E-journ@l

issue June 2025

World Simmental Fleckvieh Federation
www.wsff.info

European Simmental Federation
www.euf-esf.info

Fleckvieh Simmental strong thanks to resilience

In Europe, a number of diseases, even epidemics, have recently threatened cattle stocks. Bluetongue and foot-and-mouth disease have been the dominant topics affecting animal health in recent months. Fortunately, only a few areas were affected by foot-and-mouth disease, and government and farm safety measures brought the virus to a halt. Nevertheless, some shows had to be canceled. In general, the situation regarding various diseases worldwide is not improving. Globalization and climate change mean that previously unknown diseases are appearing in all parts of the world. We can be glad that we have a resilient and resistant breed in Fleckvieh-Simmental. Although this does not rule out disease, it does give us a better chance of surviving illness and thus minimizing economic damage. This is one of the main reasons why Fleckvieh-Simmental is gaining popularity worldwide. We now hope that the situation will calm down again and that we will be able to organize cattle shows with a clear conscience. These events are immensely important for us breeders to see how breeding, which is so heavily based on numbers today, is developing and to exchange ideas with colleagues. Ultimately, this exchange of experience is extremely important, and shows always provide strong motivation to devote oneself to breeding. I am already looking forward to meeting many Fleckvieh-Simmental breeders at the 4th American Congress in July in Bogota and Monteria. It will be a wonderful opportunity to exchange ideas internationally and admire beautiful Fleckvieh-Simmental animals.

Sebastian Auernig
President WSFF & EVF

Fleckvieh Simmental stark durch Resilienz

In Europa haben in letzter Zeit einige Krankheiten, ja sogar Seuchen die Rinderbestände gefährdet. Bluetounge und die Maul- und Klauenseuche waren die dominierenden Themen der letzten Monate, die die Tiergesundheit betroffen haben. Zum Glück waren von der Maul- und Klauenseuche nur wenige Gebiete betroffen und die staatlichen und betrieblichen Sicherheitsmaßnahmen haben das Virus wieder zum Erliegen gebracht. Trotzdem mussten einige Schauen abgesagt werden. Im Allgemeinen wird die Situation betreffend verschiedener Krankheiten weltweit nicht besser. Globalisierung und Klimawandle bringen es mit sich, dass in allen Teilen der Welt bislang unbekannte Krankheiten auftauchen. Da können wir froh sein, mit Fleckvieh-Simmental eine resiliente und widerstandsfähige Rasse zu haben. Es schließt zwar Krankheitsgeschehen nicht aus, die Chance Erkrankungen besser zu überstehen und dadurch auch wirtschaftlichen Schaden geringer zu halten, ist aber gegeben. Ein wesentlicher Grund, warum Fleckvieh-Simmental weltweit an Beliebtheit gewinnt. Wir hoffen jetzt, dass sich die Situation wieder beruhigt und wir mit gutem Gewissen wieder Rinderschauen veranstalten können. Diese Veranstaltungen sind für uns Züchter immens wichtig um zu sehen wie sich die heute so stark auf Zahlen basierende Zucht entwickelt und um uns mit Kollegen auszutauschen. Letztlich ist dieser Erfahrungsaustausch enorm wichtig und Schauen bringen auch immer eine starke Motivation sich der Zucht zu widmen. Ich freue mich schon auf das Treffen vieler Fleckvieh-Simmental Züchter am 4. American Kongress im Juli in Bogota und Monteria. Eine wunderbare Gelegenheit sich international auszutauschen und schöne Fleckvieh-Simmental Tiere zu bestaunen.

Sebastian Auernig
Präsident WSFV & ESF

FOURTH
AMERICAN CONGRESS 2025

TECHNICAL MODULE – BOGOTÁ
GUILD MODULE – MONTERÍA

JULY 20-24

FOURTH
AMERICAN CONGRESS 2025

Schedule

SUNDAY JULY 20

BREAKFAST AT HOTEL FOR PARTICIPANTS
ARRIVAL OF PARTICIPANTS AT CORFERIAS
REGISTRATION AND CHECK-IN
MODULE 1 CONFERENCES
LUNCH AT CORFERIAS
JUDGING OF SIMMENTAL FEMALES

MONDAY JULY 21

ARRIVAL OF PARTICIPANTS AT CORFERIAS
MODULE 2 CONFERENCES
TRANSFER OF PARTICIPANTS TO LA CANDELARIA
BOGOTÁ CITY TOUR AND LUNCH
RETURN TRANSFER TO CORFERIAS

TUESDAY JULY 22

BREAKFAST AT HOTEL FOR PARTICIPANTS
FIELD DAY - BOGOTA SAVANNAH
TRANSFER TO EL DORADO INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
FLIGHT BOGOTÁ - MONTERÍA
ARRIVAL AT LOS GARZONES AIRPORT
TRANSFER FROM AIRPORT TO HOTEL

FOURTH AMERICAN CONGRESS 2025

Schedule

WEDNESDAY JULY 23

BREAKFAST AT HOTEL FOR PARTICIPANTS
WORLD FEDERATION BOARD MEETING
AMERICAN FEDERATION BOARD MEETING
LUNCH
TRANSFER TO HACIENDA FRANCIA AND LUSITANIA
RETURN TRANSFER TO HOTEL
DINNER

THURSDAY JULY 24

BREAKFAST AT HOTEL FOR PARTICIPANTS
TRANSFER TO HACIENDA EL CEDRO
FIELD DAY AND AUCTION IN CERETÉ - HACIENDA EL CEDRO
LUNCH
RETURN TRANSFER TO HOTEL

FOURTH AMERICAN CONGRESS 2025

Speakers

Diana Carolina Martínez President of the Simmental Association

CONFERENCE TIME - **Welcome to the conference**
Sunday, July 20 - 9:00 A.M. /9:15 A.M.

Daniel Espinoza Garces President of UNAGA

CONFERENCE TIME - **Welcome - President of UNAGA**
Sunday, July 20 - 9:15 A.M. /9:30 A.M.

Sebastian Auernig WSFF President, Austria

CONFERENCE TIME - **The Simmental Fleckvieh Breed Around the World**
Sunday, July 20 - 9:30 A.M. /10:15 A.M.

Reinhart Pfleger Executive Director, Fleckvieh Austria

CONFERENCE TIME - **Genetic Values of the Fleckvieh Breed in Austria**
Sunday, July 20 - 10:15 A.M. /11:00 A.M.

Bruce Holmquist Executive Director, Simmental Association Canada

CONFERENCE TIME - **The Impact of Fleckvieh Beef in North America**
Sunday, July 20 - 11:00 A.M. /11:45 A.M.

FOURTH AMERICAN CONGRESS 2025

Speakers

Joseph Kucera Executive Director, Czech Moravian Breeders' Corporation, Inc.

CONFERENCE TIME – **The story of the success of the Simmental breed in the Czech Republic**
Monday, July 21 – 9:00 A.M. /9:45 A.M.

José Medina Chapa International Simbrah Judge, Mexico.

CONFERENCE TIME – **Successes and Failures of the Simbrah Breed in Mexico**
Monday, July 21 – 9:45 A.M. /10:30 A.M.

Juan Jose Rodriguez Manager of Ganaderia doña Juana

CONFERENCE TIME – **Experiences with the Simbrah Breed in Colombia**
Monday, July 21 – 10:15 A.M. /11:00 A.M.

Camilo Osorio Manager of Ganaderia El Remiendo, Colombia

CONFERENCE TIME – **Simcebú: Crossbreeding Simmental in Lowland Tropics**
Monday, July 21 – 11:15 A.M. /12:00 P.M.

Filippo Rapaioli Executive Director, Asosimmental Colombia

CONFERENCE TIME – **Simmental Fleckvieh in Colombia: From Judging to Genomics**
Monday, July 21 – 12:00 P.M. /12:45 P.M.

FOURTH AMERICAN CONGRESS 2025

CONGRESS COST

UNTIL 30/04/25	UNTIL 31/05/25
$590 USD	$650 USD
$ 2,426,675 COP	$ 2,667,590 COP

HOTELS AND INTERNATIONAL FLIGHTS **NOT INCLUDED**

FOR MORE INFORMATION

info@asosimmental.org

REGISTRATION

(+57) 310 5704309

july 24-27

Travel ITINERARY

356 USD

Wompi Bancolombia

DEPARTING FROM MONTERÍA

DAY1
Heading to Mompox

ARRIVAL IN MOMPOX (8-9PM)

- Departure from Montería in a private van
- Arrival in Mompox and hotel check-in
- Welcome dinner

DAY2
Colonial Charm & Culture

TOUR OF MOMPOX (9 AM–4 PM)

- LGuided tour of Mompox's historic center
- Traditional lunch
- Departure to Cartagena in a private van
- Arrival and check-in in Cartagena
- Dinner at a local restaurant

DAY3
Cartagena, Sun, Sand & Sea

BARU ISLANDS TOUR (8 AM– 4 PM)

- Day trip to the Barú Islands
- Enjoy crystal-clear waters and beach activities
- Return to Cartagena
- Group dinner

DAY4
Caribbean Magic

CARTAGENA TOUR (10 AM– 12 PM)

- Cultural tour of Cartagena: old town, city walls, and more
- End of the post-congress trip

INCLUDES

CUARTO CONGRESO AMERICANO 2025

Asosimmental: A Pillar in the Genetic Development and Sustainability of Cattle in Colombia

Livestock is a fundamental sector for the Colombian economy, representing a significant portion of the agricultural Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and a crucial source of employment in rural areas. Specialized breeds, such as Simmental, Simbrah, Simcebu, and their crossbreeds, are recognized for their adaptability to Colombia's diverse geographic and climatic conditions, as well as for their high productivity in both meat and milk. In this context, the Colombian Association of Breeders of Simmental, Simbrah, Simcebu, and their Crossbreeds has established itself as a key player in the development and promotion of these breeds in the country, contributing not only to the genetic improvement of cattle but also to the sustainability of the Colombian livestock sector.

History of the Association and its Breeds

Born from the commitment of a visionary group of breeders, the Association's goal from its inception was to promote cattle genetic improvement in Colombia by disseminating and consolidating specialized breeds that offer greater performance and adaptability. Almost four decades later, its legacy is indisputable: a growing network of ranchers who have elevated the quality of their herds, a recognized genetic offering both domestically and internationally, and a solid system of technical and commercial services serving the development of Colombian livestock. Through constant, technical, and coordinated work, Asosimmental has positioned itself as one of the most important associations in the country, projecting its influence on a continental scale.

Over the years, the Association has evolved, becoming a benchmark not only nationally but also internationally. Its mission has always been clear: to promote the genetic progress of the Simmental, Simbrah, Simcebu breeds, and their crossbreeds, fostering the exchange of knowledge, training farmers, and disseminating best practices in livestock farming. With a focus on quality and sustainability, the Association has positioned the breeds it represents as some of the most competitive in the market, both in Colombia and abroad.

The core of the Association's work revolves around the Simmental, Simbrah, Simcebu breeds and their crossbreeds. The Simmental, of European origin, stands out for its extraordinary dual-purpose performance: high-quality milk and meat production, with feed efficiency and excellent docility that facilitates its management. Its adaptation to the conditions of the Colombian tropics, especially in temperate to cold climates, has allowed the development of herds with high production standards, capable of competing even with more technologically advanced systems in other latitudes. The Simbrah, for its part, emerges as an ideal genetic solution for the lowland tropics, combining the hardiness of the Brahman with the productivity of the Simmental. This cross has proven particularly effective in warm climates, with excellent feed conversion, precocity, and good fertility. Commercially, Simbrah animals exhibit excellent carcass conformation, which translates into greater profitability for producers.

Along the same lines, the Simcebu represents an increasingly valued genetic alternative. By combining the hardiness and resistance of Zebu cattle with the productive capacity of the Simmental, the result is a versatile animal, adapted to the tropics, fast-growing, and highly efficient in the use of pastures. These qualities make it especially attractive to commercial ranchers seeking efficiency without sacrificing adaptability.

An attractive option for commercial cattle ranchers seeking efficiency without sacrificing adaptability.

One of Asosimmental's major contributions has been demonstrating that, with proper genetic selection and rigorous breeding programs, it is possible to obtain high-performing animals in tropical conditions. The key has been the implementation of technologies such as genomics, milk control programs, genetic traceability through genealogical records, and the marketing of certified genetic material. Through these tools, the Association has promoted data-driven, not assumption-driven, livestock farming, which translates into better and more sustainable decisions for ranchers.

In addition to its genetic work, Asosimmental has been a pioneer in providing specialized services. It currently offers comprehensive technical support, training programs, and consulting in reproduction, nutrition, health management, and farm management. It also leads genealogical registration and official milk control processes, which are essential for objectively monitoring animal performance. One of the most innovative services is genomic sampling, which allows for the identification of specific genetic characteristics that allow for the selection of the best breeding stock based on scientific evidence.

In addition, we market high-quality semen and embryos from bulls and cows with proven genetic merit, as well as the organization of exhibitions, fairs, and auctions that serve as showcases for the advancements in Colombian genetics and strengthen commercial ties between ranchers. These spaces not only stimulate the market but also serve an educational function by bringing innovation closer to producers, generating a genetic culture in the country.

Asosimmental's comprehensive approach has allowed genetic improvement to go beyond the reach of a few highly technical producers, but also reach small and medium-sized ranchers in different regions, promoting more equitable, profitable, and resilient livestock farming. In recent years, the Association has strengthened its presence in departments such as Antioquia, Cundinamarca, Córdoba, Cesar, Meta, Huila, and Caquetá, expanding its territorial impact and consolidating networks of producers committed to livestock progress.

