

grass utilisation can be bred into new varieties using conventional and molecular biology (GM) techniques. What's available, and what traits should we look for?

12.05 **In Defence of the Environmental Record of Large Scale Dairying in the UK**

Mr Graeme Surtees, Farm Business Consultant, Rowallen House, Aldcliffe, Lancashire
graeme.surtees@btconnect.com

Agriculture, and large scale dairying in particular, is vilified on a regular basis as a considerable contributor to greenhouse gasses in the UK. The author will defend its position by demonstrating that large scale dairying does have, or has the potential to have, a negative carbon footprint.

12.30 **Panel Questions**

12.45 **Lunch**

DAIRY SESSION 3 – Chaired by Neil Darwent

BREEDING TO COMBINE EFFICIENCY, PROFITABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT

14.10 **The Future through a Young Farmer's Eyes**

Mr Robert Harrison, Dairy Farmer, Greystone Farm, Moreton-in-Marsh, Gloucestershire

As winner of the Farmers Guardian Dairy Farmer of the Future award, Rob has proven that he has coherent plans for running a successful 21st century dairy business. But how much consideration has he given to issues such as sustainability and carbon footprints? As well as telling us about the steps he has taken to become a successful milk producer, Rob will spell out how he sees its environmental future.

14.35 **Across-breed Genetic Valuations – What's in it for you?**

Mr Marco Winters, breeding+ Director, DairyCo, Agriculture & Horticulture Development Board, Stoneleigh Park, Kenilworth, Warwickshire
marco.winters@dairyco.org.uk

15.00

2010 will see the introduction of Across-Breed Evaluations for the UK dairy herd. This method improves on existing evaluations and makes it possible to compare bulls of different breeds directly. For the first time genetic evaluations will be available on crossbred animals and breeds not previously evaluated in the UK (eg. Brown Swiss and Montbeliarde).

Utilising Genetic Improvement in Dairy to Deliver Environmental Goals

Dr Eileen Wall, Scientist, SAC, Bush Estate, Penicuik, Midlothian, Scotland
eileen.wall@sac.ac.uk

Dairy genetic improvement has been driven by breeding goals that consider the broader profitability of a dairy system, incorporating both production and fitness traits. However, dairy producers may also be required to consider wider societal goals in the management of their systems, including their choice of bulls. This paper will focus on how UK dairy breeding goals could be developed to include environmental impact.

And How Was It For You?

The two leading UK AI Companies will sum up their views on some of the topics covered today and how these might affect future policy.

Speaker 1 – Mark Smith, Dairy Product Development and Production Director, Genus ABS, Alpha Building, Nantwich, Cheshire

msmith@genusbreeding.co.uk

Speaker 2 – Mr Hugh Pocock, UK Sales & Genetics Manager, Cogent Breeding Ltd, Aldford, Cheshire

hugh.pocock@cotentuk.com

Panel Questions

Rob Wills – the Chairman closes the Conference.

Tea available in the Coalbrook Lounge.

AGM

ANNUAL WINTER CONFERENCE – BOOK EARLY!

Delegate booking forms – these are available to download from the website or direct from the Secretary on 01409 241579 or email lesley.lewin@cattlebreeders.org.uk

Venue – After the success of last year's conference, the Club is returning to the Telford Golf and Spa Hotel, with its excellent conference facilities and 114 comfortable bedrooms.



TELFORD GOLF AND SPA HOTEL

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ROAD: Leave the M54 at Junction 4 and take the second exit signposted A442. At the second roundabout go left onto the A442 signposted Bridgnorth. Take the second slip-road continuing on the A442 signposted Madeley and Shifnal, Ironbridge Gorge Museum. Filter right remaining on the A442. Caution: the left lane goes to Madeley and Shifnal.

At the first roundabout turn right following the brown tourist sign for Telford Golf Club. Pass the petrol station on the right hand side and turn left at the first roundabout towards Sutton Heights. Proceed along this road for half a mile until you reach Great Hay Drive, turn left. The hotel is located at the end of this road.

BY RAIL: Telford Station – 5 miles.

BY AIR: Birmingham – 44 miles.

The Club would like to thank the following sponsors who have already committed to supporting the 2010 Conference:

Allflex, Biobest, British Limousin Cattle Society, CDI, DairyCo, Dovecote Park, EBLEX, EGENES, Genus Breeding, Holstein UK, Ireland Genetics, Merial.

