

**Summary of the European Harmonisation and Judging Workshop
Derboven Farm, Warpe, Germany
5th – 7th September, 2017**

The working group was represented by Egbert Feddersen (Chair), Gabriel Blanco, Søren Christensen, Markus Gerber, Guido Simon and Tamás Sebők.

Niels Erik Haahr (DK), Tamás Sebők (HU) and Mark Nutsford (UK) were the Master Judges for Ranking; Gabriel Blanco (SP) and Markus Gerber (CH) the Master Judges for Reasons.

The following countries joined the program: Germany – as host country, Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Ireland, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, The Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and United Kingdom, all together 42 participants.

Day 1 – Dinner and Theoretical session

The first day began with a welcome dinner, followed by an initial theoretical session. This comprised of a presentation by Egbert Feddersen, regarding the format of the following day and a talk by the German vet Dr Jörg Fritze-meier on the topic of Welfare at Shows. Dr Fritze-meier is the head of the veterinary office of the district Osnabrück. He is responsible for disease control, food hygiene and animal welfare. He was brought up on a farm and participates at shows. Dr Fritze-meier also belongs to the welfare group at the German Holstein Show. His presentation was followed by a lively discussion.

- a. Need to exhibit the cows in a friendly way which will help solve the problem of bad press reports
- b. Is a welfare group useful for a judge? Yes very important
- c. The presence of an animal welfare group at a show emphasises that EHRC want to resolve this problem
- d. Should there be more influence on movement of the cows? Should she walk faster? Bad legs will show regardless of the speed of movement. If cow moves straight the amount of milk is OK. If a cow cannot walk we need to send her out of ring to prevent issues with the press.
- e. Over filled udders are not good for a class at a show.
- f. Udders as hard as stone is NOT OK, if the rumen is so full she so cannot breath properly then this is also NOT OK
- g. Farmers show cows in able to market the cows, so the cows need to be at their very best. These cows will eat more and carry more milk, and therefore they will move slower.
- h. It was suggested that in future organisers should measure stress hormones for all cows at a show.

Day 2 - Practical session:

The following day was a practical session, held at the impressive family farm Derboven in Warpe, Germany. The farm has 500 cows with 500 followers, and 380 hectares of cultivated land. They have invested heavily in renewable energies and have a 270kw Photo Voltaic and 440kw Biogas Plant. The barn is 24/7 open for the public.

The farm average 11,700 kg milk, 3.95% fat and 3.37% protein with an average calving interval of 419 days. The family also have their own cheese factory where the produce 350,000kg of cheese each year. In the same building as the cheese factory is a café where the Working Group were provided lunch.

The practical session was organised by the German Livestock Association (BRS), under the guidance of Egbert Feddersen, who brought a selection of very good cows and heifers

for the stock judging competition. There were two rings active at the same time. The participants were assigned into one of two groups. Each class contained six animals. The participants had been randomly assigned a group to give reasons on.

The Working group introduced a yellow / red card policy at the Workshop. If a participant was 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.

First there were two harmonisation groups – maiden heifers and 1st lactating cows, the judging was discussed by the Master Judges and the participants.

The competition started with a maiden heifer and a heifer group, followed by two second calver groups and finally two mature cow groups. There was then a Championship class with the first and reserve from the last four classes (shown after lunch) put forward.

Following a tour of the farm the participants had afternoon coffee and cake. In the evening there was a dinner at a restaurant. At dinner the Derboven farm were presented with a commemorative plaque and a gift of wine by Egbert Feddersen.

Day 3 - Theoretical session:

The next morning started early with a theoretical session at the hotel.

Egbert Feddersen summarized the previous day on farm, and announced the participants who passed the workshop (25). He explained the reasoning where participants had not passed the workshop due to not reaching one of the criteria. Following this the spreadsheet containing the participants scores was distributed.

To qualify at this Judges Workshop, participants must have 75% correlation with the Master Judges and score 5 or more in reasons. Each participants lowest scored class would be discounted. After this selection the first 80% of the list have qualified.

There were nine new members of the Judges Panel at this workshop.

- a. Andrew Cope (UK)
- b. Jean-Phillippe Duchange (FR)
- c. Bert Groen (DK)
- d. Cord Hormann (DE)
- e. Victor Jackson (IR)
- f. Albert Kuiper (SW)
- g. Manfred Uhrig (DE)
- h. Danny Versteegen (NL)
- i. Gill Zeilon (SW)

Three Judges were taken off the Judges Panel:

- a. Brian Miller (UK) needed to qualify at the workshop
- b. Markus Mock (DE) should have attended
- c. Luis Mota (PO) needed to qualify at the workshop

Eight Judges on the Panel must attend next time and qualify to remain on the Judges Panel:

- a. David Boyd (IR)
- b. Paul Hannan (IR)
- c. Roger Frossard (SWI)
- d. Sandor Harsanyi (HU)
- e. Gerhard Junker (SEI)
- f. Zsolt Körösi (HU)

- g. Javier Alvarez Lastra (SP)
- h. Ken Proctor (UK)

All participants and observers were given a certificate of participation.

Then the group were taken to another farm visit. The Engelke Farm has 70-75 cows and 63 hectare of cultivated land. The farm average 10,404kg, 3.83% fat and 3.32% kg protein and 150,000 SCC. A thank you commemorative plaque and a gift of wine was presented by Egbert Feddersen.

Conclusion:

The workshop was a great success, the participants were asked to comment and give ideas for improvement. It seemed they were very satisfied that the organization, hospitality and efficiency of the German organisers was very good indeed.

The main comment received following the Workshop was that it would be fairer to evaluate a participant for reasons in two classes. This would help those participants who did not have English as a first language. However reason giving takes a significant time to complete. This topic will be discussed by the Working Group at their next meeting.

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