The American Congress 2025: A Key Event for Livestock in the Region

In July 2025, the Colombian Association of Breeders of Simmental, Simbrah, Simcebu, and Their Crossbreeds will organize the highly anticipated American Congress 2025, a highly relevant event for livestock professionals. This congress will bring together experts, researchers, producers, and cattle

breeders from Colombia and other countries around the world to share knowledge, experiences, and best practices in specialized livestock farming.

The American Congress 2025 will be held in Bogotá and Montería and will feature a series of activities, including keynote lectures, roundtable discussions, and practical workshops. This event will be a unique platform to discuss the latest advances in cattle genetic improvement, sustainability in livestock farming, and the application of new technologies in meat and milk production.

Congress Activities: Talks, Field Visits, and More

The American Congress 2025 will be a comprehensive learning space, with an agenda designed to meet the needs of both experienced and new ranchers. Highlights include:

- Talks and Technical Conferences: National and international experts will address key topics for the future of livestock farming, such as advanced, cutting-edge cattle genetics and sustainable practices in beef and milk production.
- Field Visits: Participants will be able to visit model farms, where they will be able to observe firsthand best practices in the breeding of Simmental, Simbrah, Simcebu, and their crossbreeds. These visits will be an invaluable opportunity to learn from the best and learn from success stories.

The Congress will undoubtedly be a key event for everyone involved in specialty breed livestock farming, providing a space for the exchange of ideas and strengthening regional collaboration.

The Colombian Association of Breeders of Simmental, Simbrah, Simcebu, and their crossbreeds invites all ranchers, researchers, technicians, and professionals in the agricultural sector to participate in the 2025 American Congress, an event that will mark a milestone in the development of specialized livestock farming in Colombia. This congress represents a unique opportunity to acquire knowledge, establish strategic alliances, and learn firsthand about the latest innovations that are shaping the future of livestock farming.

If you would like more information about the event or to register, please visit our website at www.asosimmental.org or contact us at info@asosimmental.org or call 3123973235.

Don‘t miss the opportunity to be part of this unique event and contribute to the growth of specialized livestock farming in Colombia!

Agroexpo is back!

The event that boosts the Colombian and Latin American countryside

Agroexpo is back! The event that boosts the Colombian and Latin American countryside

* More than 600 exhibitors and nearly 3,000 live animals will provide a unique showcase for the agricultural and agroindustrial sectors.
* More than 200,000 visitors are expected over the 12-day fair, maintaining Agroexpo‘s position as the most important agricultural event in Latin America and the Caribbean.
* Agroexpo celebrates 50 years of bringing together agricultural professionals and the general public in a single space, integrating the best of the country‘s agricultural and livestock trade shows.

AGROEXPO is the fair that has brought together the agricultural sector, an event that promotes the Colombian agricultural industry to the world, bringing together the most comprehensive national and international trade show in a space conducive to exhibitors making business contacts, conducting business deals, exchanging knowledge, and staying up-to-date on new technological developments in related industries.

It will be held in Bogota, Colombia, from July 9to 20. It is the most important event for Colombian livestock, and this year will host the World Brown Swiss Congress and the American Simmental Simbrah Congress.

Corferias will once again be the epicenter of Colombian agriculture with the 25th edition of Agroexpo. It is the place where, in addition to bringing together the best of our country‘s bovine, equine, buffalo, and sheep-goat genetics, the latest knowledge and advances are presented, and a constant series of conferences will address agricultural development and biotechnology, as well as the latest in machinery and equipment.

„Agroexpo is more than a fair: it is a platform for doing business, learning, innovating, and connecting with other subsectors. It is the meeting point for the agricultural sector that drives Colombia and the entire region,“ said Daniel Espinosa, president of UNAGA.

Agroexpo is a fair for everyone, a stage where tradition, future, and identity converge. A space for producers, technicians, entrepreneurs, institutions, associations, families, and consumers to connect with the countryside, learn about its challenges, discover opportunities for transformation, and strengthen their commitment to rural development.

Organized by the National Union of Colombian Livestock Associations (UNAGA) and Corferias, Agroexpo 2025 will bring together more than 600 direct exhibitors, nearly 3,000 live animals on display and for judging, and an attendance of more than 200,000 visitors, including agricultural professionals, entrepreneurs, buyers, the media, and the general public.

Daniel Espinosa
Asosimmental - Simbrah de Colombia

Passing of Edgar Beneš

Edgar Beneš, head of the Polish Association of Simmental Cattle Breeders for the past three decades, passed away on March 24, 2025. Edgar was born in Cieszyn (Czechoslovakia back then) in 1941 and in 1970 he moved with his family and 25 others families to the village of Puławy, in south-eastern Poland, which was abandoned after World War II. Areas which had not been farmed for over 20 years had to be reclaimed for farm use. Roads, houses, farm buildings had to be built in a difficult mountain terrain.

Edgar and his family, together with others members of the community, started from scratch. One of the pioneers in the area, he dreamed of a modern farm – a goal which he achieved some years later. Together with a group of other farmers he founded the Agricultural Cooperative which bred Simmental cattle. Edgar was chosen the head of the cooperative.

In recognition of his outstanding contributions, Edgar Beneš was honored with the Golden Book Award by the World Simmental Fleckvieh Federation (WSFF).

During the transformation of the 1980s and 1990s first Breeders Associations were established in Poland. In 1994 the Polish Simmental Cattle Breeders Association (PSCBA) was founded. In 1996 Edgar became the President of the Association – a position he held until his death in March 2025. The PSCBA under the leadership of Edgar Benes has been a member of Polish Federation of Cattle Breeders and Dairy Farmers since 1995. On 6-8 May 1997, in Ulm at the XXII Congress of European Federation of Simmental Cattle Breeders, President Hans Häckel announced that the PSCBA had become a member of the European organization. Under Edgar's leadership the PSCBA also joined the World Simmental Fleckvieh Federation.

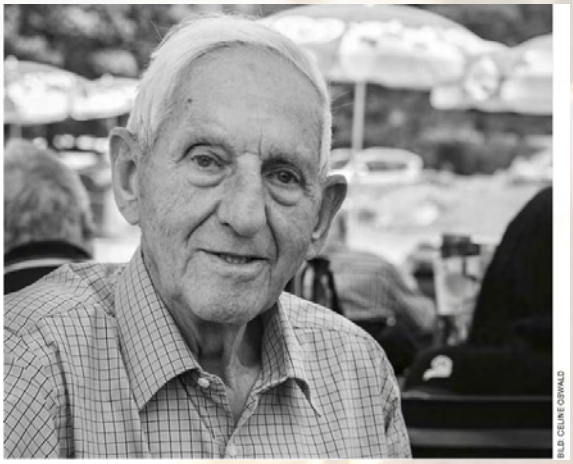
Thanks to his efforts since 2004 the National Simmental Cattle Show has been annually organized in Rudawka Rymanowska, a few kilometers away from Puławy. In 2016, also due to his efforts, the PSCBA had the honour of organizing the XXI World Congress of Simmental-Fleckvieh Cattle Breeders.

He was a well-liked and respected person. Like few others, he was able to cool down excessive emotions and reconcile conflicting parties. He brought and spread peace wherever he worked. Having done a lot for his community, he always valued common good above his own. Despite his illness he worked until his death and tried to fulfill all the duties – to his colleagues, friends, acquaintances – that he had taken on. He wanted to and managed to finish all undertakings he had started. Simmental cattle breeders associated in the PSCBA have lost a wonderful man, colleague, social activist and professional.

Władysław Brejta
The President of PSCBA

Obituary - In memory of Fritz Hari

Fritz Hari died on December 9, 2024 at the age of 97.



Fritz Hari was appointed to the board of the Swiss Fleckvieh Breeders‘ Association (now swissherdbook) in 1986 as a representative of the Simmental Alpine Breeders‘ Association. He became interested in politics at an early age and held various offices in his community Reichenbach in Kandertal.

He was later elected as a member of the Bernese Grand Council and in 1979 he reached the peak of his political career when he joined the National Council. He held this office for 16 years. As a National Councilor, he campaigned strongly for the preservation of the horse train in the army. He was a colonel on the staff of the 3rd Mountain Army Corps.

In 1972 Fritz Hari succeeded Fernand Pidoux as president of the association. His experience as a politician and staff officer served him well in carrying out his duties. It was a time when the expansion of cross-breeding experiments with the Red Holstein breed caused a lot of discussion, mainly about the following points: upper limit on the Red Holstein blood share, free use of the Red Holstein quota allocated to the farms and planned matings with black red factor bulls. It was not always easy to find acceptable compromises, as the opinions of the breeders and the board members of the association differed greatly. Fritz Hari impressed with his mediator skills and was able to handle even tense situations with humor.

In 1974 the associations‘ management and the herd book office were merged, with a single director in the person of Dr. Ernst Jenni.

An important event during his presidency was the congress of the European Simmental Federation in April 1989, followed by the SILA exhibition in Lausanne. Fritz Hari was highly valued in international committees due to his knowledge of Simmental breeding. In 1982 he was appointed president at the congress of the World Simmental-Fleckvieh Federation in Edinburgh. In 1984, during the congress in Sydney, he was awarded honorary membership of this association.

In 1983, after the statutory term limited, he resigned of the Swiss Fleckvieh Breeders Association and the delegates‘ assembly appointed him honorary president of the association.

It was always a special pleasure to meet Fritz Hari at the association’s delgates‘ meetings and exchange a few words with him. His extensive knowledge, combined with his cosmopolitanism, was something to be admired. With Fritz Hari, Swiss and international cattle breeding has lost a strong personality with great humanity. We will remember him very fondly.

Joseph Crettenand

Nachruf - Im Gedenken an Fritz Hari

In seinem 97. Lebensjahr ist Fritz Hari am 9. Dezember 2024 verstorben.

Fritz Hari wurde 1986 als Vertreter des Simmental Alpzuchtverbandes in den Vorstand des Schweizerischen Fleckviehzuchtverbandes (heute swissherdbook) ernannt. Schon früh interessierte er sich für die Politik und bekleidete verschiedene Ämter in seiner Gemeinde Reichenbach im Kandertal.

Später wurde er als Abgeordneter in den Berner Grossrat gewählt und 1979 erreichte er den Höhepunkt seiner politischen Karriere mit dem Eintritt in den Nationalrat. Dieses Amt übte er 16 Jahre lang aus. Als Nationalrat setzte er sich stark für den Erhalt des Trains in der Armee ein. Er war Oberst im Stab des Gebirgsarmeekorps 3.

1972 wurde Fritz Hari als Nachfolger von Fernand Pidoux Präsident des Verbandes. Seine Erfahrungen als Politiker und Stabsoffizier leisteten ihm bei der Erfüllung seiner Aufgaben gute Dienste. Es war die Zeit, in der die Ausweitung der Kreuzungsversuche mit der Rasse Red Holstein für zahlreiche Diskussionen sorgte, wobei es hauptsächlich um folgende Punkte ging: obere Begrenzung des Red Holstein-Blutanteils, freie Verwendung des Red Holstein-Kontingents, das den Betrieben zugeteilt wurde und gezielte Anpaarung mit schwarzen Rotfaktor-Stieren. Es war nicht immer einfach, tragbare Kompromisse zu finden, da die Meinungen der Züchterinnen und Züchter und auch der Vorstandsmitglieder des Verbandes stark auseinandergingen. Fritz Hari überzeugte durch seine Vermittlerqualitäten und konnte auch angespannte Situationen mit Humor meistern.

1974 wurden die Geschäftsführung des Verbandes und die Herdbuchstelle zusammengeführt, mit einem einzigen Direktor in der Person von Dr. Ernst Jenni.

Ein wichtiges Ereignis während seiner Präsidentschaft war der Kongress der Europäischen Vereinigung der Fleckviehzüchter im April 1979, gefolgt von der SILA-Ausstellung in Lausanne. Durch seine Kenntnisse der Fleckviehzucht war Fritz Hari in den internationalen Gremien sehr geschätzt. 1982 wurde er am Kongress des Welt Simmental-Fleckviehverbandes in Edinburgh zum Präsidenten ernannt. Im Jahr 1984, während des Kongresses in Sydney, wurde ihm die Ehrenmitgliedschaft dieses Verbandes verliehen.

1983 trat er nach der statutarischen Amtszeitbegrenzung als Präsident des Schweizerischen Fleckviehzuchtverbandes zurück und die Delegiertenversammlung ernannte ihn zum Ehrenpräsidenten des Verbandes.

Es war immer eine besondere Freude, Fritz Hari bei den Delegiertenversammlungen des Verbandes zu treffen und ein paar Worte mit ihm zu wechseln. Sein umfassendes Wissen, verbunden mit seiner Weltoffenheit, konnte man nur bewundern. Die Schweizer und Internationale Rinderzucht verliert mit Fritz Hari eine starke Persönlichkeit mit großer Menschlichkeit. Wir werden ihn in sehr guter Erinnerung behalten.

