeship from all over the country, from the cities and around the world offering prayers and financial support to our members.

Peter Wenn was most appreciative to hear from all over the world through the WSFF group with well wishes and asking after the well-being of Peter and our Simmental families.

Many parts of Australia have now received more rain in the first few months of 2020 than they had in the whole of 2019 which has seen paddocks become green again bringing a positive outlook for producers.

Our sales for the year have been very well attended with the clearance and averages exceeding expectations moving into the new year.



Burnt hills and green grass



Drought feeding



Cow and calf found amid the fires



After the rain

Fleckviehzüchter des Jahres 2019 – Familie Fürst



Noch nie in der bisher 17-jährigen Geschichte des Bewerbes „Fleckviehzüchter des Jahres“ schafften es so viele Züchter in die Auswertung und noch nie erreichte der erstplatzierte Betrieb eine so hohe Punktezahl wie heuer: Mit einem Rekordergebnis von 732 Punkten bestätigte Familie Fürst aus Lasberg in Oberösterreich ihren Vorjahressieg.

305 Betriebe aus fast ganz Österreich konnten sich für die Auswertung qualifizieren, indem sie die Mindestkriterien erfüllten. Diese erfreuliche Zahl zeigt, dass immer mehr Betriebe aktiv an der Hochzucht beteiligt sind und auch unter den Top Ten finden sich zwei neue Gesichter.

Die Top Ten – die Besten der Besten

Auch der Zweitplatzierte, Engelbert Sitka aus Miesenbach bei Birkfeld, konnte sich wieder seinen Vorjahresrang sichern, wobei auch er gegenüber dem Vorjahr ordentlich an Punkten zulegen konnte. Den dritten Rang holte sich Hubert Schrems vom oberösterreichischen Zuchtverband FIH. Gänzlich neu unter den Top 10 ist auf Platz 4 der Betrieb Schafferhofer aus Strallegg in der Steiermark. Auf Rang 5 situierte sich der allseits bekannte Betrieb der Familie Schweighofer aus Pöllau, Steiermark, der sich 2017 den Titel „Fleckviehzüchter des Jahres“ holte. Platz 7 geht wieder an einen oberösterreichischen Betrieb, an den Betrieb der Familie Hölzl aus Saxen. Es folgen auf Platz 7 der Steirer Christian Friedl aus

Unterlamm (Fleckviehzüchter des Jahres 2013), auf Platz 8 Familie Riedlmair aus Mettmach in Oberösterreich, ebenfalls ganz neu unter den Top Ten, und auf Platz 9 Familie Luschnig aus Obdach in der Steiermark (Fleckviehzüchter des Jahres 2016). Eine weitere Züchterfamilie aus der Steiermark komplettiert die Top Ten: Familie Schlagbauer aus Mortantsch bei Weiz.

Mehr Informationen über die bestplatzierten Betriebe finden Sie auf www.fleckvieh.at



Information from the WSFF Board

The global coronavirus pandemic has affected the lives of all of us, and other effective means of communication are needed without the possibility to travel abroad now.

Mainly, the WSFF Congress in Austria postponement was discussed and, with it, the postponement of the WSFF Members Meeting. The Austrian host “Fleckvieh Austria” will make a decision about new dates in the next few weeks and will inform the member countries. According to the WSFF Constitution, it is not necessary to organize a Members Meeting this year, the WSFF Board unanimously agrees to postpone the Members Meeting to 2021 as well.



The Board meeting organized using video conference platform

Science corner

Genetic relationship between type traits, number of lactations initiated, and lifetime milk performance in Czech Fleckvieh cattle

