NEW WEBSITE CRV INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

This summer CRV IBD introduced her new website: www.crv4all-international.com. This website contains all the information about CRV, our breeding programs and of course all the bulls we offer all over the world. You can also find your local CRV distributor at this page. Until now the website is available in English, Spanish and Chinese. Russian will follow very soon! Check our website or follow CRV IBD on Facebook.

PREDICT THE FUTURE WITH A HAIR SAMPLE

Which heifer calf should we keep? Which bull is the best match for this maiden heifer? Which cow should we use for breeding? Genomic tests can help to answer these questions. With the customized breeding program FOM, dairy farmers will easily and quickly gain insight into the genetics of each individual animal. “With fewer and better young animals, I can improve the efficiency on my farm”, says dairy farmer Hans Romkema from Oldeboorn, the Netherlands.

A hair sample or ear biopsy is sufficient to show the genetic potential of each animal. The genomic test is not only a solution for selecting AI bulls, but dairy farmers may also use this technique to gain insight into the future performances of young calves once they are in milk. This allows you to select the right heifer calves that you want to keep. This saves you raising costs and results in an efficient, healthy herd giving you much job satisfaction.

The best heifer calves
About three years ago, dairy farmer Hans Romkema started to use genomic tests. Initially for the whole herd, and currently just for the heifer calves. “I am past the growth phase of my farm; I wanted to work more efficiently with healthier cows and more protein. The genomic tests show me the best animals.” The best cows supply the heifer calves for replacement within the farm and the dairy farmer also makes a selection of the heifer calves. By now he is calling his method ‘systematic breeding’. “80% of my cows are mated to a Belgian Blue beef bull”, Hans explains. “And 20% are made pregnant by sexed semen or an embryo from the Delta Satellite Program.”

Better matings
The genomic test also offers a tool for selecting better matings. The genomic breeding values are incorporated in the SAP mating program (the Dutch version of SireMatch), allowing a more reliable selection of a good bull, in Romkema’s experience, who adds that any hereditary defects are also tested in the genomic test, as well as natural polling. “But A2A2 shows up in the genomic test as well, which may offer opportunities for the future.” The genomic test increases the reliability from 30% for the parent average to about 60%, equal to the reliability of the breeding value of a third-calf cow. “Our heifers are clearly better”, says Hans, adding that his best calves already score about 270 NVI. “That is exactly what it is all about: improving overall herd quality.”

THIS AUTUMN: CUSTOMIZED BREEDING

From this autumn, CRV will offer the customized breeding program FOM, a clear program for optimal use of genomic tests on your farm. The program will be available in the Netherlands and Flanders, later on also in other countries. FOM is more than simply a genomic test: it is a total concept with genomic tests, a special HerdOptimizer application and support by your herd consultant.

Hans Romkema

“Genomic tests allow us to improve overall herd quality”

1. Take a hair sample or ear biopsy of a calf and send it.
2. The sample will be analyzed and you will receive the result within three weeks.
3. You can see the result in the special HerdOptimizer application, which also shows an overall picture of your herd.
4. Your herd consultant will discuss the next steps for your farm with you.
Winning the title ‘Best Herd of the Netherlands’ is no mean feat. Jan, Tiny, Laura and Frank Winter from Vriezenveen are milking a dairy herd to be proud of. Not only because of their conformation, but definitely also because of their economic performance. Bulls from the CRV breeding program are the genetic foundation for this.

Achieving high lifetime productions is the most important goal in the herd management of the Winter family. For eight consecutive years, culled cows from the farm had produced more than 50,000kg of milk, the percentage of involuntary culling is lower than 10 percent and no fewer than 24 cows from the herd achieved the milestone of 100,000kg of milk. “Most of these cows were sired by Dutch bulls”, says Laura Winter. “This proves to us that sustainability is guaranteed in the CRV breeding program.”

Highest breeding values, best performance

According to the dairy farmer from Vriezenveen, good genetics are – in addition to optimal nutrition and care – an important precondition for high lifetime productions. “We are breeding for kilograms of protein, legs, udder and health traits. We incorporate the Better Life Health and Better Life Efficiency breeding indexes as useful additional information”, she explains. For the owners of the ‘Best Herd of the Netherlands 2016’, the mating program SAP is an indispensable tool for optimizing their breeding and selection goal. They work with the genomic breeding values of their herd of 230 dairy cows and 170 young animals, which are available to them thanks to their participation in BreedingDataPlus.

“We can see that it works in practice. The animals with the highest scores for the Better Life breeding indexes perform best”, says Laura.

An analysis of the figures of the Winter’s Farm herd supports her claim. In the past years, fourteen culled cows scored an average of +4.9% Better Life Efficiency. On the other hand, there were 27 culled cows scoring -4.2%. The difference in lifetime production between the two groups was more than 6200kg of milk.