Joseph Crettenand

Canadian

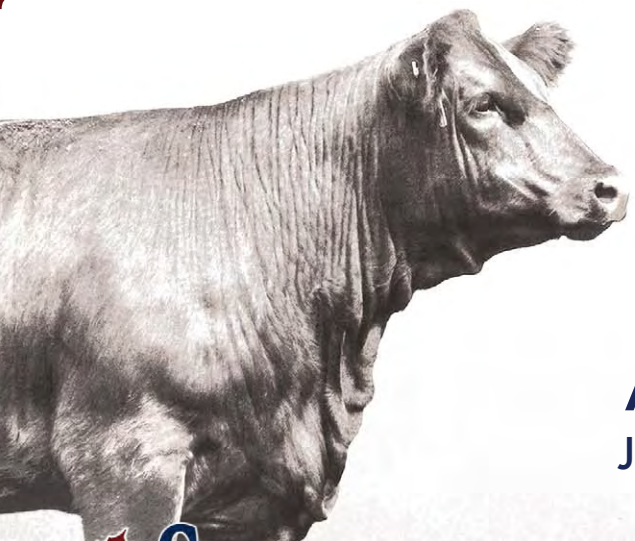
Simmental Association

Mark Your calendars

CSA Annual General Meeting
July 26, 2025, Weyburn Saskatchewan

Friends of Canadian Simmental Foundation Fundraising Auction
July 26, 2025, Weyburn Saskatchewan

Young Canadian Simmental Association National Classic Show
July 24 - 27, 2025, Weyburn Saskatchewan



SIMMENTAL
Canadian Simmental Association

Visit us online for updates & information:
www.Simmental.com

325,000 female animals already typed for FleQS

Where does my cattle stand with its current genomic values?

Genomic breeding values are part of the toolkit for farms interested in breeding. In the calendar year 2024, around 81,500 female animals were genotyped in the joint German/Austrian population, 80% of them within herd genotyping projects with recording of health and robustness traits. Since the projects began in 2018, over 325,000 female animals have already been genotyped, and the number is still rising. In Bavaria alone, almost 50,000 genotypings were added in the FleQS-GuR project last year so that in the beginning of 2025 nearly 1,500 farms with about 115,000 cattle are part of the project. The current FleQS-GuR project ends in 2025, and the response from organizations and farms has been very positive. Therefore, we are currently planning a new project period starting in 2026.

But how should the genomic breeding values be classified in terms of their level? In general, it can be said that the young bulls purchased for AI provide an indication of the level of the most highly selected group. The matings in the breeding program are then expected to yield the corresponding number of top females (without the targeted use of sexed semen). The table lists the threshold values for the best percent of genotyped females in the common estimated population of Germany and Austria. Based on this list, one can roughly classify the range of one's own animals in the two age groups listed as examples. Breeding progress results in higher breeding values for younger animals, which can be seen in the mean values and the higher threshold values. In addition to the general classification based on the level of the breeding value, other factors also play a role in breeding use. In particular, classification in the paternal half-sibling group is likely to play a greater role in the breeding program. Polled females are also of particular interest.

Dr. Reiner Emmerling, LfL-ITZ

Tab.: Genomic breeding vaules of female genotyped Simmental-Fleckvieh animals in DE and AT (mean, max. and thresold of the Top% groups)

	Cows with at least 1 milking result, born after 2020 (n=159.872)					female young animals, born after 2022 (n=195.773)				
	mean	Top 25%	Top 10%	Top 1%	Max BV	mean	Top 25%	Top 10%	Top 1%	Max ZW
TMI	109,9	116	121	130	149	116,8	123	128	138	152
MI	106,6	112	116	124	140	110,9	116	120	128	145
BI	103,5	109	114	122	138	104,8	110	115	122	137
FIT	104,1	110	116	125	139	108,7	115	120	128	145
DU	102,2	108	113	122	139	106,1	112	116	125	140
Status Pp	**n=35.431 heterozygot hornlos**					**n= 59.751 heterozygot hornlos**				
TMI	109,6	116	121	129	142	116,3	123	128	138	151
MI	105,6	111	115	123	136	110,4	116	120	128	145
BI	103,7	109	114	121	135	104,8	110	114	122	136
FIT	104,9	111	116	125	139	108,8	115	120	128	142
UD	101,0	107	112	121	139	105,3	111	116	124	137
Status PP	**n=3.709 homozygot hornlos**					**n=7.767 homozygot hornlos**				
TMI	109,4	116	121	128	135	116,1	123	128	138	149
MI	104,6	110	114	122	131	109,5	115	120	129	142
BI	103,6	109	114	121	129	105,0	110	114	122	136
FIT	105,7	112	117	126	136	109,4	115	120	128	138
UD	100,4	106	111	120	129	104,6	110	115	123	137

MI = milk index, BI = beef index, FIT = fitness index, UD= udder score

Schon 325.000 weibliche Tiere für FleQS typisiert

Wo steht mein Rind mit seinen aktuellen genomischen Werten?

Genomische Zuchtwerte gehören zum Handwerkszeug der züchterisch interessierten Betriebe. Im Kalenderjahr 2024 wurden in der gemeinsamen Schätzpopulation Deutschland/ Österreich rund 81.500 weibliche Tiere genotypisiert, 80% davon innerhalb von Projekten zur Herdengenotypisierung mit Erfassung von Merkmalen zur Gesundheit und Robustheit. Seit dem Start der Projekte im Jahr 2018 wurden bereits über 325.000 weibliche Tiere genotypisiert mit noch steigender Tendenz. Allein in Bayern kamen knapp 50.000 Genotypisierungen im Projekt FleQS-GuR im letzten Jahr dazu, so dass im Frühjahr 2025 bereits knapp 1.500 Betriebe mit rund 115.000 Kühen beteiligt sind. Das aktuelle FleQS-GuR Projekt läuft 2025 aus und der Zuspruch der Organisationen und Betriebe ist sehr positiv. Deshalb wird aktuell an der Planung einer neuen Projektperiode ab 2026 gearbeitet. Doch wie sind die genomischen Zuchtwerte in ihrer Höhe einzuordnen? Generell kann man sagen, dass die angekauften Jungbullen für die KB einen Hinweis geben, auf welchem Niveau sich die am stärksten selektierte Gruppe befindet. Aus den Paarungen im Zuchtprogramm erwartet man dann auch (ohne den gezielten Einsatz von gesextem Sperma) die entsprechende Menge an weiblichen Top-Tieren.

In der Tabelle sind die Schwellenwerte für das beste Prozent an genotypisierten weiblichen Tieren in der gemeinsamen Schätzpopulation von DE-AT aufgeführt. Anhand der Aufstellung lässt sich grob einordnen, in welchem Bereich die eigenen Tiere in den beiden exemplarisch aufgeführten Altersgruppen liegen. Der Zuchtfortschritt bewirkt, dass die Zuchtwerte jüngerer Tiere höher liegen, was an den Mittelwerten, sowie an den höheren Schwellenwerten zu erkennen ist. Neben der allgemeinen Einordnung nach der Höhe des Zuchtwertes spielen für die züchterische Nutzung jedoch noch weitere Faktoren eine Rolle. Gerade die Einordnung in die väterliche Halbgeschwistergruppe dürfte hier im Rahmen des Zuchtprogrammes eine größere Rolle spielen. Auch die hornlosen weiblichen Tiere sind von speziellem Interesse.

Dr. Reiner Emmerling, LfL-ITZ

Tab.: Genomische Zuchtwerte weiblicher genotypisierter FV Tiere aus DE und AT (Mittel, Max. und Schwellen der Top%-Gruppen)

	Kühe mit mind. 1 PM, geb. ab 2020 (n=159.872)					wbl. Jungtiere, geb. ab 2022 (n=195.773)				
	Mittel	Top 25%	Top 10%	Top 1%	Max ZW	Mittel	Top 25%	Top 10%	Top 1%	Max ZW
GZW	109,9	116	121	130	149	116,8	123	128	138	152
MW	106,6	112	116	124	140	110,9	116	120	128	145
FW	103,5	109	114	122	138	104,8	110	115	122	137
FIT	104,1	110	116	125	139	108,7	115	120	128	145
EU	102,2	108	113	122	139	106,1	112	116	125	140

Status Pp	n=35.431 heterozygot hornlos					n= 59.751 heterozygot hornlos				
GZW	109,6	116	121	129	142	116,3	123	128	138	151
MW	105,6	111	115	123	136	110,4	116	120	128	145
FW	103,7	109	114	121	135	104,8	110	114	122	136
FIT	104,9	111	116	125	139	108,8	115	120	128	142
EU	101,0	107	112	121	139	105,3	111	116	124	137

Status PP	n=3.709 homozygot hornlos					n=7.767 homozygot hornlos				
GZW	109,4	116	121	128	135	116,1	123	128	138	149
MW	104,6	110	114	122	131	109,5	115	120	129	142
FW	103,6	109	114	121	129	105,0	110	114	122	136
FIT	105,7	112	117	126	136	109,4	115	120	128	138
EU	100,4	106	111	120	129	104,6	110	115	123	137

Breeder of the Year: Number 1 for the third time

The Estelmann family from Gerolfing is at the top of the best Fleckvieh breeding farms this year. This means that after exactly ten years, the „Breeder of the Year 2024“ award goes back to the Pfaffenhofen Breeders‘ Association region. With a solid lead in points, the Upper Bavarians are named Breeder of the Year. Schürer-Hammon GbR took second place again this year, confidently continuing its remarkable streak of success. Busch GbR from Hechtlingen took third place this year, their best placing to date.

What an achievement: After exactly ten years, the Estelmann family has once again won the award and the title of „Fleckvieh Breeder of the Year.“ They first held the large trophy, which was presented back then, in 2001. This year‘s results are based on four progeny-tested bulls and a whopping 21 genomic young sires used during the evaluation period. Of the 21 genomic young sires included in the evaluation, eleven are naturally polled. Most, namely nine, come from the B cow family, which traces back to the successful bull dam Bombe and her daughters.

Editorial team of Rinderzucht Fleckvieh

(from left standing) Hans and Maria Estelmann, Hans-Josef Landes (ABB), Georg Hollfelder and Hedwig Strobl (ASR), Carina and Maxi Estelmann with HEISS heifer Milli, Christiane and Hannes Estelmann with daughter Emily and (from left, kneeling) Marina Neumeier (born Estelmann), Theresa Gail (ZV PAF), Jacob Steger (trainee), Angelika Kiermair and Markus Stocker (ZV PAF)

Züchter des Jahres: Zum dritten Mal die Nummer 1

Familie Estelmann aus Gerolfing steht in diesem Jahr an der Spitze der top Fleckviehzuchtbetriebe. Damit geht die Auszeichnung „Züchter des Jahres 2024“ nach genau zehn Jahren wieder ins Pfaffenhofener Zuchtverbandsgebiet. Mit einem soliden Punktevorsprung werden die Oberbayern Züchter des Jahres. Die Schürer-Hammon GbR kommt auch in diesem Jahr auf Platz 2 und führt ihre bemerkenswerte Erfolgsserie damit souverän fort. Auf Rang 3 landete in diesem Jahr, die Busch GbR aus Hechtlingen, ihre bisher beste Platzierung.

Was für ein Erfolg: Nach genau zehn Jahren holt sich Familie Estelmann erneut die Auszeichnung und den Titel „Fleckvieh-Züchter des Jahres“. Das erste Mal hielten sie 2001 den damals noch überreichten großen Pokal in Händen.

Das Ergebnis in diesem Jahr stützt sich auf vier nachkommengeprüfte Bullen und sage und schreibe 21 genomische Jungvererber, die im Auswertungszeitraum eingesetzt wurden.

Von den 21 genomischen Jungvererbern in der Auswertung sind elf natürlich hornlos. Die meisten, nämlich neun, stammen aus der B-Kuhfamilie, die auf die erfolgreiche Bullenmutter Bombe und ihre Töchter zurückgeht.

Redaktion Rinderzucht Fleckvieh

(v.l. stehend) Hans und Maria Estelmann, Hans-Josef Landes (ABB), Georg Hollfelder und Hedwig Strobl (ASR), Carina und Maxi Estelmann mit Heiss-Jungrind Milli, Christiane und Hannes Estelmann mit Tochter Emily und (v.l., kniend) Marina Neumeier (geb. Estelmann), Theresa Gail (ZV PAF), Jacob Steger (Azubi), Angelika Kiermair und Markus Stocker (ZV PAF)

Selection for feed efficiency of male candidates in performance test in Italian Simmental breed

Lorenzo Degano And Daniele Vicario
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Introduction

The feed costs represent up to 60% of the total costs of the cattle industry. Thus, the economic profitability of farms is strongly related with the feed efficiency of the animals. Moreover, the feed efficiency is also intensively associated with the sustainability and environmental impact of the farms. A more efficient animal has lower feed intake and, thus, it has a lower environmental impact. The emissions of polluting substances deriving from rumen fermentations or from manure is a critical aspect of the cattle breeding. Mitigation of enteric methane (CH4) emission in ruminants has become an important area of research because accumulation of CH4 is associated to global warming. The improvement of feed efficiency has the potential to increase cattle farms' profit and decrease environmental footprint.

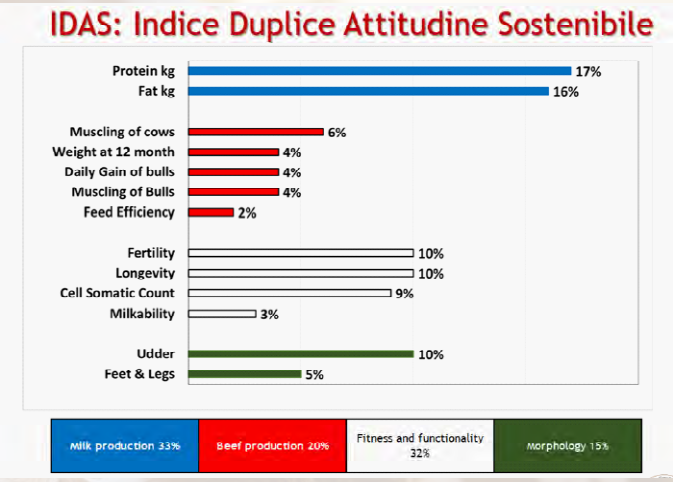
The reduction of environmental impact configures as one of main objectives of the cattle sector, aim that can be pursued through cattle breeding since it is possible to address directly the selection on environmental impact.