L. Novotný, J. Frelich, J. Beran, L. Zavadilová

Genetic relationship was analysed between type traits and longevity measures in dual-purpose cattle. Data from 91 486 Czech Fleckvieh cows first calved between 2003 and 2009 were used. Longevity was defined as the actual number of lactations initiated per cow and also as functional longevity, which incorporated an adjustment to account for variation in voluntary culling based upon milk production. Lifetime performance was defined as cumulative milk production through the 6th parity. All cows were scored for conformation traits during their first lactation. Genetic correlations between these traits and longevity measures were estimated by bivariate analysis using the DMU variance component program package. Type trait heritabilities ranged from 0.30 to 0.59, while heritabilities for longevity and functional longevity were 0.06 and 0.05, respectively. Heritability of lifetime performance was 0.08. Genetic correlations between type traits and longevity measures ranged from low to intermediate values. Genetic correlations of the measured body size traits to the real and functional longevity

ranged from -0.06 to -0.29 , for udder traits from -0.02 to 0.33 , and for foot and leg traits from -0.03 to 0.17 . Genetic correlations between the measured body size traits and lifetime performance ranged from -0.03 to -0.30 , for udder traits from 0.05 to 0.47 , for foot and leg traits from -0.07 to 0.15 . Genetic correlations of composite trait scores for frame, muscularity, feet and legs, and udder with longevity traits ranged from -0.20 to 0.41 and for lifetime performance -0.14 to 0.51 . The highest genetic correlations between a type trait and functional longevity were for composite udder score (0.25), feet and legs (0.26), and udder depth (0.33), suggesting that these traits could serve as indicators of functional longevity. We conclude that selection based upon easily and inexpensively measured type traits could improve functional longevity of cows as well as lifetime milk production.

Source: <https://www.agriculturejournals.cz/web/cjas.htm?volume=62&firstPage=501&type=publishedArticle>

On the genomic regions associated with milk lactose in Fleckvieh cattle

Angela Costa, Hermann Schwarzenbacher, Gábor Mészáros, Birgit Fuerst-Waltl, Christian Fuerst Johann Sölkner, Mauro Penasa

Lactose is a sugar uniquely found in mammals' milk and it is the major milk solid in bovines. Lactose yield (LY, kg/d) is responsible for milk volume, whereas lactose percentage (LP) is thought to be more related to epithelial integrity and thus to udder health. There is a paucity of studies that have investigated lactose at the genomic level in dairy cows. This paper aimed to improve our knowledge on LP and LY, providing new insights into the significant genomic regions affecting these traits. A genome-wide association study for LP and LY was carried out in Fleckvieh cattle by using bulls' deregressed estimated breeding values of first lactation as pseudo-phenotypes. Heritabilities of first-lactation test-day LP and LY estimated using linear animal models were 0.38 and 0.25 , respectively. A total of 2,854 bulls genotyped with a 54K SNP chip were available for the genome-wide association study; a linear mixed model approach was adopted for the analysis. The significant SNP of LP were scattered across the whole genome, with signals on chromosomes 1, 2, 3, 7, 12, 16, 18, 19, 20, 28, and 29; the top 4 significant SNP explained 4.90% of the LP genetic variance. The signals were mostly in regions or genes with involvement in molecular intra- or extracellular transport; for example, CDH5, RASGEF1C,

ABCA6, and SLC35F3. A significant region within chromosome 20 was previously shown to affect mastitis or somatic cell score in cattle. As regards LY, the significant SNP were concentrated in fewer regions (chromosomes 6 and 14), related to mastitis/somatic cell score, immune response, and transport mechanisms. The 5 most significant SNP for LY explained 8.45% of genetic variance and more than one-quarter of this value has to be attributed to the variant within ADGRB1. Significant peaks in target regions remained even after adjustment for the 2 most significant variants previously detected on BTA6 and BTA14. The present study is a prelude for deeper investigations into the biological role of lactose for milk secretion and volume determination, stressing the connection with genes regulating intra- or extracellular trafficking and immune and inflammatory responses in dairy cows. Also, these results improve the knowledge on the relationship between lactose and udder health; they support the idea that LP and its derived traits are potential candidates as indicators of udder health in breeding programs aimed to enhance cows' resistance to mastitis.

