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Breeding cattle for health, VikingGenetics' philosophy for more than 30 years

VikingGenetics is a pioneer when it comes to breeding for health to bring sustainable and profitable results to the dairy production. VikingGenetics is an Artificial Insemination (AI)-company that can achieve reliable genetic progress, since it has a unique registration system, which involves data from 1,000,000 cows in Denmark, Sweden and Finland.

The health of the dairy cattle has become more important, increasing its relevance with the pass of the years. The Nordic countries realized, already 30 years ago, that reproduction and health traits are of significant economic importance for an efficient dairy production.

The well-integrated and unique recording system within the Nordic countries enabled the adoption of the Nordic Total Merit (NTM); the index selection system that has proven to be effective in maintaining the functional efficiency of the cows while keeping a sharp increase in their production.

“Health traits have been a priority of VikingGenetics' breeding program since the late 80's. We can offer bulls that breed for healthy and productive cows, increasing efficiency in the herd. And we can do it with highly reliable data that support it”, Jan Andresen, Export Manager for Germany, states at Euro Tier 2016 in Hannover, Germany.

As bull selection nowadays takes place globally, a sustainable, reliable breeding program is then required to achieve the genetic improvements in the herd. VikingGenetics breeding program takes into account the milk recording system in Sweden, Denmark, and Finland, which is highly developed and includes 1,000,000 cows.

Besides, the NTM consists of traits such as “Mastitis resistance” index, which has extensive veterinarian registrations of clinical mastitis as the main source and “Hoof health” index, which is based on official reports from hoof trimmers that classify each individual hoof for eight different disorders.

“All this information gives us the guidelines for our healthy breeding program and detects the best sires in an entirely reliable manner”, Andresen added. Other unique health traits on NTM are “Other diseases” and “Youngstock survival”.

About VikingGenetics:

VikingGenetics is an AI-company built by farmers and for farmers. Today it's owned by around 25,000 dairy farmers from Denmark, Sweden and Finland. The company genomically tests 8,000 bull calves annually, to select 240 for progeny tests (VikingHolstein, VikingRed and VikingJersey). VikingGenetics has 165 employees in four countries and exports to 50 different nations.

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