Pezzata Rossa Italiana

Italian Simmental (IS), Pezzata Rossa Italiana, is a dual-purpose cattle, that counts about 90.000 heads registered in the official Herdbook of the breed. The Italian Simmental Breeders Association (ANAPRI, Associazione Nazionale Allevatori) manages the Herdbook and the breeding program of the IS breed in Italy. In 2024, 60,645 cows spread in 4,136 herds, were milk is recorded by the Italian Breeders Association (Bollettion AIA); this breed is mainly raised in small herds, often located in mountains areas (57% of farms). The average milk production in 2024 was 7,419 kg of milk with 3.90% and 3.44% as fat and protein contents, respectively; a high protein content, combined with a low somatic cell, explains why IS milk is appreciated for high quality cheese production. A remarkable robustness combined with high fertility and disease resistance are the other main qualities of this breed.

The IS breeding program aims at simultaneously improving milk and meat production in both quantity and quality, especially because the milk is mainly used for the cheese production. Other breeding goals are functionality and stayability, in particular, fertility, longevity, milking speed, disease resistance, feet & legs and udder conformation. Regarding the beef production, the aim is to breed animals with faster growth, good muscling, strong feet & legs with a better feed efficiency. Genetic program is based on a total merit index called "Dual Purpose Sustainable Selection Index" (Indice Duplice Attitudine Sostenibile - IDAS).

Figure 1: The total merit index of Pezzata Rossa Italiana: Indice Duplice Attitudine Sostenibile – IDAS (Dual purpose sostenible selection index).



The genetic program includes a performance test in order to evaluate the beef purpose of male candidates to be selected for artificial insemination (AI). In August 2018, some automatic feeding systems (RIC – Roughage Intake Control) were installed in the performance-test station of ANAPRI. These systems automatically recognize each animal and register the feed intake in real time; trough this new plant of feeding control, several individual measurements of feed intake are now available. About 250 calves, born from programmed matings between the best sires and cows of IS breed, are introduced yearly in the ANAPRI genetic station (Fiume Veneto, PN, Italy) at age of 30 days. The calves are quarantined in a designated barn away from the testing station, and they are weaned using a milk replacer at the age of about 3 months. As soon the quarantine period is completed, usually at age of 3-4 months, the candidates are divided into homogeneous groups and raised together in the same facility, from post-weaning until 1 year of age, when they have to be selected used for reproduction either AI or natural insemination, otherwise the destination is fattening for slaughtering.

The performance test starts when calves are 5 months old and ends when they are 12 months old. In the last two months of the performance test, the calves are raised in pens box equipped with Roughage Intake Control system (RIC) provided by Hokofarm group (https://hokofarmgroup.com). The RIC feed-weigh trough measures the amount of roughage intake with extreme precision and stores the data in a database every day (Figure 2-3). During the whole control period, all the animals are weighted every six weeks. At the end of the performance test period, conformation traits are collected and each animal is classified according to growth and muscular conformation.

Figure 2: Roughage Intake Control system (RIC) provided by Hokofarm group in the performance-test station of ANAPRI.

Figure 3: An Italian Simmental calf in the RIC.

The feed Efficiency

There are several measures of feed efficiency, but Residual Feed Intake (RFI) is currently the most widely used, especially in the beef cattle sector. RFI is a linear index derived from the combination of feed consumption and production traits and it was first proposed as an alternate measure of feed efficiency. RFI can be defined as the difference between actual feed intake and the expected feed requirements for maintenance of body metabolic processes and production. Negative values of RFI identify more efficient animals, whereas positive values are related to animals that are not efficient because the feed intake is larger than the expected feed request. RFI is independent from body size and growth of livestock animals, and only slightly correlated with average daily gain. For these reasons RFI has already been included worldwide in some breeding programs in both pigs and cattle.

Thanks to the data collected during performance test, RFI is calculated for every candidate. Moreover, also Methane and Nitrogen emission are calculated starting from Feed Intake considering a specific equation proposed by IPCC. Currently RFI data is available for 1.103 candidates. In table 1 descriptive statistics are summarized. The ADG (average daily gain) was 1.58 ± 0.28 kg/d and the average DMI (Dry Matter Intake) was 10.1 ± 1.11 kg/d. RFI ranged from -2.73 to +2.25 kg/day (SD = 0.78). The average methane production was 220.5 g/day.

Table 1: Descriptive statistics for average daily gain (ADG), Dry Matter Intake (DMI), Residual Feed Intake and CH4 emission.

Trait	Mean ±SD	Min	Max
ADG (Kg/d)	1.58±0.28	0.60	2.6
DMI (Kg/d)	10.1±1.11	5.73	13.3
RFI (Kg/d)	0.00±0.78	-2.73	2.25
CH4 (g/d)	217.8±24.0	116.1	287.5
Nitrogen (g/d)	156.1±18.0	81.0	206.3

Figure 4 shows the value of RFI for the calves; consistent individual variability can be observed; the animals represented on the left of the graph are the most efficient, whereas animals on the right side of the graph are the not efficient calves. The distribution of RFI is normal, and this allowed the use of the linear models for the estimation of genetic parameters and Breeding Values.

Figure 4: Distribution of Individual values of RFI for Italian Simmental male Calves candidates.

The phenotypic correlations among the different traits are reported in Table 2. RFI showed positive correlations with DMI (r=0.74); there was no relation between RFI and ADG (r=0.00). It means that a selection for RFI gives a reduction of Feed Intake and CH4 emission without any effect on the growth performance of the calves.

Table 2: Phenotypic correlations between ADG, DMI, RFI and CH4 emission.

	ADG	DMI	RFI
ADG	1	0.38	0.00
DMI		1	0.74
RFI			1

The question is: Is RFI affected by genetics aspects? The answer is Yes, actually Heritability is close to 30% with a genetic variance of 0.114±0.060 kg2/d2, which corresponds to a standard deviation of 0.337 kg/d. These values indicate that there is a wide genetic variability and, therefore, the possibility to select animals for the feed efficiency. It should be pointed out that these are preliminary estimates based on a limited number of records. However, the genetic parameters estimated in the present study are comparable to those reported in literature for other breeds.

Since December 2022, ANAPRI has started to publish official genomic EBVs for RFI for all candidates in the performance test using a ssGBLUP model. Furthermore, feed efficiency has been introduced in the composition of the new selection index IDAS with a weight of 2%. Despite the very high importance of the feed efficiency, the current weight of RFI in the IDAS is low. There

are several reasons to explain that: first of all, the estimation of genetic parameters must be confirmed with an greater dataset of phenotypic data ; secondly, the impact of selecting for RFI on the meat quality, in terms of flavour, tenderness and fatness, needs to be investigated. Moreover, the correlation of the selection on growing males only between the corresponding feed efficiency on lactating cows must be furthermore investigated. These topics are under investigation through to a dedicated research project.

Economic relevance

In order to understand the difference between animals with different Residual Intake, it is useful compare the 25% of the most efficient candidates (animals with negative RFI are more efficient), with the 25% of the less efficient (animals with positive RFI are not efficient). In table 3, it is reported the comparison between efficient animals and those they are NOT efficient; in this last group (Average RFI +0.989) the observed DMI is 11.1 Kg/d, while the DMI of the efficient animals is 9,1 Kg/d.

Given a current cost of 0.30 €/kg for 1 kg/d of dry matter feed; it means that savings is close to 0.60 €/d for animal.

There is not a significant difference in terms of ADG, while the methane emission is lower for the efficient animals.

In conclusion selection for feed efficiency is feasible, and it is useful form both economic and environment point of view.

Table 3: Comparison between Phenotypic correlations between ADG, DMI, RFI and CH4 emission.

	RFI (Kg/d)	DMI (Kg/d)	ADG (g/d)	Feeding Cost (€/d)*	CH4 (g/d)
Not efficient	+0.989	11.1	1,567	3,33	240
Efficient	-0.995	9.1	1,565	2,73	196
Efficent – Not Efficient.	-1.984	-2.0	-0,002	0,60	-44

Postcard from German South West Africa portraying a herder and a cattle herd at a water dam

Cattle Breeding:

A Journey from Colonial Times to Today's Herds in Namibia

Authors: Seyi Vanvanhossou, Lilli Scheiterle, Dennis Yazici, Christian Hülsebusch

How has cattle breeding in Namibia evolved from the colonial era to the present day? A German-Namibian research project is exploring this fascinating history, examining the influence of German settlers on cattle husbandry, breeding strategies, and the genetic makeup of Namibian herds. This interdisciplinary effort brings together historians, livestock geneticists, and social ecologists from universities and research institutes in both countries, offering a unique perspective on a complex and enduring legacy.

Specifically, researchers from the University of Passau, Justus Liebig University Giessen, the German Institute for Tropical and Subtropical Agriculture (DITSL) in collaboration with the Namibia University of Science and Technology (NUST) are investigating how cattle husbandry, breeding, and genetics in Namibia were influenced by German colonial settlers and their introduction of stockmanship ideals, breeding strategies, and European livestock as of the turn of the 20th century. Notably, DITSL, as the legal successor of the former German Colonial School (DKS) in Witzenhausen, provides unique access to extensive archival material, historical library holdings, and teaching collections, enriching the project's historical research component.

A Landscape Transformed

In the late 19th century, the "Scramble for Africa" saw colonial powers vying for influence. Namibia, then known as German South West Africa, experienced a significant influx of German settlers. This period brought profound changes to the landscape, impacting natural habitats, biodiversity, and land use. Colonial administrations aggressively appropriated land and resources, promoting settler emigration and the establishment of European-style farms.

By the mid-19th century, approximately 75,000 people from diverse societies (San, Nama, Damara, Herero, Ovambo) inhabited the region. They were soon confronted with an influx of around 15,000 predominantly German settlers by 1914. Many of these communities, particularly the Herero, Nama, and Ovambo, had practiced mobile pastoral livestock husbandry for centuries, skillfully managing the sparse resources of the arid climate. Their intimate knowledge of the environment and their adaptable herds allowed them to thrive in what outsiders might consider a hostile landscape. These pastoralist strategies involved managing variable and mobile herds, composed of animals with diverse characteristics and capabilities, enabling them to respond to the irregular resource availability strategically.

Different Approaches to Cattle Husbandry

German colonial undertakings, alongside mining, prioritized livestock farming as a prime occupation for settlers. However, the existing African livestock systems were often viewed as "backward" and in need of "improvement". Coming from temperate climates with predictable resources, German settlers sought to control and homogenize the environment through technologies like water provision, fencing, and supplementary feeding. They favored herds of livestock consisting of uniform animals belonging to or at least "upgraded" with breeds of European origin, believing their production potential superior. This contrasted sharply with the diverse and adaptable herds of the local communities. The colonial approach, based on "improving" local stock with European breeds (among those the Simmental), led to the emergence of new forms of animal husbandry, breeding practices, and land-use strategies. This diversification of livestock production systems resulted in diverging breeding goals

Cattle herd in former German South West Africa
Souce: DITSL Archive
Lichtbildverlag Th. Benzinger, Stuttgart

and, ultimately, phenotypic and genetic changes in Namibian cattle populations.

Unravelling the Past: The History Package

The History Package, led by the University of Passau, delves into the specific strategies behind colonial breeding promotion and control, examining how human-animal relationships evolved in response to breeding outcomes. Through a micro-historical lens, the project investigates the farms established by German colonial settlers, with a particular focus on alumni of the DKS in Witzenhausen. From 1900 onwards, graduates of this school migrated to Southwest Africa, documenting their livestock breeding and husbandry efforts. Their role and lasting impact on colonial cattle breeding remain largely unexplored, making this a key area of investigation. The project also examines colonial settlers in other regions (Windhoek, Waterberg, Grootfontein) known for cattle husbandry and breeding, focusing on areas within the commercial farming zone that experienced stronger influence from the German colonial state.

The History Package concentrates on the period from 1884, the formal beginning of German colonization, to 1930. This timeframe encompasses the initial German settlement period, the First World War and its impact on cattle breeding, and the subsequent transformations under South African mandate rule. A central question is the extent of continuity and change in cattle breeding practices across these periods. The research seeks to understand the state control mechanisms and support measures for colonial cattle breeding, while simultaneously reconstructing the diverse breeding strategies employed by individual settlers on their farms.

A well-documented aspect of this history is the importation of European cattle breeds. The project critically re-

Cattle herd by a swamp former German South West Africa

Souce: DITSL Archive
Lichtbildverlag Th. Benzinger, Stuttgart

evaluates the introduction of various European breeds into colonial Namibia, placing established narratives, such as the arrival of the first Simmentaler cattle in 1893, within the broader context of colonial developments. The research explores the quantity and quality of these European imports: When did systematic imports begin and increase? Where did these cattle originate? What was their profitability? Which breeds received preferential treatment from the colonial state? How did breeders' associations influence these imports? What were the long-term consequences?

These questions are intertwined with the contemporary biological debate surrounding acclimatization. The importation of European cattle will be examined within the framework of colonial breeding ideology. The resulting colonial breeding strategies, ranging from crossbreeding to pure breeding, will be meticulously reconstructed for various settler farms using a wide range of sources. These include archival materials from the National Archives of Namibia, the German Federal Archives, and the Archive of the DKS Witzenhausen, as well as contemporary sources like letters, farm chronicles, breeding manuals, and scientific articles.