If your company is interested in supporting the Club in bringing all sectors of the cattle breeding industry together to link practical cattle breeding with science, please would you contact the Secretary, Lesley Lewin, contact details on the front page.



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Tel: 01409 241579
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www.cattlebreeders.org.uk**

A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

January! You're just recovering from the Christmas and New Year celebrations and thinking that there is still a long way to Spring when you suddenly spot the British Cattle Conference programme lying on the kitchen table! The perfect antidote to the midwinter blues! Once again the Club Committee has managed to secure an exceptional set of world class speakers to deliver Conference papers to challenge us all.

The theme for the British Cattle Conference 2010 is "**A Sustainable Breeding Future**". Let me explain our plans! Agriculture, and particularly livestock breeding, is at a crossroads and a farming revolution is at hand. Recent announcements from Government show that the stance taken by successive administrations, allowing others to feed us rather than feeding ourselves, is changing at last. Is it possible that the perceived assumption that British farmers are merely custodians of the countryside and that we are rich enough to buy on open markets is now being sidelined?

The British Cattle Conference 2010 will focus on this brave new world. A world where we now have many more "breeding tools" at our disposal, particularly the increasing use of genomics, but also a greater awareness of what our customer demands, what the world expects of us in environmental terms and how we can sustain and grow our businesses profitability. Is the priority to keep food cheap or to lower its carbon footprint and lower the cost of diet related health care? Are consumers our modern gods or is it time to wake up to the fact that we cannot sustain the ever increasing choice that we see on supermarket shelves? With the phenomenal growth in the world population, how can we efficiently produce protein, through milk and meat, without a damaging impact on our environment and, in particular, our already vastly depleted water resources?

These are tough questions which demand careful consideration and full debate. The British Cattle Breeders Club takes its responsibilities seriously. Come and join us at the superb facilities offered at the Telford Golf and Spa Hotel for this vibrant, informative and challenging Conference. We are proud of the history and traditions of the Club and feel that the role we play is of great importance to the well-being of the cattle breeding industry at large. I am deeply honoured and delighted to have been asked to Chair this prestigious Club and so let me tell you a little of what's new and what's in the programme for the Conference.

Look out for:

- **A free Workshop Monday afternoon**
- **Reception with a superb speaker on Monday evening to set the scene**
- **Joint Beef/Dairy session at the end of the first full day**
- **A slightly earlier start and finish on the last day**
- **An inaugural Inter-Collegiate Poster Competition**
- **A British Cattle Photo Competition**
- **Post-Club Dinner Question Time.**

The Committee has been outstanding in its dedication, original and creative thinking and support and I am extremely grateful to each member. We are a happy crew and I know that we will continue this good work with my "Right Hand Man" Lucy Andrews next year. But, of course, none of this would be possible without the enormous influence of our Secretary, Lesley Lewin. Thank you Lesley, the British Cattle Breeders Club has gone from strength to strength in your capable hands and I look forward to watching the growth of prestige in the livestock world continue in the future.

Don't wait, BOOK NOW! Come and join us at the Telford Golf and Spa Hotel from 25th to 27th January 2010 where we will look forward to welcoming you.

