

Danish-Spanish Classifier Workshop

September 26-28, 2016, in Gijon, Spain

Participants:

Spain:

Carlos Mendez, AI ASCOL, and Nouredine Charfeddine for introduction on AI business, registration and BV calculation

Classifiers: Gabriel Blanco, Juan Manuel Fernandez and Santiago Mato.

Gabriel Blanco is for years a member of several working groups related internationally to type: ICAR type Harmonisation, WHFF Classifier Harmonisation (yet as chairman), EHRC Judging school and additional numerous other related Working groups

Denmark

Classifiers: Villy Nicolajsen, Jørgen Knudsen, Mogens Madsen, Jakob Edstrand, Torben Andersen, Søren Christensen and Carsten Dahl

Keld Christensen as the organizer

Stay at HOTEL ABBA PLAYA GIJÓN, 33203 Gijón, Espana

Danish classifiers had a wish and need for updating and experience from colleagues in other organisation. We had a wish to find good colleagues to introduce to this education and exchange of facts and changings in classification. CONAFE was so helpful in this education and exchange of ideas.



Due to half a day delay overnight in Barcelona programme was reorganized, but all items were covered.



DANISH-SPANISH CLASSIFIERS WORKSHOP

Gijón (Spain), 26-27-28 September 2016

PROGRAMME

25 September, Sunday

Arrival (IB 5882 – 23: 00 hours from Barcelona)

26 September, Monday

09:00 Practical Session: ASCOLAF-ASCOL A.I. Center
Spanish dairy map: CONAFE
Spanish type classification system: CARGEN
Danish type classification system
WHFF Type traits: Progress on type harmonization
Monitoring classifiers in Spain-Denmark
Organization of everyday work: Spain-Denmark

12:00- 13:00 Visit A.I. Center ASCOL

13:30 Lunch

15:30 Practical work on farm

18:00 Departure from farm

27 September, Tuesday

8:30 Departure from Hotel

9:00 Practical work on farm

13:30 Lunch

15:30 Farm visit

18:00 Departure from farm

28 September, Wednesday

8:30 Departure from Hotel

9:00 Review meeting

12:00 Farm visit

14:00 Lunch

15:00 Departure to Gijón

29 September, Thursday

5:45 Departure from Gijon to Airport

Details:

- Hotel in Gijón: Abba Playa Gijón Hotel.
Paseo Dr. Fleming, 37. 33203 Gijón. Phone: +34 985 000 000
- Gabriel Blanco: Phone: +34 649 913 216

ASCOL

We met at ASCOL AI (ASCOL = Asturias Control Lechero) and General Manager Carlos Mendez gave the information about general AI structure, milk recording and related organisations. Point of highly interest was selection criteria for selecting breeding material and information about the use of semen. It was quite obvious, that ASCOL AI is searching widely for sires with high BV but not at least high type BV, and many sires are tested in gTPI as well as in national BV, primarily also to serve different markets. 10 bulls were presented to us.

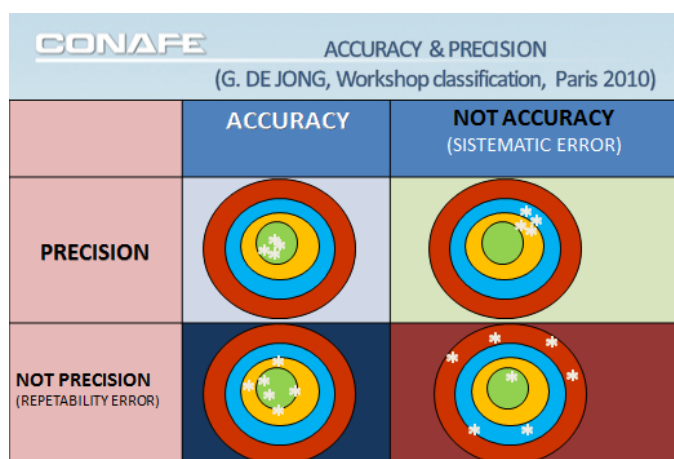


Cargen

Noureddine Charfeddine from CONAFE Breeding Evaluation gave an introduction to developments in monitoring in Spanish Type Classification.



Noureddine Charfeddine was well informed on NAV (Nordic Breeding Evaluation) calculation for type and had good comparisons between the two systems. His presentation was good and informative in short and easy understandable presentation.