Beyond breeding, the work package also explores the complex history of cattle husbandry practices on German settler farms. How did colonization transform these practices? The creation of new farm infrastructure, the establishment of a colonial veterinary regime, and the pressures of competing in a global market all influenced cattle husbandry. However, the research also seeks to uncover the resilience of African cattle husbandry practices on settler farms, acknowledging the crucial role of indigenous herders and their knowledge.

Lastly, the historians investigate the commodification of cattle during the colonial period. Driven by rumors of the indigenous populations' cattle wealth, the exploitation of livestock was a key motivator for German colonization. This process will be analyzed within trans-colonial and global contexts, considering established cattle economies like those in Argentina and Uruguay as both models and competitors. Connections with British South Africa are also relevant, as a significant portion of cattle from German South West Africa was intended for sale in the neighboring colony. Changes in breeding goals will be explained by considering both global and local interests. The History Package traces the economic dimensions of cattle commodification, examining the shift from beef cattle breeding before World War I to the rise of dairy cattle breeding in the 1920s under South African mandate rule. This history of cattle breeding and commodification represents a fundamental shift in human-animal relations. While livestock held primarily social and cultural significance in indigenous societies, it became an object of capitalist exploitation under German colonization.

Unlocking Genetic Potential: The Animal Breeding Package

The Animal Breeding Package, spearheaded by the University of Giessen, adds a further scientific layer to the project by exploring the genetic architecture that underpins the adaptability and productivity of cattle in Namibia. It investigates how colonial societal changes have contributed to the definition of breeding objectives, and quantitatively measures the impacts of these changes on current cattle populations. The central objective is to identify the specific genetic features that characterize the

evolution and adaptability of imported cattle breeds, with a particular focus on the Simmental, within the unique Namibian environment.

The research team employs state-of-the-art genomic methodologies, integrating phenotypic data (observable traits), pedigree information (ancestral records), and genomic data (genetic makeup) to conduct robust statistical analyses. This multi-faceted approach aims to generate reliable and comprehensive insights into the genetic potential of Namibian cattle breeds, empowering breeders to strategically adapt their breeding practices to the diverse environmental challenges they encounter.

The breeding research revolves around three main areas:

Genetic Diversity and Population Structure: Assessing the genetic diversity within Namibian cattle breeds is paramount for understanding their long-term viability and adaptability. By analyzing the genetic makeup of these populations, researchers can provide breeders with crucial indicators of their capacity to withstand environmental pressures and respond to market demands. Estimating the genomic inbreeding coefficient, for example, will reveal the extent to which Namibian cattle populations can adjust to changing production environments and consumer preferences. A low inbreeding coefficient indicates a high level of genetic diversity, which is essential for achieving and maintaining genetic gains through selection. Conversely, a high inbreeding coefficient can signal a vulnerability to disease and reduced adaptability. Therefore, this research serves as an early warning system, alerting breeders to the need for improved breeding strategies to manage inbreeding. The characterization of population structure will provide insights into the genetic relationships among different breeds and populations, which is crucial for sustaining or improving the existing breeding strategies.

Genetic Architecture of Traits and Selection Signatures: Understanding the genetic basis of economically important traits is essential for targeted breeding efforts. Genome-wide association studies (GWAS) will be utilized to identify specific genetic markers that are statistically associated with variations in productive and fitness traits. This will allow the research team to bridge the gap between genotype (genetic makeup) and phenotype (observable traits), enabling breeders to select animals with desirable characteristics more efficiently. Selection signatures, the genomic footprints left by natural and artificial selection, will provide a historical perspective on the evolution of Namibian cattle breeds. By identifying regions of the genome that have undergone strong selection pressure, researchers can pinpoint genes that are likely to have significant effects on relevant traits. This analysis will shed light on the transformation process of cattle breeds since the colonial era, revealing how they have adapted to the Namibian environment.

Climate Influence on genetic parameters of traits: Climate change poses a significant threat to livestock production also in Namibia, particularly through increased drought frequency and intensity. This part of the research will investigate how climate conditions, especially drought, influence the heritability and genetic variances of productive and fitness traits in Namibian beef cattle breeds. By examining genotype-by-environment interactions, researchers can determine how different breeds adapt to varying climatic conditions. This information will be vital for predicting animal resilience and survival potential in future climate scenarios, enabling breeders to select animals that are best suited to the changing environment.

Cattle herds in the plains former German South West Africa.
Source: DITSL Archive

Understanding Present Practices: Socio-Ecological Package

The Social Ecology Package, led by DITSL in Witzenhausen, examines how production strategies, management principles, and the logic behind livestock keepers' actions have evolved since the colonial period. It explores how these changes reflect shifts in the complex relationships between people, animals, and the environment. A core concept is the recognition that livestock keepers exert varying degrees of control over their production environment. This level of control, influenced by numerous factors, shapes the specific management practices employed. While the herd itself is often the element under the most direct managerial control, both short and long-term decisions are essential. Daily decisions about grazing, feeding, watering, movement, veterinary treatment, selection, culling, sales,

Cattle herd with traditional fencing in former German South West Africa
Source: DITSL Archive
Lichtbildverlag Th. Benzinger, Stuttgart

Cattle herd with traditional fencing in former German South West Africa
Source: DITSL Archive
Lichtbildverlag Th. Benzinger, Stuttgart

and loans directly affect the animals' interactions with their immediate surroundings. Crucially, breeding decisions have a more profound, long-term impact, influencing the genetic makeup of the herd and its capacity to adapt to future environmental conditions. These breeding strategies reflect how livestock keepers envision their animals' role in the environment, shaping their characteristics to enhance what we term "structural coupling" – the ability of the animals to effectively utilize available resources.

The research carried out in collaboration with the Namibia University of Science and Technology, provides a valuable window into these dynamics. In Kunene North, the Himba pastoralists' intimate knowledge of their environment and their cattle is central to their success. Their understanding of the land, its resources, and the specific traits of their animals allows them to manage their herds effectively in a challenging landscape. For the Himba, cattle are more than just a source of production; they are integral to their cultural identity, playing a significant role in social organization and often imbued with ritual significance. This deep connection is reflected in their breeding strategies, which prioritize a broader range of traits than simple productivity. Behaviors crucial for navigating the extensive rangelands, such as agility in rocky terrain, the ability to climb mountains, and the capacity for long-distance travel, are highly valued.

The Nguni breed, often referred to as "Himba cattle," is highly prized for its exceptional adaptation to the local environment. Herders rely on the Nguni's ability to independently navigate the landscape, locating grazing and water sources. This requires both specific animal characteristics and detailed herder knowledge. While the Nguni are known for their resilience and adaptability, they are also recognized for their smaller size and lower milk production compared to other breeds. However, their consistent reproductive rate and reliable milk production, even during challenging seasons, make them a cornerstone of the Himba pastoral system. Other breeds, like Herero, Brahman, and Simmental, are also incorporated into herds, often to enhance milk and meat production, contributing to household income, particularly in favorable years. However, these breeds are less resilient in harsh conditions.

The research also examines the complex social dynamics that influence herd management. Himba herders classify their animals into "cattle families" based on matrilineal descent, demonstrating a sophisticated understanding of animal ancestry and the inheritance of traits. Herd composition is influenced by a range of factors, including access to grazing, the topography of the land, and the herder's age and experience. Young herders often depend on livestock from family members, creating a network of reciprocal obligations. As herders gain experience and autonomy, they refine their herds through selective breeding and trade, tailoring their livestock to meet specific needs and goals.

The varied topography of the rangeland plays a significant role in herd composition. In mountainous areas, Nguni cattle are dominant, as their agility and surefootedness make them ideal for utilizing resources in these challenging terrains. In areas with gentler slopes, a higher proportion of other breeds, including Herero and Brahman, and their crosses, may be observed. This strategic diversification of breeds within herds allows Himba pastoralists to balance various traits, optimizing their livestock for both productivity and resilience in a dynamic and often unpredictable environment. This research offers valuable insights into the intricate human-animal-environment interactions that underpin the Himba's successful pastoral system, demonstrating how local knowledge and adaptive management practices contribute to thriving in what might appear to be a challenging landscape.

Collaborations and partnerships

The project has established strong collaborative partnerships with local researchers, Himba pastoralists, the Simmentaler Simbra Cattle Breeder's Society of Namibia, other commercial farmers and further key stakeholders. An agreement has been signed with the Simmentaler Simbra Cattle Breeder's Society of Namibia and the University of Giessen under which genotyping of new Simmentaler and Simbra animals is done to contribute to enhance the genetic database and to provide valuable genomic information for the Namibian Simmentaler Breeder's Society to estimate animal breeding values. This collaboration contributes to the improved accuracy of estimated breeding values and reliable early selection in Namibian cattle breeding through genomic selection.

The partnership with the Namibia University of Science and Technology (NUST) provides valuable research and collaboration opportunities for students from Germany and Namibia. The project involves two post-doctoral researchers and two doctoral students (one Namibian, one German). Additionally, one German and up to now three Namibian students pursue Master's and Honors degrees under the project on breeding objectives and practices of commercial beef breeders, and on analyzing cattle breeding and management strategies from historical sources and archive material. A further thesis studies livestock marketing and sales strategies of Himba pastoralists and will provide empirical information on both commercial and non-commercial livestock off-take from their herds, offering evidence-based insights into actual practices and their underlying rationale.

Cattle herd with fencing former German South West Africa
Source: DITSL Archive

Cattle branding in former former German South West Africa
Source: DITSL Archive

The students' efforts will contribute to a deeper understanding of the breeding priorities and management strategies employed by Namibian commercial breeders, considering the complex socio-economic and environmental factors that influence their decisions. The students receive joint supervision from researchers at the German partner institutions and NUST, fostering a dynamic exchange of knowledge and expertise. This partnership offers hands-on training and experience in organizing and conducting collaborative and interdisciplinary research. This initiative fosters Namibian-German research collaboration through academic and scientific exchange.

Looking Ahead

The project aims at generating valuable knowledge and opportunities for Namibian breeders and young scientists, empowering them to adapt to the challenges of a changing environment. The project team is committed to fostering ongoing partnerships and welcomes further collaborations, ensuring the long-term impact and sustainability of research efforts. The research team is very open to include the interests of livestock breeders and other actors with an interest in Namibia's livestock sector alongside the project objectives, ensuring that the research is relevant and beneficial to the Namibian cattle breeding community.

Junior Team CESTR:
Growing the Next Generation of Cattle Breeders

Since its founding in 2021, Junior Team CESTR has served as a community for young enthusiasts of Czech Fleckvieh cattle breeding. This initiative aims to provide young breeders with comprehensive theoretical and hands-on knowledge about cattle—from husbandry practices to genetics—while promoting their deeper interest in agriculture and encouraging stronger ties with farms undergoing generational change.

A key part of our educational activities involves organizing camps for young people interested in dairy breeds.

Camp for Older Youth

This camp is aimed at students aged 15 to 26, with around 40 participants yearly. It offers them the chance to learn the basics of showing cattle, including fitting and conformation assessment. The program is enriched by practical lectures from experts on topics such as hoof trimming, calf care, and cattle nutrition.

In 2024, the camp's main focus was preparing animals for the National Czech Fleckvieh Cattle Show, held on September 19. Participants – including students, apprentices, and young livestock technicians – gained valuable knowledge while developing their practical skills.

During the initial days, students focused on core techniques like washing, clipping, and showmanship in the ring. A lecture on feed introduced them to forage crops, feeding strategies, and how to formulate a balanced ration. The group also toured the Czech Impuls AI station in Bohdalec, where they saw up-and-coming breeding bulls – including the bull HROM.

Another important session introduced participants to linear cow scoring using the FLECKSCORE system, which was led by Ing. Pavel Král, the director of the Czech Fleckvieh Breeders Association. Thanks to the FLECKSCHOOL app, participants could instantly compare their assessments to expert benchmarks. Afternoons included a hands-on workshop on livestock photography, where students learned the theory and techniques for capturing professional images of cattle. The outcome? Stunning portraits of two heifers, fully prepared and photographed by the campers themselves.

The Youngest Breeders Camp

For the third year, the association for small population dairy breeds (Brown Swiss and Jersey), Holstein breeders association, and Czech Fleckvieh association hosted a camp for children aged 5 to 14, held during the spring fair in Lysá nad Labem. The goal is to introduce the youngest generation to cattle care in a fun and approachable way – from basic handling and grooming to daily animal care. The camp takes place in front of a large public audience, giving the children a true taste of the show's atmosphere.

At the end of the camp, the young breeders showcased their progress in a mini exhibition and were proudly recognized for their hard work.

The children were divided into three age groups – MINI, MIDI, and JUNIOR – with activities tailored to their experience levels. For the youngest, most things were brand new, and tasks were presented as games, guided by experienced leaders and peers. They work with the youngest calves. The MIDI group (ages 9–11) typically consists of returning participants who are eager to build on previous experience. They dived deeper into showmanship, learning how to present animals effectively and why handler-animal harmony is so important. The oldest group refined their techniques to perfection and often became mentors for the younger kids – setting a great example.

Each year, the camp brings something magical. The line between farm kids and those handling a heifer for the first time quickly faded. Everyone supported each other, new friendships were formed, and the shared experiences created lasting memories. The camps also help to blur the boundaries between breeds – something essential in a smaller country like ours, where cooperation matters more than division.