Rob Wills, Chairman

British Cattle Conference

Organised by the British
Cattle Breeders Club

A SUSTAINABLE BREEDING FUTURE

**Annual
Winter
Conference
25th – 27th
January 2010**

**Telford Golf and Spa Hotel,
Great Hay Drive, Sutton Heights,
Telford, Shropshire TF7 4DT**

President – Henry Lewis
Chairman – Rob Wills
Secretary – Lesley Lewin

MONDAY 25th JANUARY

- 13.30 **Meeting of the Pedigree Beef Societies Group** in the Coalbrookdale Room. More information from John Fleming on 01768 88775
- 15.30 Coffee in the Guest Lounge
- 16.00 **Research and Development Workshop**
Listen to what's up and coming from your own Development Board. Does this meet your needs? This is your chance to provide feedback direct to the decision makers.
Henry Lewis, BCBC President – Chairman's introduction.
- 16.10 **Speaker 1 – Sion Aron Jones**, Industry Development Manager, HCC, Aberystwyth, Wales.
- 16.25 **Speaker 2 – Dr Duncan Pullar**, Head of R&D, EBLEX, Stoneleigh, England.
- 16.40 **Speaker 3 – Andy McGowan**, Senior Manager, QMS, Edinburgh, Scotland.
- 16.55 **Speaker 4 – Dr David Garwes**, R&D Manager, DairyCo, Stoneleigh, England.
- 17.10 **Speaker 5 – Dr Mike Tempest**, Technical Director, LMC
- 17.25 Discussion
- 18.00 **EBLEX Wine & Cheese Reception**
- 18.45 **The Politics of Food – Who Really Cares?**
Ionwen Lewis is a farmer from Ceredigion in West Wales, who has her roots and boots in farming. Her rôles in the Welsh Assembly, the WFU and the NFU have brought her the ear of Government. She is passionate about farming and about Britain remaining a food producing country contributing to world food security. Ionwen will bring candour and humour to her tales of working with the powers that be and her regular visits to London's Smiths Square.
- 19.30 Dinner available from this time onwards.

TUESDAY 26TH JANUARY – Great Hay Suite

BEEF SESSION 1 – Chaired by Duncan Sinclair

SETTING THE SCENE

- 09.00 Chairman's welcome
- 09.10 **Are Burping Cows Warming the World?**
Dr Duncan Pullar, Head of R&D, EBLEX, Stoneleigh Park, Kenilworth, Warwickshire.
duncan.pullar@eblex.org.uk
Ruminants in general and beef cattle in particular are in the firing line when it comes to greenhouse gas emissions. Is this justified? What is their contribution to GHG production and what is the scope for reduction? The Environmental Road Map aims to describe the current situation, and recommend the route ahead. This is an issue that will affect all cattle farmers in the near future so we need to understand and own the issues.
- 09.40 **Animal Breeding in the Genomics Era – the Future Now!**
Dr Jerry Taylor, Professor and Wurdack Chair in Animal Genomics, University of Missouri, Columbia, USA.
taylorjerr@missouri.edu
Dr Taylor is an acknowledged world leader in the development of animal genomics. His team has developed high-density genotyping assays which predict genetic merit at birth with accuracies equivalent to progeny testing. These assays are revolutionising cattle breeding by decreasing generation intervals and increasing rates of genetic improvement. This is particularly true in traits which are not routinely measured such as disease resistance, feed efficiency and beef tenderness. This conference will be the first to hear the latest news, hot off the press, of recent research breakthroughs.
- 10.10 **Mass Selection and Molecular Markers to Improve Sustainability**
Mr Ian Hill, Director of Agropecuária Jacarezinho (Brazilian Farming Company), Valparaíso, São Paulo, Brasil
ian.agrojaczinho@grendene.com.br
This massive beef breeding program in Brazil involves 400,000 head of cattle. Ian's paper will address the main concerns regarding public demands and expectations. These include managing the environmental impact of the business to reduce its footprint by various means from general husbandry to selection with the use of molecular genetics.
- 10.40 **Coffee**

BEEF SESSION 2 – Chaired by Philip Hadley

BREEDING FOR MARKET REQUIREMENTS

- 11.15 **Understanding Market Signals**
Mr Steve McLean, Agriculture Manager, Marks & Spencer plc, London
steven.mclean@marks-and-spencer.com
Consumer demand and changing lifestyles necessitate continually evolving beef products which in turn require innovative product development, processing and procurement. Understanding consumer trends and changing market signals are important for retail sales and should play a part in informed breeding decisions to achieve market requirements.
- 11.40 **Beef Processors and the Challenge of 'Sustainability'**
Mr Stuart Roberts, Director, Anglo Beef Processors, Birmingham Business Park, Birmingham
This paper will explore how the processing sector is addressing the issue of a sustainable beef sector. The paper will focus on the dual challenges of declining livestock numbers and the environmental impacts of beef production as well as looking at current consumer trends and attitudes towards sustainability and meat.
- 12.05 **Genetics versus Management**
Mr Adam Quinney, Farmer, Reins Farm, Redditch, Worcestershire
adam.c.quinney@btinternet.com
Commercial beef farmers have to balance genetics, herd health, changing markets and day to day management. Adam's ASDA scholarship has explored the different ways USA and French farmers have approached these challenges. Both have found answers through co-operation with fellow farmers but with very different ideologies.
- 12.30 **Question Panel** – Session 1 and Session 2 speakers.
- 12.45 **Lunch**