In addition, the 73 cows with the highest scores for Better Life Health were also found to have the best health figures in practice: 48% less subclinical mastitis, 63% less ketosis and 33 days shorter calving interval.

RESEARCH CONFIRMS VALUE OF UNIQUE CRV BREEDING INDEXES

“Cows that are easy to manage and get old without any problems”

The 25 percent best cows for Better Life Health achieved:
• 58,000 cells/milliliter lower somatic cell count
• 38 percent less subclinical mastitis
• 40 percent less digital dermatitis
• 45 percent less interdigital dermatitis
• 48 percent less ketosis
• 30 days shorter calving interval
• 62 percent less difficult births in heifers

“Cows that last long and easily produce much milk per kg of feed”

The 25 percent best cows for Better Life Efficiency achieved:
• 13,000kg of milk higher lifetime production
• 10 months more longevity
• 4.2kg of milk higher daily production
• 11-16 points higher lactation value (lactation 1-3)

(Source: study based on data of 61,000 cows by Eva Koole, Van Hall Larenstein, Leeuwarden, the Netherlands)
**DELTA BODYGUARD**  
(Bolt RF x Stellando RF)

Bodyguard is a son of Molkankaap Bolt (Boeckum x Spencer) and Delta Nadja. In the maternal line we find cow Apina Nadja. We know her as the dam of InSire Topbulls like Health, Hero and Norman (former #1 UK). The dam of Bodyguard is also the dam of the RedWhite bull Delta Norbert. Delta Nadja is working on an solid lactation in CRV’s test farm of the Peeters family in Geel. Belgium. The Bodyguard daughters will excel in udders and udder health. They will be productive with good components, making him another fine example of CRV’s philosophy, easy to manage and efficient.

**AMERICAN CARNIVAL**  
(Jester RF x Try RF)

American Carnival is a son of the Red-factor bull Jester. Jester is a Stellando son out of the full sister of Delta Atlantic and combines two of the best daughter proven Black&White CRV bulls. The dam of Carnival is a daughter of the red-factor, former InSire Topbull Try RF and the granddam was a daughter of another former InSire Topbull: Camion van de Papele. The Carnival daughters will be eye-catching with excellent udders and strong feet and legs. Besides his high type Carnival also transmits a good production with positive daughter fertility, less problems with udder health and less claw disorders. Making another fine example of CRV’s unique RedWhite breeding program.

**WALK**  
(Watt x Reumut)

The number one available Fleckvieh bull is Walk (Watt x Reumut, 147 gGZW). This InSire Top Bull from CRV is the absolute champion for production efficiency (+14%) and a real udder specialist (+24). On top of this great package he has fantastic scores for fitness traits (FIT 124) and Better Life Health +9% and longevity +19%. Thanks to this combination, daughters of Walk will be capable of very high lifetime productions and will be a pleasure to work with. They are nice and easy to manage cows.

**RIVAAL**  
(Rudolf x Matthijs)

With his high longevity (+411 days) Rivaal will appeal to every farmer, the pure MRU breeder as well as the farmer who wants to improve his cows with crossbreeding. Offering a very complete package: good production, excellent udder and claw health and also a good conformation. He scores high for udder (101) and feet and legs (80). At the last CRV Event in June we have seen excellent MRU cows, and Rivaal was the best! Moderate sized cows with good udders and good feet and legs. Farmers who are milking Rivaal daughters are very enthusiastic about the cows. They are nice and easy to manage cows.

**PEAK SOLAR**  
(Monterey x Supersire)

Solar is a son of Monterey MACricket x Rebuti and Supersire daughter No-Fia Shine-ET. Participants of the CRV USA tour four last October have had the possibility to see this fantastic Red&White cow at Budjon Farms. At this moment there are already 12 sons of No-Fia Shine tested over 2600 GTPI of which Solar is one of the most complete bulls. Solar is easy to use because he is besides all his qualities also suitable for maiden heifers. His daughters will be very productive and long lasting, but also very easy to manage as they are fertile, have very healthy udders and less ketosis. With Solar, CRV adds another fine example of what we represent easy to manage and efficient!
CHINESE FARMERS ARE ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT CRV

China is a country with great potential, especially in the field of dairy farming. Recently, some CRV colleagues visited this Asian country to provide trainings. Both parties are enthusiastic to work together. CRV’s Brazilian team visited the farm. In September, two members of the IBD team visited CRV Canada to join CRV agent Peter Schuurmans on the Outdoor Farm Show in Woodstock. In the days before the event some farms of CRV customers were visited and there was great offspring of many bulls from both the Dutch and North American breeding program to be seen. Daughters of Kodak, Fidelity and Atlantic were seen in production and many offspring of Grand, Rockey, Chevrolet and Regan looked promising as they are about to calf in this winter.