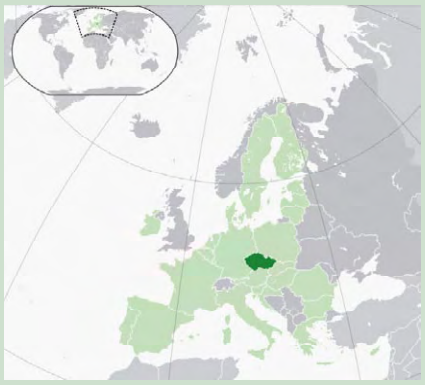
This year's camp was especially notable thanks to our international guests – three siblings from Malta, accompanied by their parents and one of the country's top breeders. They held their own impressively among the Czech participants.

By sharing this article, we hope to highlight the importance of educating the next generation of livestock professionals. Our work with young people is more than just a project – it's a mission. Awareness of what cattle farming involves is declining, even in rural communities, where people increasingly see milk as simply a white liquid that appears on store shelves. Misinformation spreads fast – often faster than the truth – which is why initiatives like this are so important to our breeders.

An informed young generation is the future of our industry. And that's why we're committed to investing in it.

X-Choice ® Lab

Czech Republic



- Total area of the Czech Republic: 78,866 km^2.
- Agricultural land: 3.5 million hectares (about 45% of the total area).
- Population: approx. 10.9 million

Cattle Breeding

- Total number of cattle: approx. 1,370,000.
- Number of dairy cows under milk performance control: 336,390.
- Of which Czech Fleckvieh: 98,526 cows (33.75% of dairy breeds in the CZ).
- **Average milk yield of Czech Fleckvieh: 8,506 kg per lactation.**
- Fat content: 3.91%.
- Protein content: 3.53%.
- Average calving interval: 385 days

CATLLE GENOM Project

- Number of genotyped cows: 51,756.
- Number of genotyped bulls: 6,030.
- Average breeding value (GZW) of cows: 117.7.
- Average breeding value (GZW) of genotyped bulls: 127.06 (Average of animals born in 2024.)

These data refer to the breeding year 2023/2024.

The Czech-Moravian Breeders‘ Corporation, Inc. has expanded its services to include semen sexing - available for Czech and foreign partners from October 2024

The Czech-Moravian Breeders‘ Corporation, Inc. has introduced a semen sexing service to its service portfolio since October 2024, not only for the needs of Czech insemination stations, but also for foreign partners. With this step, the company has significantly expanded its portfolio of services and once again confirmed its position as a leader in modern biotechnology in the Czech livestock sector.

The sexing technology allows the targeted production of female or male offspring depending on the breeding strategies of the breeders, whether it is to increase the efficiency of heifer production in dairy&dual purpose cattle or to use male offspring in a beef on dairy system where the added value of the offspring is increased by crossing with beef breeds.

Semen sexing represents one of the very popular methods available in the field of bovine reproduction. With its deployment, the Czech-Moravian Breeders‘ Corporation, Inc. has demonstrated its ability to react flexibly and in advance to market developments and technological trends on an international perspective.

Providing this service within the Czech Republic opens up new opportunities not only for Czech breeders, but also significantly strengthens the export potential of insemination doses abroad. Local availability of sexed semen with high quality processing and full control over the process is a strategic advantage in the competitive environment of European cattle breeding.

Sexing is thus not only a tool for more targeted reproduction and better breeding economics, but also an important step towards sustainability, welfare and more efficient breeding.

Fleckvieh Austria - leadership confirmed - generational change initiated

Reinhard Pfleger, Fleckvieh Austria

At this year's General Assembly of Fleckvieh Austria, the Executive Board was re-elected in accordance with the statutes. President Sebastian Auernig, who has held this position since 2013, stood for re-election and was re-elected unanimously. ÖR Johann Hosner was also confirmed in his position as 1st Deputy Chairman. Matthias Bischof was newly elected to the Board as 2nd Deputy Chairman. Matthias Bischof is an active Fleckvieh breeder from Oberwölz in Styria. He has been the Chairman of Rind Steiermark since 2019 and recently also became Deputy Chairman of Rinderzucht Austria. He succeeds ÖR Kaspar Ehammer, who has held this position since 2009 and is stepping down from the Board. Kaspar Ehammer is Chairman of Rinderzucht Tirol for almost 20 years and was an important representative of Austrian Fleckvieh breeding for many years. President Sebastian Auernig honoured his achievements in a very personal laudation.

The new elected board of Fleckvieh Austria
from left to right: Johann Hosner, Sebastian Auernig, Matthias Bischof, Reinhard Pfleger

ÖR. Kaspar Ehammer - long-time representative of Fleckvieh Austria

LILLIFEE - AT 852 329 288
Father: GS DELUXE, 100 day performance: 3800 – 4,40 – 3,37, GZW: 131, Breeder: Milchrahm Anton, Rind Steiermark, Austria

Fleckvieh Austria – Results of Milk Recording 2024

Fleckvieh Produce Over 8000 KG Milk for the First Time

Reinhard Pfleger, Fleckvieh Austria

The milk yield results for the current control year showed a moderate increase in performance for Austrian Fleckvieh. For the first time in history, the average performance of Austrian Fleckvieh cows exceeded 8,000 kg of milk.

However, with 328,719 controlled cows (-2,167) and 311,384 herdbook cows (-2,274), 2024 also brought a decline in the number of cows. At the same time, Austrian Fleckvieh breeding was able to maintain its dominant position within Austrian cattle breeding. The share of Fleckvieh cows in all Austrian dairy cows in organized herd book breeding is currently 75.7%.

Structural Change Continues

The ongoing trend towards falling farm numbers (-1.4%) also manifested itself this year in falling cow numbers (-0.7%). There are currently 11,858 (-162) farms with Fleckvieh cattle as their main breed in Austria. The number of breeding herds is 13,457 (-238). This means that the average Austrian Fleckvieh breeding farm keeps 26 cows.

Fleckvieh Cattle Exceed 8,000 KG of Milk for the First Time

The average milk yield of Austrian Fleckvieh herdbook cows is 8,077 kg of milk. This corresponds to an increase of 167 kg compared to the previous year. The absolute level of milk solids fell slightly in terms of fat content to 4.16% (-0.01), while there was a slight increase in protein content to 3.43% (+0.02). On average, the Fleckvieh cows achieved an average of 613 F+P-kg, an increase of 13 F+P-kg compared to the previous year. In the Fleckvieh young cows, this increase in performance was +143 kg milk at 553 F+P-kg and an increase of +12 F+P-kg.

Interpreting Absolute Performances Correctly

When looking at absolute performances, the genetic trend in the traits that can be worked on in breeding must always be considered at the same time. This has been clearly positive for Fleckvieh cattle in terms of milk quantity over the last few years, but slightly negative for milk solids. At the same time, the genetic trend in traits of the fitness complex and animal health is developing in the desired direction. This ensures economical milk production in the long term and also meets society's expectations.

Highlights in the Top Lists

The top lists of the 2024 performance results deliver impressive figures. In addition to the positive breeding development, these achievements are proof of the high standard of Austrian breeding farms in terms of management and animal care.

Table 1: Milk yield results 2024 of Fleckvieh in Austria – all herdbook cows all lactations

breed	standard l.	milk (kg)	diff. to prev. y.	fat (%)	fat (kg)	protein (%)	protein (kg)	f+p (kg)	diff. to prev. y.
Fleckvieh	265,559	8,077	+167	4.16	336	3.43	277	613	+13

Table 2: The best cows in fat and protein (Fleckvieh, herdbook A)

name	live number	sire	l.	milk (kg)	fat (%)	protein (%)	f+p (kg)	owner	org.
LOREEN	AT 56 2455 838	MINT	4	18,940	4.11	3.23	1,389	CT GesbR, Anger	RSTM
BLASI	AT 53 5369 629	WARRIOR	3	15,806	5.07	3.57	1,367	Steiner Manuel, Kremsbrücke	caRI
KOENIGIN	AT 22 3147 469	ETHOS	3	17,763	4.47	3.11	1,348	Schwarzelmüller Franz, Steinbach/Steyr	RZO
MONA	AT 39 5502 768	INDU Pp*	4	15,865	4.84	3.37	1,303	Dorfner Daniel, Oepping	RZO
FILIPA	AT 26 2372 238	MONTELINO	5	15,362	4.59	3.85	1,296	Rienesl Irmgard, Freistadt	RZO
HERRGOTT	AT 24 4072 138	GS PANDORA	5	14,513	5.22	3.55	1,273	Hirsch Robert, Vitis	NOEGEN
ASTORIA	AT 79 6635 968	PIACENZA	3	16,132	4.50	3.35	1,266	Reingruber R. u. G., Inzersdorf i. K.	RZV
LEONI	AT 44 1042 674	ORKA	2	16,717	4.12	3.43	1,262	Penninger Josef, Hernstein	NOEGEN
ROSALIE	AT 37 9841 568	GS VAIL	3	15,817	4.50	3.45	1,257	Pfaffeneder Marina u. Karl, Zeillern	NOEGEN
MILKIWAY	AT 16 4542 769	VERTIGO	3	15,853	4.21	3.70	1,254	CT GesbR, Anger	RSTM

Table 3: The best life performance cows in fat- and protein-kg (Fleckvieh, ≤ 50% RH)

name	lact.	sire	milk (kg)	fat (%)	protein (%)	f+p (kg)	owner	org.
RILLE	12	RECHBERG	207,326	4.02	3.30	15,180	Poscher Christoph, Schenkenfelden	RZO
BLIDA	16	GS HORESTI	197,621	3.99	3.19	14,192	Seber Christian, Bramberg	RZS
ROLINA	12	FABER RED	175,994	4.48	3.55	14,134	Lanner Emmerich, Hofstetten-Grünau	NOEGEN
LADY	15	ROMEL	181,338	3.54	3.44	12,651	Bramböck Julia, Maier Hanspeter, Kramsach	RZT
FABIOLA	11	WEINOLD	142,861	5.04	3.51	12,211	Eberdorfer Peter, Spielberg	RSTM
GUSTI	10	VANSTEIN	148,025	4.53	3.55	11,958	Sigl Michael, Josef, Ottilie, Steinbach/Steyr	RZO
BALLI	10	ERMUT	140,369	4.81	3.62	11,825	Hollaus-Rosenbaum E. u. R., Hofstetten-Gr.	NOEGEN
LUSTIG	13	ROMSEL	159,273	3.99	3.42	11,801	Dallinger Wolfgang, Timelkam	RZV
ROSE	12	MANITOBA	146,332	4.48	3.58	11,799	Weber Johannes, St. Michael/Lav.	caRI
WUNDER	13	VANDO	129,925	4.96	4.05	11,699	Vormayr Roswitha u. Johann, Pram	FIH

Table 4: The best herds (Fleckvieh, size of herd minimum ≥ 5 cows)

breeder	org.	cows (n)	milk (kg)	fat (%)	protein (%)	f+p (kg)
Resinger Franz, Matrei in Osttirol	RZT	17.5	14,454	4.20	3.70	1,141
Penninger Josef, Hernstein	NOEGEN	42.3	15,239	3.81	3.49	1,114
Schwarzelmüller Franz, Steinbach/Steyr	RZO	49.9	13,073	4.60	3.53	1,063
Bauer Matthias, Riegersburg	RSTM	93.7	14,484	3.79	3.46	1,051
Schlagbauer Peter, Weiz	RSTM	22.6	13,598	4.08	3.64	1,050
Haselmayr Gabriele u. Karl, Aschbach-Markt	NOEGEN	63.4	12,935	4.36	3.62	1,032
Aigner Erich, Turnau	RSTM	42.1	13,579	4.13	3.35	1,016
Friedl Christian, Unterlamm	RSTM	77.7	13,242	4.20	3.47	1,015
Stumbauer Eva, Reichenthal	RZO	16.0	12,219	4.66	3.61	1,010
Hartl Bernhard, Neumarkt in der Steiermark	RSTM	33.2	13,238	4.00	3.62	1,009

©Igor Petkovic

The Title „Fleckvieh Breeder of the Year in Austria“ Goes to the Fürst Family, Verena and Michael, from Lasberg in Upper Austria

An Exciting Match

Reinhard Pfleger, Fleckvieh Austria

For more than 20 years, Fleckvieh Austria has been organizing the „Fleckvieh Breeder of the Year“ competition, which holds great emotional significance within Austria’s breeding community. To compete at the top, exceptional breeding achievements are required. At the same time, herd fitness and management parameters must be maintained at a high level.

Who Is in the Competition?

All Austrian Fleckvieh breeding farms that meet the following minimum criteria are included in the evaluation: Fleckvieh must be the main breed, and at least one newly introduced young sire (with at least 30 inseminations), a progeny-tested sire (with at least 200 inseminations), or a genotyped male candidate (TMI ≥ 132 and feet&legs ≥ 205) must have been bred. This year, 303 farms across nearly all breeding regions in Austria met these criteria.

A Tight Race for the Podium

The coveted title of „Fleckvieh Breeder of the Year“ once again went to a dominant force in the ranking of Austria’s most successful Fleckvieh breeders: The breeding family Verena and Michael Fürst from Lasberg, in the RZO breeding region, secured the title for the fifth time—an achievement no other breeding farm has reached before. Their success was based on an impressive five genomic young sires at a top level, as well as five top candidates that scored the most points in the „Breeding“ category among all evaluated farms.

As last year, the competition for the podium places was extremely close. The breeding farm of Heidemarie Günzinger from St. Georgen, in the FIH breeding area, secured second place, trailing by 18 points. Two strong progeny-tested sires and three promising genomic young sires contributed significantly to their high score in the „Breeding“ category. The herd also impressed with its high breeding value level.