BEEF SESSION 3 – Chaired by Philip Halhead

PUTTING MEAT ON THE BONES

- 14.15 **Designing Cows for the Farmer. Designing Beef for the Consumer**
Mr David Ismail, Fordel Angus, Fordel, Glenfarg, Perth, Scotland
david.ismail@macantar.com
David is focussed on breeding a sustainable future, from organics to bubbles. The growth of his business is through designing an animal that offers more opportunities to buyers, throughout the chain, within a changing environment (from Angus to Wagyu, from grass-fed to high oleic fatty acid). He will tell us about developing a future for his 500 cow pedigree Aberdeen Angus herd, extensively grazing 4500 rented acres, in the Perthshire hills.
- 14.40 **Healthy Beef Meat – Can Breeding Change Fatty Acid Profiles?**
Professor Rainer Roehe, Professor in Animal Breeding, SAC, Penicuik, Midlothian, Scotland
Rainer.Roehe@sac.ac.uk
For modern meat consumers and retailers, fat quality of meat with emphasis on unsaturated fatty acids is becoming one of the most important quality criteria. This paper reviews the potential health benefits of unsaturated fatty acids, recent developments of their prediction online in abattoirs, and their potential improvement in beef breeding.
- 15.05 **Putting Lean Meat on the Bones (and Plates)**
Mr John Tobe, Chairman and CEO, Laura's Lean Beef Company, Lexington, Kentucky, USA
jetllb@aol.com
Laura's Lean Beef is a company that started on a farm and has grown to where their beef is sold in 46 states through 6,500 retail grocery stores. This year, Laura's Lean Beef branded sales will exceed \$150 million. They offer their 1,000+ cattle producers a sustainable income future as well as a sustainable environmental model. The compounded annual growth rate for the past ten years is over 10% and last year, during a difficult economic time, growth in weight sold

and revenues over the prior year were up over 7%. The Company's retail sales growth and the cattle procurement model they have utilized to make it grow, will be the focus of this paper.

15.35 **Tea**

JOINT SESSION – Chaired by Mike Coffey CONTENTIOUS ISSUES FOR CATTLE BREEDERS

16.05 **Devolved Administration of bTB; Confusion or Consistency?**
Mr Carl Padgett BVMS, CertCHP, MRCVS, Farm Director, Artlebeck Orchard, Caton, Lancaster
padge-vet@kencomp.net

The advent and maturation of British devolved administrations has resulted in the development and application of different policies for the control of bovine TB in each country. However, they all base their decisions on the same science. Some reasons for this and their implications for trade in pedigree cattle will be outlined.

16.30 **To Show or not to Show – the future of livestock shows in the UK**

Speaker 1 – Mr Ray Jones FRAGS, Chief Executive, Royal Highland Centre, Ingliston, Midlothian, Scotland
rayj@rhass.org.uk

What is the future for the pedigree livestock breeders and shows? Is it sustainable or worthwhile? How does one compare one beast to another in looks, temperament, fitness and agility? What part does nutrition, hygiene and health play? Are livestock shows cost effective? Will the buyer come to you or sell over the 'net? What does the future hold??

16.40 **Speaker 2 – Mr Geoff Burgess**, Secretary, Royal Smithfield Club, Brierley House, Bath, Somerset
sally@royalsmithfieldclub.co.uk

With the increasing time and cost pressures on livestock producers, is there a future for the traditional livestock show? Is there any value for the exhibitor or the show visitor? Is there a future for livestock shows and if so what will they look like?

16.50 **Speaker 3 – Mr Nick Everington**, Chief Executive, RABDF, Dairy House, Stareton, Warwickshire
nickeverington@rabdf.co.uk

Showing animals at events will continue to place cattle breeders and event organisers under increasing pressure both financially and from the problems associated with increasing legislation on bio-security. This paper will look at the reasons why the RABDF is confident in the way forward for exhibitors, organisers and audience.

17.00 **Panel Questions**

17.20 **Rob Wills** – the Chairman sums up the day

EVENING EVENTS

19.00 **CDI Champagne Reception** in the Guest Lounge

19.30 **Club Annual Dinner** in the Great Hay Suite with beef kindly donated by Waitrose and Dovecote Park Ltd

21.15 **ANY QUESTIONS** in the Great Hay Suite

Chairman – Paul Westaway

PANEL

Professor Geoff Simm, SAC Academic Director

Elizabeth Buchanan, former Private Secretary to HRH The Prince of Wales, now advisor to Waitrose and organic livestock farmer.