Source: [https://www.journalofdairyscience.org/article/S0022-0302\(19\)30730-1/fulltext](https://www.journalofdairyscience.org/article/S0022-0302(19)30730-1/fulltext)

Body weight prediction using body size measurements in Fleckvieh, Holstein, and Brown Swiss dairy cows in lactation and dry periods

Leonhard Gruber, Maria Ledinek, Franz Steininger, Birgit Fuerst-Waltl, Karl Zottl, Martin Royer, Kurt Krimberger, Martin Mayerhofer, and Christa Egger-Danner

The objective of this study was to predict cows' body weight from body size measurements and other animal data in the lactation and dry periods. During the whole year 2014, 6306 cows (on 167 commercial Austrian dairy farms) were weighed at each routine performance recording and body size measurements like heart girth (HG), belly girth (BG), and body condition score (BCS) were recorded. Data on linear traits like hip width (HW), stature, and body depth were collected three times a year. Cows belonged to the genotypes Fleckvieh (and Red Holstein crosses), Holstein, and Brown Swiss. Body measurements were tested as single predictors and in multiple regressions according to their prediction accuracy and their correlations with body weight. For validation, data sets were split randomly into independent subsets for estimation and validation. Within the prediction models with a single body measurement, heart girth influenced relationship with body weight most, with a lowest root mean square error (RMSE) of 39.0 kg, followed by belly girth (39.3 kg) and hip width (49.9 kg). All other body measurements and BCS resulted in a RMSE of higher than 50.0 kg. The model with heart and belly girth (ModelHG BG) reduced RMSE to 32.5 kg, and adding HW reduced it further to

30.4 kg (ModelHG BG HW). As RMSE and the coefficient of determination improved, genotype-specific regression coefficients for body measurements were introduced in addition to the pooled ones. The most accurate equations, ModelHG BG and ModelHG BG HW, were validated separately for the lactation and dry periods. Root mean square prediction error (RMSPE) ranged between 36.5 and 37.0 kg (ModelHG BG HW, ModelHG BG, lactation) and 39.9 and 41.3 kg (ModelHG BG HW, ModelHG BG, dry period). Accuracy of the predictions was evaluated by decomposing the mean square prediction error (MSPE) into error due to central tendency, error due to regression, and error due to disturbance. On average, 99.6% of the variance between estimated and observed values was caused by disturbance, meaning that predictions were valid and without systematic estimation error. On the one hand, this indicates that the chosen traits sufficiently depicted factors influencing body weight. On the other hand, the data set was very heterogeneous and large. To ensure high prediction accuracy, it was necessary to include body girth traits for body weight estimation.

Source: <https://www.arch-anim-breed.net/61/413/2018/>

Nature Simmental Beef



The Association of German Simmental Breeders has created a trademark for farm marketers

The Association of German Simmental Breeders (VDSi) presented its trademark „Nature Simmental Beef“ at its annual members meeting, which took place in Ansbach in Central Franconia in September 2019. This new brand should represent

rural regionalism and quality beef. All VDSi members have the opportunity to market their beef directly under this brand. The first who sells his beef as „Nature Simmental Beef“, is Norbert Böhmer from Franconian Schrenkersberg. „This is exactly the right step for Simmental breeders who market their products directly. The consumer has to recognize, that naturally grown and matured Simmental beef is not available from wholesalers, but only from the breeders,“ emphasizes Böhmer.

Der Verband Deutscher Simmentalzüchter hat Markenzeichen für Direktvermarkter geschaffen

Der Verband Deutscher Simmentalzüchter e.V. (VDSi) hat bei seinem alljährlichen Bundestreffen, das im September 2019 im mittelfränkischen Ansbach stattfand, sein Markenzeichen „Nature Simmental Beef“ vorgestellt. Diese neue Marke soll für bäuerliche

Regionalität und Qualitätsrindfleisch stehen. Alle VDSi-Mitglieder haben die Möglichkeit, ihr Fleisch unter dieser Marke direkt zu vermarkten. Der Erste, der sein Fleisch als „Nature Simmental Beef“ verkauft, ist Norbert Böhmer aus dem fränkischen Schrenkersberg. „Für Simmentalzüchter, die ihre Produkte direkt vermarkten, ist dies genau der richtige Schritt. Der Verbraucher muss erkennen, dass natürlich gewachsenes und gereiftes Simmentalrindfleisch nicht im Großhandel, sondern nur beim Züchter zu bekommen ist“, betont Böhmer.