Third place went to Karin and Alois Schmidseder from Enzenkirchen, another farm from the FIH area. A progeny-tested sire and an impressive 13 candidates earned them significant points in the „Breeding“ category. Their herd demonstrated a very high total merit index level and excelled in the „Fitness“ category as well.

In fourth place was the Martin Zauner family from Münzkirchen, another FIH member farm. A remarkable six genomic young sires were sold to AI stations and scored many points. The high proportion of lifetime yield cows in the herd is also remarkable.

Fifth place went to Martin Stückler’s breeding family from Prebl in Carinthia, a regular in the top rankings of recent years. The farm collected significant points in both the „Breeding“ and „Fitness“ categories.

Among the top 10 breeders, in addition to established names in Fleckvieh breeding, there were also some promising new rising stars.

Standout Herds Among the Top 100

The farms Zauner Martin (FIH), Fürst Verena and Michael (RZO), Günzinger Heidemarie (FIH) and Schrems Katharina and Hubert (FIH) were able to sell the most genomic young sires for artificial insemination. Regarding progeny-tested sires, only the farms of Günzinger Heidemarie (FIH) and Auer Korbinian (RZT) had two sires included in the ranking.

The breeding of genetically valuable male and female candidates earns points for the evaluation. The farms Schmidseder (FIH), Schrems (FIH), and Waldenberger (FIH) had the most male candidates. Among the females, the farms Schweighofer Corina and Hannes (RSTM), Schafferhofer Daniela and Josef (RSTM) and Perschlingtalmilch (NÖGENETIK) came out on top.

The farms of Haberl Anna and Josef (RSTM), Gruber Josef/Andreas (RZT), and Sitka Engelbert (RSTM) have the herds with the highest genetic value, as expressed in their average total merit index.

In the ‘fitness block’, the farms Wimmer Maria and Helmut (NÖGENETIK), Eichberger Anna and Christoph (RSTM) and Kaiser Gerlinde and Johann (RSTM) scored the most points.

The farms Seber Christian (RZS), Bauer Johannes (RSTM) and Sommerauer Anita and Stefan (NÖGENETIK) achieved particularly high percentages of lifetime yield cows in their herds.

1st place: Fürst family, Lasberg, RZO

The Fleckvieh breeding farm Fürst, vulgo ‘Weiß auf der Wies’, is located in the northern part of the province of Upper Austria. The Fürst family once again won the title of ‘Breeder of the Year’ in 2024 by a margin of 18 points. This makes them the first company in Austria to have won this competition five times (2012, 2018, 2019, 2023 and 2024). This underlines the

outstanding quality and consistency of the farm, especially in view of the close competition among the best breeders in the country.

The farm currently has 55-60 dairy cows with an average TMI of 118 (+632-0.11-0.05, MI 112), making it one of the best Fleckvieh farms in Austria. The polled MAHANGO Pp* daughter TAUBE remains the most influential cow family on the Fürst farm. She was the number 1 polled cow in the world for many years. She has produced ten sons for artificial insemination, which are used at various AI centres in Austria and Germany. Promising young bulls and calves from her offspring are also being reared. In 2024, it is their grandchildren and great-grandchildren who will score the most points (366) in the genomic young bulls category and secure victory for the farm. From WAALKES daughter TERRI alone, GS HAG Pp* and GS SANDERS Pp* went to the AI center Genostar and HERZHAFT PS* in Hohenzell.

The homozygous polled MEVERIK Pp* son GS MYFUERST PP* also traces back directly to TAUBE via his VERDEN PS* dam TARA Pp*. He can convince with enormous milk production and good fitness values. The WIRBELWIND PS* son WIPRO PP* was also purchased by the Upper Austrian AI centre and used.

The farm achieved a total of 566 points in the breeding category, supplemented by 99 points in the fitness category, including a short calving interval (382 days) and a high lifetime yield of almost 42,000 kg from the cows that have left the herd. With a total score of 665 points, the title was successfully defended.

2nd place: Günzinger family, St. Georgen/Obg., FIH

It's the family that counts! For the Günzinger family, also from Upper Austria, this is meant in two senses. The whole family identifies with Fleckvieh breeding. They have come a long way in and with it. The second place in the Fleckvieh breeder of the year award is due without exception to bulls from the A-family. The early entry into breeding for polledness contributed significantly to this success. The daughter-tested bulls GS WEGA Pp* and HAMLET Pp* scored many points. The three interesting genomic young sires SALOMON PP*, HAKIM PP* and WERNER Pp* rounded off the success. The herd also impresses with its high breeding value level. Further successes are inevitable. Among others, the current number 1 of HEISS sons with a total merit index of 151 is being bred. There are currently around 50 cows in the barn, of which around a third are already genetically polled.

3rd place: Schmidseder family, Enzenkirchen, FIH

After the Schmidseder family from Upper Austria was honoured as Breeder of the Year in 2022, this year's third place confirms their sustainable, intensive and successful breeding work. The Schmidseder breeding farm is also one of the pioneers in breeding for polled Fleckvieh cattle. The herd is built on several cow families, from which cows are often presented at shows and also sold. The daughter-tested HORAZIO P*S impressively demonstrates the hereditary strength of the I-line. The genomic young sire HUPFER, on the other hand, comes from the S-family. Outstanding in the current evaluation is the large number of young males and females with the best breeding values, which contributed 180 points to the success. This is no coincidence, as the herd is one of the best in Austria in terms of average total merit index. Further interesting candidates can be expected.

Breeding Program Fleckvieh AUSTRIA
The Successful Path Continues

Dr. Christian Fürst, ZuchtData

As every year, the analysis of the Fleckvieh Austria breeding program is once again on the agenda. Although only minor changes usually occur from one year to the next, and in many cases, only numbers need to be updated, there are still some special aspects that deserve closer examination.

Significant Performance Increase

Table 1 shows the phenotypic performance in several key trait areas since 2010. It should always be kept in mind that these values can be influenced by factors such as weather conditions, feed and price situations, as well as data quality.

In terms of milk yield, the 8,000 kg threshold was surpassed this year, representing an increase of almost 100 kg per year since 2010. The genetic development of fat and protein content has been slightly negative in recent years, but thanks to improved management, the phenotypic values have remained stable.

Despite the high performance level and the largely negative genetic correlations, most meat and fitness parameters show a stable to slightly positive trend.

In the meat sector, the daily gains of fattening bulls have remained largely stable, dressing percentage shows a slightly positive trend, and the EUROP trade class score has not deteriorated at all; in fact, it is now clearly above the level of 15 years ago. The proportion of bulls classified as E or U was 8% higher last year than in 2010.

In the fitness sector, longevity has been slowly but steadily increasing again for about 20 years and reached 4.06 years in 2024, which is 4 months higher than in 2010. The average lifetime production of culled cows has increased by approximately 8,000 kg over this period, equating to more than 500 kg per year. Figure 1 shows the development of lifetime production and the number of calvings over the past 20 years. The average number of calvings of culled cows is currently 4.16, which is 0.43 calvings higher than 20 years ago.

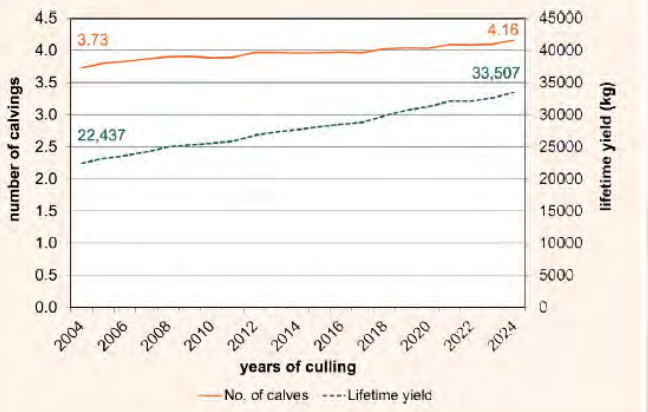
Fertility parameters such as the insemination index and calving interval have remained largely stable in recent years.

Table 1: Development of selected phenotypic traits in Fleckvieh AUSTRIA since 2010 (ZuchtData Annual Reports, 2010–2024)

Trait	2010	2015	2020	2023	2024
Milk (kg) – herd book, all lact.	6,736	7,220	7,893	7,910	8,077
Fat (%) – herd book, all lact.	4.13	4.15	4.16	4.17	4.16
Protein (%) – herd book, all lact.	3.40	3.40	3.44	3.41	3.43
F+P (kg) – herd book, all lact.	508	545	599	600	613
Daily gain (g)	1,113	1,143	1,177	1,137	1,150
Carcass percentage (%)	57.1	57.3	57.3	57.4	57.6
EUROP trade class (E=5, P=1)	3.56	3.61	3.68	3.65	3.66
EUROP trade class share E+U (%)	57.5	61.3	67.5	65.0	65.5
Number of calvings	3.89	3.97	4.03	4.10	4.16
Longevity (years)	3.73	3.80	3.90	3.98	4.06
Lifetime yield (kg)	25,567	28,114	31,220	32,615	33,507
Calving interval (days)	392.0	390.0	390.1	389.8	390.2
Insemination index	1.9	2.0	2.2	2.1	2.1
Som. cell count (average, in 1000)	190.7	180.1	186.5	192.4	201.5
Som. cell count (median, in 1000)	70	64	64	61	61

The average somatic cell count has been rising continuously. However, the median somatic cell count (half of the values are above and half below this figure) has decreased from 70,000 in 2010 to 61,000. This means that while the overall cell count level has improved, the number of extreme outliers („millionaires“) has slightly increased.

Fig. 1: Phenotypic development of number of calvings and lifetime production in Fleckvieh in Austria over the last 20 years



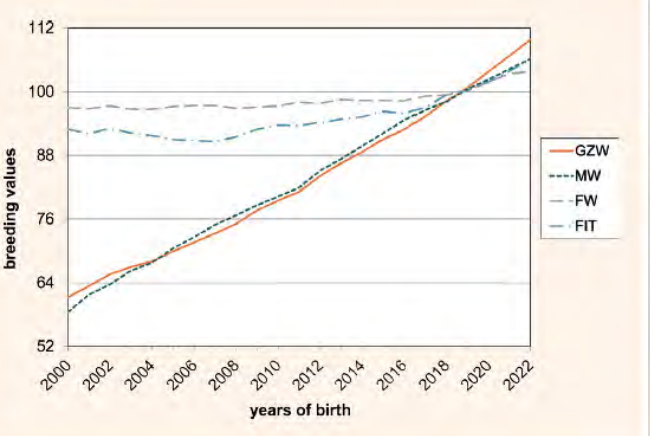
Genetic Development Very Positive

For the evaluation of long-term developments, genetic trends are used, reflecting the average breeding values per birth cohort. Figure 2 shows the genetic trends of the female population in the main areas: Total Merit Index (GZW), Milk Value (MW), Meat Value (FW), and Fitness Value (FIT).

Since 2010, the annual increase in GZW has been 2.5 points. The Milk Value has been experiencing an almost linear increase of 2.2 points per year for decades. In recent years, a slight upward trend has been observed in Meat Value, with an annual increase of 0.5 points since 2010.

The most significant increase is seen in the Fitness Value: The annual gain rose from 0.1 points (2000–2010) to 0.5 points (2010–2015) and further to 1.4 points per year in the period from 2015 to 2022.

Fig. 2: Genetic trends for GZW, MW, FW, and FIT in Austrian Fleckvieh cows



Significant Improvements in Conformation

Clear improvements continue to be observed in the conformation sector, particularly in udder quality and feet & legs. Both trait groups are only indirectly represented in the Total Merit Index (GZW) through longevity, udder health, and claw health values. However, their high practical importance reflects this positive development. After a prolonged period of increase or decline, frame size and muscling have now largely stabilized.

Proportion of Genotyped Animals Continues to Increase

For the accuracy of single-step breeding values, the highest possible proportion of genotyped animals, which are included in the breeding value estimation with phenotypic performance, is decisive. Thanks to the herd genotyping project FOKUHS (HERDE), 15.1% of the living female Fleckvieh cattle in Austria are now genotyped (Fig. 3). While there are significant differences between breeding associations, all have recorded an increase compared to previous years. Among calves and young heifers, the average genotyping rate is 16.1%, while it reaches 18.3% in first-parity cows. Through FOKUHS HERDE and independent breeding initiatives, the genotyping rate is expected to continue rising.

A particularly important aspect is the combination of genotypes and phenotypes—meaning that genotyped animals should also contribute performance data to the breeding value estimation. In this regard, the reporting of veterinary diagnoses and claw health records is crucial. Unfortunately, in 2024, only about half (49.6%) of Fleckvieh farms with at least ten cows provided veterinary diagnoses in a quantity sufficient for breeding value estimation. For claw health evaluation, only 13.2% of all farms submitted valid data. There is still significant room for improvement in this area!

Important Notice: If diagnoses are not reported by veterinarians or the Data Recording Association (LKV), or claw records are not submitted by claw trimmers via the RDV system, farms can enter this data themselves using various applications from Rinderzucht Austria/ZuchtData (RDV Mobile App, Klauenprofi App, LKV Herd Manager).

