



## **EUROPEAN HOLSTEIN AND RED HOLSTEIN CONFEDERATION**

### **Summary of the European Holstein Judges Workshop at the Ballymena Livestock Market, Northern Ireland, UK 19<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> November, 2022**

The working group was represented by Sofía Alday (Chair), Giuseppe Beltramino, Søren Christensen, Thomas Ender, Cord Hormann, Mark Nutsford, and Tamás Sebők.

Javier Alvarez (Spain), Marcel Egli (Switzerland) and Mark Nutsford (UK) were the Master Judges for Ranking and Reasons.

The following countries joined the program: United Kingdom – as host country, Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, The Netherlands, Poland, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland, all together 34 participants.



#### **Day 1– Dinner and Theoretical session**

The first day began with a theoretical session. This comprised of an introduction by Sofía Alday, regarding the format of the following day. Thomas Ender followed and gave an explanation of scoring using the Swiss Program that would be used to compute the results. The Working Group changed to the Swiss program because it takes into consideration the gaps between the cows in the class. Giuseppe Beltramino then spoke about the reason giving. This was followed by presentations from the Working Group on “The European True Type Cow” and “New research from ICAR on correlations between

traits and lifetime production, calving ease and survival". The session concluded by a welcome drink and buffet.

### **Day 2 - Practical session:**

The following day was a practical session, held at Ballymena Livestock Market.

The practical session was organized by Holstein UK, bringing forward a selection of cows and heifers for the stock judging competition. Each class contained six animals. The participants had been randomly assigned a cow class to give reasons.

The Working Group continued the policy of a yellow / red card at the Workshop. If a participant were found to be talking during a class, they would be given a yellow card and sent out of the ring for that group. A repeat offence would result in a red card and the participant would be disqualified from that class. Fortunately, the yellow / red cards were not needed at the Workshop.

The competition started with a class of maiden heifers. Here no reasons were given. After the participants judged the heifers the Master Judges gave their reasons for placing the class.

This was followed by two first calver classes, then lunch. After lunch was a second and third calver class and finally a mature cow class. Reasons were given for all four classes of cows.

At the end, there was a Championship class comprising of the winners from the four cow classes. All participants who scored 4 in reasons were given the opportunity to give their reasons again using the Championship cows



Following the Judging, the participants returned to the hotel for a Bushmills Whiskey tasting. In the evening there was a dinner in the hotel with entertainment. Hannah Williams of Holstein UK was presented with a certificate of thanks by Sofia Alday the Chair of the Judges Panel Working Group.

### **Day 3 - Theoretical session:**

The next morning started early with a theoretical session at the hotel. Sofia Alday summarized the previous day. 17 participants passed the workshop. The result sheets were later emailed to the participants.

5 participants will be added onto the European Judges Panel. These are:

- Andrea Uhrig (Germany)
- Marco Ladina (Italy)
- Pol Collell (Spain)
- Bruno Charriere (Switzerland)
- Hefyn Wilson (UK)

All participants who passed the workshop will be emailed a certificate. 5 Judges on the EHRC judging panel did not pass the workshop and have been taken off the list.

### **Farm Visit:**



The participants then went by coach to Damm Holsteins of Lisburn, County Down. The farm was very welcoming and had a great herd of cows. The farm was presented with a certificate of thank you by Sofia Alday.



### **Conclusion:**

The workshop was a success, the participants were asked to comment and give ideas for improvement. There were comments about the quality of the cows. Holstein UK had issues finding cows because of TB on one of the farms they had intended to source cows.

The participants were asked to give an overall ranking (1 to 9) for Workshop. The feedback was: 6.3 (based on 29 responses).