Points from his introduction:

- 1988 first time calculated BV type
- 2007 first time electronically calculated General Characteristics (GC) in handheld computers, which made it easier and better for classifiers to present results to breeders.
- Cows scored 5 on mammary traits across will have a GC Mammary 78
- Low score e.g. fore udder attachment, udder depth will be punished more than high scores will benefit

- Classifiers can modify +/-2 but 70 % of cows has no modification, only the poorest and best
- Classifiers are checked and "examined" twice a year
- Standard deviation should be app. 1,5, - will be checked and discussed
- Accuracy between classifiers

Danish Classification



Villy Nicolajsen gave an overview on classifiers work in Denmark and some technical items were covered:

- 7 classifiers fulltime, - all dairy breed classifications. Most beef breed classification additional for two of the classifiers
- Herds/areas in a 5 month round to classify according to herd classification all 1. lact. Cows and in some herds additional later lact. cows. In some herds only high indexing animals for breeding program
- Visits can in bigger herds be distributed to more often visits to have adequate number of cows to classify per visit
- 4 days in the field visiting, first herd around 8,00 and last visit ends around 16,00. Transport from/to home
- One day a week normally office for other update and prepare next weeks
- Showed statistics that gives an overview how each classifier average each trait and how is the standard deviation.
- Presented the print-outs given to the breeder before leave farm and informed about these different information on the paper

Villy Nicolajsen explained the effort to spread more out classification score for different traits, where scale is not enough used. The calculation of accuracy and precision between classifier would be calculated soon according to the model from Gerben de Jong shown above.

Type Classification in Spain

Gabriel Blanco showed different power points on classification in Spain as well as some comparisons between countries, - calculated at latest WHFF Classifier Workshop in Argentina.



Tells about

- Distribution on cows in different areas of Spain
- Work distribution on classifiers



- Gabriel Blanco presented the Spanish classification system and how check on results were carried out and discussed between the 10 classifiers.
- Classifiers work more or less all over Spain, and they can not visit same area/farms within 3 years
- Visit farms in 10 month rounds is normal program for herd book members. Extra visits, e.g. each 6 month is upon extra cost
- Classifying locomotion is an important trait for Spanish classification

Villy Nicolajsen informed that Nordic classifiers in NAV area stop classifying locomotion from October 1. 2016. It is difficult and in Sweden/Finland there are more tied-up barns. And calculations show, that hoof trimmer data and calculation of hoof health index gives better information on cows welfare.

Fee for classification: In Spain dairy farms pay a fee including classification, registration and magazine and more. Milk recording is paid separately.



Update on correlations
conformation traits between
countries 2016

Gerben de Jong
March 2016



Finally Gabriel Blanco discussed some correlations presented at latest WHFF Workshop in Argentina 2016.

Trait	Average correlation		
	<0.80	0.80=< <=0.90	>= 0.90
stature			0.90
chest width	0.76		
body depth		0.80	
angularity	0.72		
rump angle			0.93
rump width		0.86	
rear leg set		0.82	
rear leg rearview	0.72		
foot angle	0.73		
fore udder	0.78		
rear udder height		0.80	
udder support	0.75		
udder depth			0.93
teat placement			0.91
teat length			0.94
rear teat placement			0.92
locomotion	0.65		
body condition		0.85	
overall conformation	0.70		
overall udder	0.77		
overall feet & legs	0.67		



The table above shows that some traits need improvement, but many countries are quite good and only some countries need to improve different traits strongly. Generally Angularity has too many variations between more countries, and definitions must be checked and followed. Locomotion is varying a lot, and the fact that some countries do not deliver data makes the correlations lower between countries.

Practical session

Two farms had each prepared a group of cows to classify individually and afterwards having a discussion on each cow.

This was a very good exercise and shows that generally Danish and Spanish classifiers look upon traits in almost same way:

- For a few traits the level between the two countries are slightly different, - but that was well known from earlier workshops and does not necessarily influence on the result
- Different scores on some body traits gave some discussion, probably mostly because of different type between our two countries: in many Spanish herds taller, wider and deeper cows are preferred more than in Danish herds. The level was a little different but variation OK close.
- Agreed on score of ligament – but low international correlation
- Rear udder height and width was properly discussed, - general agreed upon
- Udder texture – quality – is registered in Spain
- Locomotion was discussed and trained
- Results for General Characteristics (GC) were compared, and for Feet & Legs and Mammary mostly quite close and variations mostly easy to explain due to weight on different single traits. GC for Capacity and Dairyness were more different and could be discussed, - but the fact, that Danish (NAV) calculation on Frame (Body + Dairyness) does punish the taller, wider and deeper cow more than Spanish calculation gives most answers.

Both herds were very well prepared for the exercise in registration the scores in the handheld computers for the 7 Danish and 3 Spanish classifiers. A very good test and discussion in both herds

Herd visits general

On our last day we had a meeting making conclusions and visits in 3 herds, - a few comments on scores, but more to see the cows without the handheld computer. We saw extremely good cows, - e.g. several class winners and Champions from the National Show 2 days prior to our arrival.

We visited the Badiola Holsteins same time as a Canadian group, and when leaving the farm they expressed this was one of the best type herds in the world.