Fig. 3: Proportion of genotyped female cattle in Austrian Fleckvieh (ZuchtData Annual Report, 2022–2024)

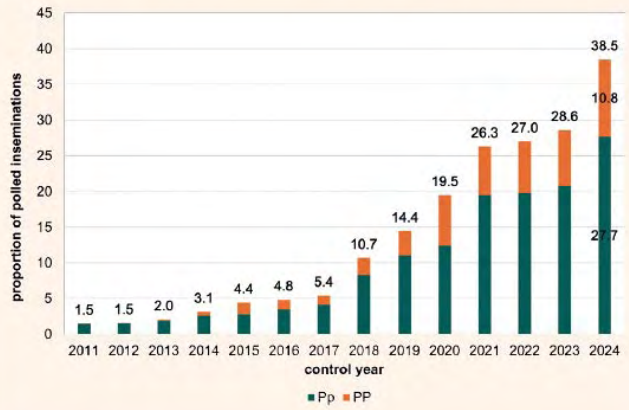
Significant Increase in Polled Cattle

The breeding program of Fleckvieh Austria aims to conduct 75% of all inseminations with genomic young sires (GJV). Last year, this goal was almost perfectly met at 74.9%, considering all Fleckvieh sire inseminations (excluding crossbreeds and natural service). The trend toward polled cattle remains strong and saw another significant increase last year (Fig. 4). Among purebred Fleckvieh inseminations, 38.5% were performed with genetically polled sires, with more than a quarter of these being homozygous polled (10.8%).

However, particular attention is paid to the genetic level of these inseminations. The average Total Merit Index (GZW) of all inseminations reached an impressive 132.0. Interestingly, polled sires (both heterozygous and homozygous) nearly matched this level with a GZW of 131.7, largely due to the widespread use of high-breeding-value sires such as MEGASTAR Pp* and WIRBELWIND P*S. However, homozygous polled sires had a noticeably lower GZW of 126.6.

The homozygous sires performed particularly below average in traits such as milk yield, fertility, udder health, and udder conformation. Additionally, polled candidates tended to show a slight deficit in milking speed, although this was not reflected in the overall insemination levels.

Fig. 4: Development of the proportion of inseminations with heterozygous (Pp) and homozygous (PP) polled Fleckvieh sires



MEGASTAR Pp* Leads the Rankings

Table 2 lists the most widely used Fleckvieh sires in the 2024 control year. At the top of the list is the heterozygous polled MEGASTAR Pp*, truly living up to his name. Interestingly, his brother MONORON follows closely in second place. This remarkable success is a great achievement for the breeder family Hörmandinger from Peuerbach – congratulations!

They are followed by the progeny-tested GS DEFACTO and HEISS, the latter of which has already produced several promising sons now in use. Rounding out the top five is MCGYVER, another progeny-tested sire.

Overall, five polled sires are among the Top 20, including two homozygous polled bulls: EDELJOKER PP* and INSTYLE PP*.

On the paternal side, the Top 20 trace back to seven different founding sire lines, with the MORELLO line dominating with six representatives, followed by HORROR with five. Last year, STREIK had five top-ranking sons, but this year, the highest-ranked representative of this line (GS SUPPORT) only reached 47th place.

Table 2: Most Frequently Used Fleckvieh Sires in the 2024 Control Year
(ZuchtData Annual Report, 2024)

Rank	Name	Birth Y.	No.AI	GZW	MW	FW	FIT	PT*	Line
1	MEGASTAR Pp*	2022	21,046	143	134	104	119	N	MORELLO
2	MONORON	2022	19,661	140	125	109	125	N	MORELLO
3	GS DEFACTO	2018	14,818	128	113	118	110	Y	DIRIGENT
4	HEISS	2021	14,787	148	124	123	125	N	HUCH
5	MCGYVER	2018	13,490	135	118	108	118	Y	MORELLO
6	WIRBELWIND P*S	2021	13,434	142	123	103	129	N	HORROR
7	MABUSO	2018	10,779	127	121	99	109	Y	MORELLO
8	GS DOTTORE	2022	8,787	133	126	111	111	N	DIRIGENT
9	EDELJOKER PP*	2022	8,316	133	116	111	121	N	EGEL
10	HOKUSPOKUS	2016	8,123	129	114	109	116	Y	HUCH
11	WEISSENSEE	2017	7,708	128	119	102	111	Y	HORROR
12	GS WEBWUNDA	2022	7,377	137	116	117	124	N	HORROR
13	VIRGINIA	2018	7,133	137	125	111	110	Y	RADI
14	GS DER BESTE	2016	7,063	114	116	100	98	Y	DIRIGENT
15	GS WUHUDLER	2018	6,191	133	125	94	115	Y	HORROR
16	MIRACLE Pp*	2021	6,164	138	122	113	123	N	MORELLO
17	WUNDAWERK	2022	5,957	141	121	108	130	N	HORROR
18	INSTYLE PP*	2022	5,950	128	118	106	115	N	RENNER
19	HERZPOWER	2021	5,944	128	119	113	110	N	HUCH
20	MARWIN	2022	5,626	134	118	102	129	N	MORELLO

* PT ... progeny-tested; Y=yes, N=no

Conclusion

The analysis of phenotypic and genetic developments demonstrates that it is possible to improve multiple trait areas simultaneously in the desired direction. The overall progress in milk, meat, fitness, and conformation is highly encouraging.

However, the development of fitness and health traits could be even more positive if greater emphasis were placed on comprehensive and accurate data collection (e.g., veterinary diagnoses and claw health records). Since these traits have lower heritabilities, extensive data collection is crucial.

Even the most advanced breeding value estimation (Single-Step) is only as good as the data it is based on!

PALMIRA - AT 911 507 388

Father: GS WUNDAWUZI, 100 day performance: 3874 – 3,90 – 3,33, GZW: 125, Breeder: Moitzi Johann, Rind Steiermark, Austria

8 Tons and Double Effect

Reinhard Pfleger, director Fleckvieh Austria

The aim of Fleckvieh breeders in Austria is to think and breed holistically and sustainably. That is why we would like to introduce you to these exceptional six Fleckvieh cows from Austria, which can combine the following remarkable achievements:

1. A total lifetime yield of at least 100,000 kilograms of milk – a standard that is common in cattle breeding worldwide and is synonymous with sustainable performance.

2. A total lifetime yield of at least eight tonnes (8T) of fat and protein. The amount of fat and protein is our actual selection criterion for milk and thus also the ranking criterion for lifetime yield. In Fleckvieh breeding, we deliberately focus on high protein and fat content in the milk.

3. The special advantage of Fleckvieh cattle is the so-called 'double effect': the naturally elegant muscling of our cows not only stabilises them, but also ensures that purebred animals can produce beef of the best quality and quantity in addition to their milk. Every calf, whether male or female, that is not used for breeding is therefore ideally suited for the production of beef.

BIRKE AT 57 4238 719
Waldbrand x GS Rau, Birth: 12.07.2012
9/8 12,554-3.82-480-3.22-404
HL 5. 14,378-3.80-547-3.23-465
LP: 127,600 kg / 9.1 t F+P

SIRENE AT 00 6635 822
GS Vogt x Manz, Birth: 04.08.2012
7/7 11,116-5.25-584-3.58-398
HL 5. 11,842-5.81-688-3.64 431
LP: 100,734 kg / 9.1 t F+P

LAGUNE AT 43 7772 922
Reumut x Wal, Birth: 07.01.2013
7/7 11,116-5.25-584-3.58-398
HL 5. 11,842-5.81-688-3.64-431
LP: 100,734 kg / 9.1 t F+P

ALMA AT 64 6049 118
Vorteil x Horito, Birth: 09.01.2012
10/9 10,393-4.47-465-3.43-356
HL 5. 10,938-4.66-510-3.50-383
LP: 109,161 kg / 8.7 t F+P

SELINA A AT 28 0893 719
GS Rave x GS Hetoro, Birth: 25.10.2011
10/10 9,571-4.26-408-3.60-345
HL 5. 11,582-4.67-541-3.47-402
LP: 101,201 kg / 8.0 t F+P

BRUNI AT 13 8294 219
GS Oedstein x Webal, Birth: 11.12.2011
12/10 9,562-4.40-421-3.88-371
HL 3. 11,660-4.73-552-3.86-451
LP: 108,866 kg / 9.1 t F+P

HL: Highest lactation; LP: Life performance; kg: Milk yield in kg; t F+P: Tons of fat + protein
Fleckvieh from Austria

RILLE – New World Record for Fleckvieh

Johannes Penz, Fleckvieh Austria

RILLE (S: Rechberg) from the Christoph Poscher breeding farm in Schenkenfelden recently became the third Fleckvieh cow in the world to reach the 200,000 kg milk mark. RILLE is currently in her 12th lactation and is currently producing 37 kg of milk per day with perfectly healthy udders.

The pedigree of this record-breaking cow includes Fleckvieh greats like the sire RECHBERG and the dam's sire GS MALHAX. In the female line it is remarkable that both the granddam (*1991, peak performance 6th lactation 10.500 kg) and the great-granddam (*1985, peak performance 5th lactation just under 8.000 kg) were high yielding cows by the standards of the time.

Favorite and Leading Cow

RILLE is very special in terms of both her performance and her character. As a first-calf cow in 2011, she produced 45 kilos of milk in her first trial milking. RILLE also holds the current farm record when she produced 69.5 kilos of milk in a trial milking in her 4th lactation. Over the years she has shown remarkably good persistence - she has never been dried off below 35 kilos. RILLE really blossomed during the switch to AMS with three to four milkings a day. She is not only farm manager Christoph Poscher's favorite cow, but also a caring lead cow. She has relinquished some of her lead cow status in recent months, as she is now more comfortable and can spend her days and nights in the calving pen and is now milked twice a day by the robot.

The Three Pillars of Animal Health

For many years, the three pillars of lying comfort, hoof care and feeding have been the success factor for old and productive cows at the Poscherhof. Old farmer Edeltraud Gossenreiter, who lovingly prepares the deep pens with separation bedding every other day, ensures that the cows are comfortable when lying down. Claw trimming also plays an important role. RILLE has been to the claw trimmer about 50 times in her nearly 16 years of life. Certified claw trimmer Christoph Poscher knows for a fact that she only went lame once and had a block glued. Since moving into the freestall barn in 2003, the farm has relied on a full TMR feeding system with two production groups (fresh cows and late-lactation cows). This approach was continued even after switching to an AMS in 2021. High forage quality is especially important for the success of the full TMR system.

Key Data on the Farm

The Poscher farm is located in the northern Mühlviertel (Upper Austria) at an altitude of 850 meters above sea level. Currently, around 40 hectares of arable land, 30 hectares of grassland and 15 hectares of forest are farmed. The Fleckvieh herd comprises 70 cows with a current average yield of 11,644 kilos in the last twelve months (4.55% fat, 3.55% protein) and 65 female offspring.

Successes on the Farm

With her exceptional performance, RILLE is in good company at the Poscher farm. There have already been 23 100,000 kg lifetime production cows. In 2018, there were seven live 100,000 kg cows on the farm. In addition, eleven cows with 10 tons of fat and protein have already been produced.

All these successes are only possible thanks to good family cohesion between several generations and a large portion of luck. The Poscher family hopes to keep the cow RILLE on the farm for a long time to come and give her a wonderful retirement.

Caption: The Poscher family with the 200,000 kg cow RILLE

Opening of the First Sexing Laboratory in Austria by genetiX Austria GmbH

A milestone for modern cattle breeding

Mag. Peter Kreuzhuber, geneticAUSTRIA and genetiX Austria GmbH, Peter.Kreuzhuber@Genetic-Austria.at, +43 664 46 47 904

genetiX Austria GmbH recently celebrated the successful opening of its state-of-the-art sexing laboratory in Kagelsberg (Lower Austria), together with partners, customers, and industry colleagues. The new facility for the production of sexed bovine semen was developed in close cooperation with Sexing Technologies, the world leader in this field, and marks a major step forward in the advancement of both Austrian and international cattle breeding.

The lab is the first of its kind in Austria and now enables the local production of high-quality sexed semen, allowing for targeted female or male offspring depending on breeding goals. This technology supports not only more efficient breeding strategies but also makes a significant contribution to sustainability and animal welfare in modern agriculture.

The high level of international interest was particularly gratifying: numerous customers, partners, and guests from both Austria and abroad attended the opening ceremony. The festive launch was accompanied by a diverse supporting program, including visits to the two partner organizations OÖ Besamungsstation GmbH and GENOSTAR Rinderbesamung GmbH in Gleisdorf. The program concluded with a joint visit to the cattle show in Greinbach, where breeding quality and commitment were impressively showcased.

"With the opening of our sexing lab, we are creating new opportunities for breeders in Austria and beyond," stated Managing Director Peter Kreuzhuber and Chairman Clemens Blaimauer. "Our focus is on quality, efficiency, and a strong commitment to the future of cattle breeding."

The commercial distribution has already started. With the launch of this new laboratory, Austrian cattle insemination centers reaffirm their dedication to actively shaping the future of animal breeding — innovative, responsible, and forward-looking.

Caption © genetiX Austria/Zehetner

The advisory board of geneticAUSTRIA GmbH (from left to right): Peter Stückler (Managing Director GENOSTAR), Bruno Deutinger (Managing Director of the Klessheim Insemination Center), Matthias Wieneroither (Managing Director OÖ Besamungsstation), Clemens Blaimauer (Managing Director GENOSTAR), Juan Moreno (CEO Sexing Technologies), Peter Kreuzhuber (Managing Director geneticAUSTRIA and genetiX Austria), Josef Miesenberger (Managing Director OÖ Besamungsstation)

Tradition. Innovation. Emotion.

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21.–22.03.

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- International Fleckvieh Forum
- 75th Anniversary Celebration of Fleckvieh Austria

Saturday, 21 March 2026

- FleckScore World Cup
- Progeny Presentation
- Young Breeders´Competition
- Elite Auction

Sunday, 22 March 2026

- Judging of the Show Cows
- Election of the National Champions
- Grand Raffle

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