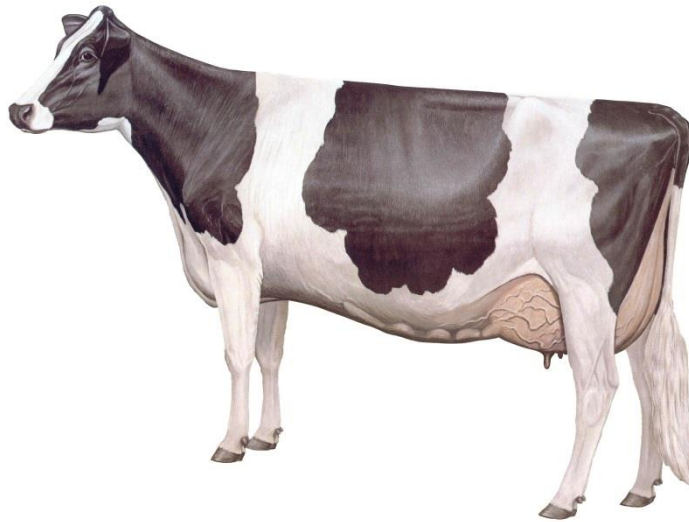




Traits Other than Production and Holstein Friesians



28 August 2018

Holstein Friesian Udder

From September HFNZ TOP inspectors will be starting to make their way around the country, inspecting both members' herds and herds for the NZ dairy industry. TOP (Traits Other Than Production) refers to the behaviour, temperament and physical attributes of a cow. It is a tool to consider when selecting bulls to put over the cows in your herd, and to help improve your overall profitability. Follow us on Facebook, or here on the HFNZ website, over the next few weeks to read about each trait, how they make up the ideal cow, and how the Holstein Friesian breed stands out over each of the TOP traits.

This week, the spotlight is on the udder. There are six udder traits scored in a TOP inspection: Udder Support, Front Udder, Rear Udder, Front Teats, Rear Teats and Udder Overall.

Holstein Friesian udders fare excellently in the TOP inspections. Maire FI Golddigger has an Udder Overall score of 1.22, while the average all-breed sire score sits at 0.34. Number two for Udder overall is Bothwell WT Maxima S2F with a score of 1.04 and number three is Greenwell SH Bomber S1F with a score of 1.02.

Holstein Friesian females also score higher than the all-breed average, across all six traits! This means that a Holstein Friesian udder is stronger, more supported and has better teat placement (easier milking). This all leads to a cow who will last longer in your herd.

7 September 2018

Holstein Friesian Legs

Traits other than Production (TOP) are scored on a linear scale from 1 to 9. The scaling differs for each trait depending on what is being scored. The TOP raw data is then sent out to the farmer for them to analyse their herd. For the TOP breeding values (BV) the raw data is collated by the NZAEL where within a herd, region and national comparisons are analysed and processed. NZAEL then feeds this information into the national herd database as a breeding value. In calculating the

breeding values the animal model uses information from relatives as well as from the animal's own records. The raw data is how the animal physically looks and the breeding value is the estimated genetic potential of the animal. A breeding value allows the comparison of one animal to the next. The breeding value is measured as a mean value. The average of all breeds is a 0.00 breeding value.

This week, the spotlight is on the legs.

The leg score describes the straightness or curvature of the rear legs when the animal is walking. The angulation of the leg is determined by an imaginary line between the thurls and mid-hoof when walking, with slightly curved being the most desirable. On the linear scale 1 is very straight and 9 is very sickle. A linear score of between 5 and 6 is desired, which is converted to a breeding value of close to 0.00. The top four Holstein Friesian bulls breeding values for legs all have a score of 0.00, and the average for Holstein Friesians is also 0.00. Out of these four leg bulls, Carsons FM Cairo S3F, a Fairmont Mint Edition son, has the highest BW at 210/98. If the legs are too straight it makes it harder for the animal to walk as there is not enough shock absorption within the joints and if the leg is too curved the animal will be walking on the heel. Good leg set can indicate less lameness and therefore better longevity in the herd.

All bull information has been taken from the DairyNZ RAS list.

11 September 2018

Holstein Friesian Rump

Traits other than production are scored on a linear scale from 1-9. There are two types of traits: One way and two way traits. A one way trait, such as rump width, goes from smallest to largest with largest being preferable.

With a two way trait, such as Rump angle, the ideal is around middle. Rump angle starts from 1, being very high pins, to 9 which indicates very sloping/low pins.

The rump is measured in two parts: rump angle and rump width. Rump angle describes the angle of a line between the centre of the hip and the top of the pin bone. A slightly sloping rump is desirable, with a linear score of between 4 and 6, which converts to a breeding value score of just above 0. Rump width is measured as the distance between the most posterior points of the pin bones relative to the size of the animal. The most desirable score is a 9 which would indicate a wide rump, as a breeding value this would be close to 1.00. The top Holstein Friesian bull breeding value for rump angle is Uptons VA Priceless S1F at 0.05, and the top bull for rump width is Mitlem KT Gunman S2F at 0.89. The average Holstein Friesian score for rump width is 0.30, considerably higher than the all-breeds average of 0.05. Rump is important for both mating and calving ease, as a wider rump means a wider pelvis, therefore easier calving. A wider rump also means a wider position for the legs to hook into.

All bull information has been taken from the DairyNZ RAS list.

17 September 2018

Holstein Friesian Capacity

Traits other than production are a great tool to use when choosing sires to put over your cows. By looking at your TOP results you will find the traits that you may want to improve on or protect against within your herd. Furthermore by looking at these traits on the RAS list or in a bull catalogue you can choose the sires which excel in these traits to help improve your herd. For instance, selecting for good teat placement to correct wide teats or strong udder support to ensure that udders last longer and therefore the animal lasts longer in your herd. Research conducted in 2012, in accordance with Holstein Friesian NZ, found that the value of an extra lactation was \$146.90 per cow per season, and \$56,703 per average NZ herd of 386 cows.

This week the spotlight is on Capacity:

Capacity describes a combination of the strength and depth of the chest and body as viewed from the side, rear and front in relation to the physical size of the animal. On the linear scale, a score of 1 would be very frail, while a score of 9 would be very capacious. The current top ranked Holstein Friesian Capacity bull on the RAS list is Maire IG Gauntlet-ET with a BV of 1.52, followed by Maire FI Golddigger at 1.01 and Jacques Boy Jaks S2F at 0.91. This trait is important as it gives the farmer an idea of the amount of food the animal is able to eat by the shape of the jaw and the amount of room the animal has for its heart, lungs and stomach.

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USEFUL WEBSITES

<https://www.dairynz.co.nz/animal/animal-evaluation/interpreting-the-info/breeding-values/>

http://www.licnz.com/top_traits_other_than_production_.cfm

<https://www.dairynz.co.nz/animal/animal-evaluation/ranking-of-active-sires-ras/>