John Beckett, dairy farmer, cheese maker, retired Chairman of Genus plc and founder of MBA Agri-Farm Scholarships.

WEDNESDAY 27TH JANUARY

DAIRY SESSION 1 – Chaired by Lucy Andrews USING GENOMICS IN THE BREEDING HERD

08.30 Chairman's Welcome

08.35 **Even Fairy Tales have a Message!**

Mr Gerard Scheepens, Co-ordination Director, K I Samen, Grashoek, The Netherlands
g.scheepens@ki-samen.nl

Like fairy tales Genomics are a lot of "make believe"! However, will there be a happy ending? Genomics are merely statistics! With a formula using more than 60,000 genomic markers

based on only 5000 bulls, a lot of statistical imagination is required! A different definition of traits makes all previous "super bulls" ordinary and vice versa. In other words, genomics are not a magic wand, but present a greater financial risk than Wall Street!

09.05 **Genomics: Veni Vidi Vici**

Mr Huub te Plate, Vice President International Marketing, Cooperative Resources International, Shawano, Wisconsin, USA

hteplate@crinet.com

January 2009 was a milestone in dairy cattle breeding. USDA proofs based on DNA testing were made available to the public. Today the majority of CRI semen sales in the US are from genomically proven bulls. As daughters of these bulls start milking they add information to the genomic pta's. These daughters are now confirming that bulls can be selected reliably based on genomics.

09.35 **Genomic Selection in Ireland – from Zero to Hero in One Year**
Dr Donagh Berry, Principal Research Officer, TEAGASC, Moorepark, Fermoy, County Cork, Ireland

donagh.berry@teagasc.ie

Ireland has implemented genomic selection for dairy cattle within 1 year of initiating the research. The road to this achievement was based on quick thinking, decisive action and a collective commitment to get on with it. Collaboration, both among industry representatives, farmers and scientists in Ireland as well as among international scientists was vital to its success. Numbers of genotypes were increased by swapping with other countries. Dr Berry will demonstrate the success of this project in Ireland.

10.05 **"What part does breeding play in the post quota era?"**

Presentation by the winning Agricultural College of the Poster Competition.

10.15 **Coffee**

DAIRY SESSION 2 – Chaired by Stuart Ward THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF BRITISH DAIRYING

10.50 **Gold Cup or Holy Grail? The Secret to Success in an ever Greener World**

Mr Geoff Spence, Herd Owner and Manager, Lowfields Farm, Fullicar, Northallerton, Yorkshire
miresdaleairy@btinternet.com

Winners of the 2009 RABDF/NMR Gold Cup, the Miresdale Pedigree Holstein herd has 370 milking cows and 430 head of youngstock on Geoff Spence's 84-hectare unit. His operation boasts exceptional stats across the board with; CI: 401, Yield: 10380kg at 3.90% BF and 3.10 prot, SCC: 168k, PLI: 21 with an outstanding 13% cull rate. Geoff's presentation will focus on how in the past, present and future his team's rigorous attention to detail, coupled with innovative ideas for environmental sustainability deliver a profitable, efficient and high welfare system that is truly deserving of this year's Gold Cup.

11.15 **"Dairy Beef has a Lower Carbon Footprint": Discuss!**

Mr Philip Halhead, MD, Norbreck Genetics Ltd, Norbreck Farm, Cockerham, Lancaster
info@norbreckgenetics.com

Genetic advancement within the British Blue breed has combined ease of calving with superior feed efficiency. However, current environmental and welfare concerns surrounding beef production have moved the goalposts. Mr Halhead will tell us why he thinks that the British Blue is ideally placed to produce high yields of saleable beef in the shortest possible time frame leaving a favourable footprint.

11.40 **We have developed the Cow; have we developed the Grass?**

Dr Jon Moorby, Dairy Cow Nutritionist, Institute of Biological, Environmental & Rural Sciences, Aberystwyth University, Aberystwyth, Ceredigion, Wales
jon.moorby@aber.ac.uk

Although traditional grass breeding targets such as yield and persistency remain important, other characteristics that help reduce the environmental footprint of dairy production are only just gaining recognition. Traits that improve the efficiency of