The demand for CRV product in Canada is increasing and the August proof run showed good results for CRV as well. With Hotline (Hotrod x Mogul) being at the #2 gLPI position and bulls like Bojangloks, Carrera and Marlow in the line-up we see an increasing demand for our bulls which are suited to breed cows that are profitable and easy to manage. A trend that does not go unnoticed in Quebec either, where the CRV distributor for that province was visited in the same week. Together with Mario Grimard of Holdstar Genetics great offspring from Hunter were seen in many barns in this French speaking province. Moreover, the enthusiasm of many breeders having great results with Hotline so far shows CRV is increasing its influence in the ‘True North’.

SIREMATCH NOW AVAILABLE FOR ALL GLOBAL BREEDS

SireMatch is already well known by our Business Units and Distributors worldwide to provide advices for the Holstein breed on the Dutch as well as US base. As of the August index run SireMatch can now also be used to provide breeding advice for CRV’s other global breeds. By implementing the same program also for the Fleckvieh, Grazing and Jersey breeds our sales representatives can use the same tool in a similar way for all global breeds. Customers using non-Holstein breeds can now also receive a comprehensive breeding plan including a bull advice on individual cow level. For CRV and its Distributors it is now key to achieve the same advantages as we see for Holstein, a higher semen market share and higher customer loyalty with the farmers using SireMatch.

TROUBLE-FREE FARMING

Health is also a focus point, according to the area manager of CRV. “Ketosis, mastitis and claw problems are mentioned very often. Therefore, we focused really on efficiency and health during the training. We explained that breeding is underestimated very often, but in particular it is a very good tool to take your herd to a higher level.” During the training Better Life Health and Better Life Efficiency were explained to the public. “These breeding values work very well in Chinese circumstances. When the size of the farms grow, like in China, the need for easy-to-manage cows is also increasing. Better Life Health and Better Life Efficiency are a very appropriate response to this need.”

The trainings were well appreciated by the Chinese farmers. They appreciated being informed about the excellent opportunities to reach their individual breeding goal. Bart is looking back on a successful trip: “That’s the strength of our company’s philosophy. Wherever we come in the world, almost every farmer can recognize himself in it.”
BREEDING BASED ON ROBOT BREEDING VALUES

Do you decide to build another parlor or do you decide to milk using an automatic milking system (AMS or robot)? Increasing numbers of dairy farmers are opting for the latter. Efficiency is key here: cows must visit the AMS of their own accord and heifers must quickly adapt to the robot. AMS efficiency breeding values are an effective tool in achieving your breeding goals. Robot breeding values have been available since April 2015. They utilize ‘data’ made available via milking robots. There are three breeding values:

– robot efficiency: how efficient is a cow for robotic milking?
– milking interval: what is the interval between two visits to the AMS?
– heifer habituation: how quickly does the heifer adapt to the AMS?

What are the benefits of robot traits?

Let us zoom into the three breeding values and see the benefits they offer dairy farmers.

Robot efficiency

“If I use an AMS, I want to know how efficiently my cows use it.”

Breeding based on robot efficiency makes a difference. The table shows just how significant this difference can be. In the example, we have assumed a farm with an average robot efficiency. The total available robot time is 20 hours a day. All the other factors in this example are the same. If you use bulls that rank 108 for robot efficiency, their daughters will produce 0.18kg of extra milk per minute. That is 216kg of additional milk per day, and almost 79,000kg of additional milk per robot per year. With an average production of 30kg of milk per cow per day, you can even milk seven extra cows with your current AMS.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Breeding value</th>
<th>92</th>
<th>96</th>
<th>100</th>
<th>104</th>
<th>108</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average daughter performance (kg milk/min)</td>
<td>1.44</td>
<td>1.53</td>
<td>1.62</td>
<td>1.71</td>
<td>1.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extra kg milk/minute</td>
<td>–0.18</td>
<td>–0.09</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extra kg milk per robot/day</td>
<td>–216</td>
<td>–108</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>216</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extra kg milk per robot/year</td>
<td>–78,889</td>
<td>–39,445</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>39,445</td>
<td>78,889</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extra cows per robot (at 30 kg milk/day)</td>
<td>–7.2</td>
<td>–3.6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>7.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With a breeding value of above 100, more than 50% of the descendants have reached the final milking interval in week 3 after calving. For bulls with a breeding value of 92 that figure is just 30%, while bulls with a breeding value of 108 show more than 60%.

Conclusion

These differences are considerable and show that using the AMS efficiency breeding values allows you to breed a herd that is well-suited to automatic milking systems.