

INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION IN ANIMAL BREEDING AS REACTION ON GLOBALIZATION

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Abstract

Looking on the international market for animal genetic we find a lot of companies, which are offering their products worldwide by own official representatives. Examples may be the North American organisations ABS or Semex or even CRV from the Netherlands. But also in pigs such enterprises like PIC are acting in many countries of the world. Therefore it seems to be necessary to have a closer view on the development of animal breeding companies in the last 20 years. Our breeding organisations were founded about 1900 and worked on a regional level up to 1970 or 1980. These regional acting organisations more and more worked together on a national level. Up to 1990 the breeding values were calculated on regional base in Germany with different models and programmes in different regions. For German Fleckvieh we had sire evaluation for the whole breed throughout Germany since 1995. For this reason the links between the different regions were not very tight, and the import of genetics from another region was limited to outstanding sires, which promised a good proof in the own region.

At the same time the Interbull centre in Uppsala in Sweden worked on the topic of comparing breeding values from different countries for other countries. In the first step they calculated equations for the conversion of the EBV from different countries. A few years later the MACE method was developed and gives us now a good impression whether a sire from New Zealand may be the right for our region or not. Nowadays a proof in one region is a good base for a worldwide sale of semen of this bull. Regarding this level of development an international strategy is possible and necessary in animal breeding and not only in marketing.

Key words: globalization, bulls, Fleckvieh, improvement, cows

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If we look on the communication development for the last 50 years we can see a major change. In the beginning, the letter was the main way of communication. Further we came over to the telephone about 1970. The first stages of internet gave us the chance to send such information which usually was transferred by a phone call, in written form.

Now in the global internet times the young people use the internet and the international information for all their private and official matters. Some changes took place as well in animal breeding.

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Some companies are acting worldwide with the product of one country. But I think the goal we have to achieve in animal breeding is a real co-operation of breeders, scientists and businessmen from different countries to establish a product for the different regions were the co-operation is working. I am personally working for this goal. I gave up my job as scientist in animal breeding to work on this development of an international co-operation in animal breeding, because working together is the best way to live together and avoid conflicts like wars. Further I like to point out the development of BVN in the last 20 years as an example and to show what may happen in 20 years.

In 1990 BVN was a great organisation in Germany, the biggest A.I.-station in Europe. But it worked nearly exclusively on a regional level. Of course there were meetings of the world federation or the European federation and some other countries bought some semen-doses from BVN, but that was on low level and not the focus of the firm. After the changes in Europe 1990 BVN was able to found co-operations with organisations in other countries. Since there was a big demand in Eastern Europe, many of the partners were in these countries. BVN tried to set up several co-operations and not all of them were successful. Still active from this period is the cooperation with Poland in Krasne and on a lower level with Slovakia. Such co-operation have the opportunity, that

the amount of money for the investment is not to high and for the partner, that he is still responsible for animal breeding in his region or nation. In 1997 we got in contact with the Romanian cattle breeders on the congress of the European federation, which was organised in Germany. This contact leads us to take over 80 % of the shares of Semtest Targu Mures in 1999. Since that time the Romanian Fleckvieh breeders who are working with Targu Mures are our members and we take care of them in the same way as of our German members. Beside the financial investment we worked a lot for the development of the A.I.-centre in Targu Mures. The visit in 1999 was a hard work. We had to develop the station up to the EU-level and we worked a lot in training the employees at Targu Mures and the farmers.

After the good development in Targu Mures we made a similar cooperation in Croatia in Varazdin. At the same time we formed the co-operation with the Upper Austrian A.I.-station in Hohenzell from a friendly cooperation to an official cooperation. In 2008 the Austrian regions of Tyrolia and Kaernten joined this co-operation.

Also in 2005 we started our efforts on the Chinese market. This was quite different, because we had to show the Chinese animal breeders the advantages of a dual purpose breed. They knew about Simmental as beef breed but nearly nothing about Fleckvieh in Europe as a breed for the production of milk and beef. Five years later the Chinese breeders are strongly interested to work with Fleckvieh, because it is necessary to increase the production of milk and beef for the demand of the people simultaneously. Additionally it shows the great success of Targu Mures and our association BVN, that Semtest BVN will get the permission to produce semen for the Chinese market. This example shows also the high intensity of cooperation within BVN and, that the great jobs are not only done in Germany.

Besides of already mentioned areas there is a great demand for Fleckvieh genetics in other parts of the world, even in parts where

we are not working up to now. Therefore it is important to have an international company, which is trading with our genetics worldwide. In our case that is Spermex. This company is located near Munich and offers semen of Fleckvieh and Brown Swiss from Germany throughout the world. They are specialist in international trading and together with the shareholders like BVN, Spermex informs customers about the properties of our genetics.

If we are working throughout the world, we have always to take into account genotype by environment interactions. It is important for the seller to think on this. A customer, who is satisfied with the product he got will come back and reorder. Otherwise he goes to another company. Since animal breeding and especially cattle breeding is based on long term this fact is very important. The females which result from a semen selling from our bulls will produce milk 4 or 5 years later. If they are good and

the farmer is satisfied with them he may be a good customer for a long time, otherwise he will not buy any semen from our company for his lifetime.

For this reason we always try to get information from the different countries where our semen is used to get results of the daughters. It is not always possible to get the same information as in Germany, but we must know if top- sires from Germany are also top in other countries or if others may be better. This goal is only to achieve in real co-operation, because it needs a lot of work in milk recording and so on to get these data. This is another reason to set up a system with a good cooperation. Basically, an international company should share the duties and share the profit. In that case the profit is not mainly based on financial profit but also on benefits for the people working on those subjects and a good standing of the firm in relation to our members and customers – the farmers.