Classifiers on work



Conclusions

- Both countries are high on the WHFF published correlations
- We must always have WHFF definitions in mind to make the best result to compare
- There is a good line in most traits between Spanish and Danish classification
- Between Danish (NAV) and Spanish General Characteristics there is the closest agreement on F&L and MAM-traits.
- More difference on some Body and Dairy traits
 - Spanish classifiers spread more on scale
 - Stature in Spain does not give extra points when score 7 (151 cm) or higher. We do not want taller cows either, but show has a certain interest in Spain
 - Angularity has also to do with different types of feeding
 - Discussion on “round” cows in body, - will they be scored too high?
 - Chest width is an interesting trait in Spanish classification compared to Danish classification. Optimums differ some in Body traits between Danish and Spanish GC calculations. Question is if a cow can be too big, wide and deep in Spanish eyes, and Danish classifications punish such cows. It seems smaller and less dairy score lower in Danish system according to our examples.

Optimum Body/Frame and Dairy traits

Trait	NAV optimum	Spain optimum
Stature	148-150	7 (151)
Body depth	6	7
Chest width	5	7
Angularity	6-6,5	7
Topline (SP: Loin strength)	6,5-7	9
Rump width	5,5	7
Rump angle	5	5

- Good discussion about Angularity and good information about higher scores in Spanish classification. We can evaluate on that later in NAV
- Feet & legs: Denmark has Quality of hocks as a trait; - Spanish classification put much weight on locomotion. Locomotion is difficult to score in NAV-countries, and registrations will stop October 2016. Careful when registering in tied-up barns, but locomotion is important to evaluate, - examples easy to find where

Rear legs Rear view looks good, but when walking, this is something different than expected. When cows are free to walk we register locomotion and make final check on rump and setting of legs

- Spanish classifiers agree that Texture can be difficult. 1-3's and 7-9's easy to evaluate, middle difficult. Spain considers stop register Texture. Villy Nicolajsen mentioned few people ask for classification in Denmark, - not in question
- Defects were considered during the practical sessions
- Important : NAV-area has good IB correlations, but important all classifiers come close to definitions and use the scale
- Total score, in Spain hard to go 88 for 1, lact. cows, in NAV 89 is a max and can "easily" be made
- General Characteristics are more different due to different weights on traits

Trait	Spain now	Spain maybe change	Denmark (NAV)
Frame-Rump	20		30
Capacity		- 10	
Dairyness	15		
Feet & Legs	25	+ 0	30
Mammary	40		40

Gabriel Blanco informed: EHRC (Secretary Generale and Spanish Committee member) find such small workshops between countries important to improve quality. More countries should do the same and this might be proposed to more countries. It is important to follow WHFF definitions and decisions.

Participants expressed their motivation by participating in such small workshops, and they felt good, that they were present in discussions.

Thank you very much to CONAFE for this arrangement, - has been well organized and a very good experience to everybody. We met great hospitality all over, from CONAFE, the two herds, that accepted to tie-up cows for several hours for our exercise and the time herds spent on our visits in general.

On behalf of the Danish classifier team

Keld Christensen

Spanish-Danish Classifiers Workshop

From: Gabriel Blanco, Juan M. Fernandez, Santiago Mato, CONAFE

It was a pleasure to welcome to Spain all Danish classifiers and discuss with them in a very close relation, programs from a technical and practical point of view.

When we take part as classifiers in workshops, always analyse the technical and practical part of the meeting and discuss at the end of the journey, things that we should improve in order to have better quality data.

Technical part

- We should organize very well our day's work
- We should score linear traits in the best way possible: Not always easy (locomotion)
- We should score as many cows as possible but not too many: Too many and Good?
- We should applied same trait definition and scale within countries: Reference points
- We should be precise and accurate in ours everyday work
- We should end up the year with a good distribution of our data, good mean and a good standard deviation, high heritability traits, high correlation with other classifiers and countries, etc: Monitoring classifiers

Practical part

WHFF 18 approved standard traits:

- Stature, Chest W, Body D, Rump A and Rump W: Very high correlation. No problem
- Body Condition S: Very high correlation. No problem
- Angularity: Some problems when distribute numbers. The new WHFF definition (60/40) seems more clear and should help to have a better distribution of data
- Foot angle, Legs side view: High correlation. No problem
- Legs rear view: Some problems. Help the score when cows are walking

- Locomotion. Same definition and good correlation. Score if cows can walk freely
- Fore udder atch. Same definition, good correlation.
- Rear udder h. Some problems with reference point. Use WHFF reference point
- Udder d. High correlation. No problem (different reference point)
- Teat p, Teat l: High correlation. No problem

General Characteristics

There is a high correlation between Udder and Feet and Legs but Frame, Body and Dairy Structure is weight and see from a different selection criteria. We are now putting less emphasis on breeding too big young animals although we think that in order to have sufficient dairy strength in our breed we should not loose a lot of capacity.

Conclusion

I think it has been a very positive meeting for Spain and Denmark, all classifiers could talk and discuss cows in a more freely way , both countries have learned new things from each other, comparing theirs every day's work and of course putting attention on traits that need improvement.

Gabriel Blanco