

The Value of Reliability

What value do you put on "reliability"? When you see a new bull proof, how much time do you take to look at the reliability score and compare it? What does it actually mean, and how will it affect you? Why are "daughter numbers" so important and what should they be?

Here we have tried to simplify the figures and explain what they mean for better understanding.

Any reliability for sires published are expressed as a percentage, and rate the likelihood of the bull repeating in that particular area from what the proof says he does. So basically, it shows you how likely you are to receive the improvement. As sires receive more and more daughters into their proofs, the "promise" becomes more accurate, and therefore reliable. So what is the "value of reliability"?

Variation in true genetic value for production at different reliabilities

| Reliability (%) | Milk (kg) | Fat (kg) | Protein (kg) |
|-----------------|-----------|----------|--------------|
| 30 | +/- 556 | +/- 17 | +/- 15 |
| 50 | +/- 470 | +/- 515 | +/- 13 |
| 70 | +/- 364 | +/- 11 | +/- 10 |
| 90 | +/- 210 | +/- 7 | +/- 6 |
| 95 | +/- 149 | +/- 5 | +/- 4 |
| 99 | +/- 66 | +/- 2 | +/- 2 |

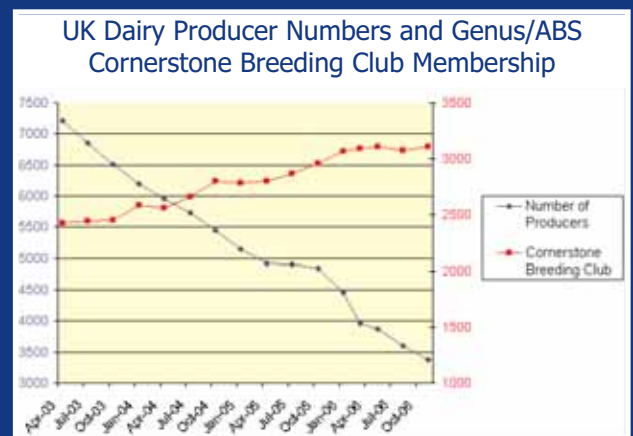
Source: MDC Breeding

All sires begin with an estimated proof, calculated entirely from his parentage, these are the figures you will see at the top of any of our Cornerstone Breeding Club pedigrees that you use. Our mission in the breeding programme is to find the sire stacks and cow families which demonstrate not only the attributes we need, but also look for the confidence that the family will deliver this. When daughters of the test sire begin calving, this "actual" data will be used alongside parental information and eventually replace it giving the true potential of the sire.

While reliability is important to us at Genus ABS, we are even more driven by daughter numbers and daughters in herds. This is the most accurate way of improving reliability, and is a figure that does not get

converted from one country to the next.

Alongside daughter numbers, herd numbers are equally as important, from reaching the 3,000 member mark, the Cornerstone Breeding Club is now hovering at 3,100 members. This is an impressive figure when we are well aware of the decline in herd numbers in the UK today and shows how committed UK farmers are to improving diverse genetics. That large number of herds ensures all our bulls are sampled over a wide variety of systems and improves the reliability of data you see. All our young sires that come through the Cornerstone Breeding Club are geared to achieve more than 100 daughters in 60 herds, regardless of whether the bull is sampled in Italy, Canada, Australia, USA or the UK. When our bulls receive this standard they are awarded RSG status 🍷 (Rock Solid Genetics) and you can feel confident that the bull has been sampled accurately and reliably.



As more dairy farmers join the Cornerstone Breeding Club, we have grown the capacity to test more British bulls under UK conditions.

The Holstein Breeding Club is not the only part which is growing, the Jersey Cornerstone Breeding Club is now up to 107 members and our Grassland Cornerstone membership has grown to 167 members.

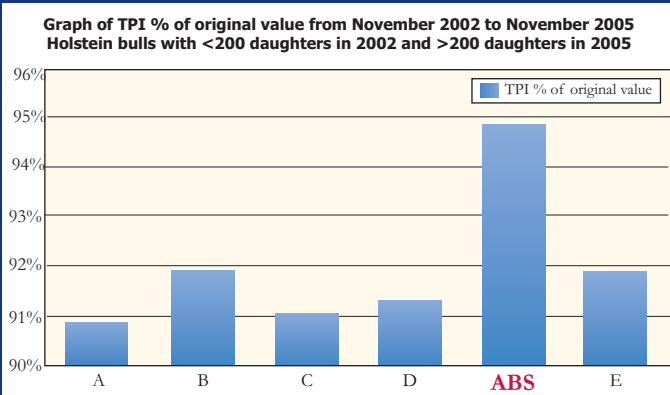
We are also testing young bulls on 119 farms in Northern Ireland and 97 in Southern Ireland.

As management traits are less heritable (environment has more impact on them) it is even more important to get high reliability scores to help you pick the bulls that will make a difference to your herd.

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We can demonstrate the value of reaching RSG in the USA by looking at Figure 1 below.

Figure 1. Stability of Proofs Among First and Second Crop Sires



Here you can clearly see that ABS sires sampled through Cornerstone herds are most likely to maintain their proofs over time.

As our Cornerstone Breeding Club bulls move from first to second crop in the UK we are seeing the same results. Below is a table of the UK Proofs for three consecutive years for MOET Lookout, which shows the reliability of our stud.

We place as much importance on this as the actual proof of the bull itself. Our bulls hold their proof over time, so you can feel confident that the semen you buy will produce you the daughters that you want.

Our promise to you is that we will do everything we can to achieve RSG status on every bull we sample through the Cornerstone Breeding Club. You can help us by ensuring that all details are accurately recorded with your milk recording organisation and Holstein Classifier.

MOET Lookout UK Proofs over time

| Proof Date | Dtrs | Herds | PLI | PIN | Milk | Fat | Fat% | Prot | Prot% | SSC | Lifespan | Type | Udder | Feet & Legs |
|------------|------|-------|-----|-----|------|-----|------|------|-------|-----|----------|------|-------|-------------|
| Aug 2004 | 122 | 88 | 65 | 58 | 769 | 16 | -0.2 | 25 | 0.0 | -9 | -0.1 | 1.20 | 1.84 | 2.13 |
| Aug 2005 | 141 | 92 | 75 | 63 | 716 | 17 | -0.1 | 25 | 0.0 | -13 | 0.2 | 1.50 | 1.89 | 2.40 |
| Aug 2006 | 1446 | 499 | 76 | 65 | 728 | 19 | -0.1 | 26 | 0.0 | -9 | 0.2 | 1.50 | 1.98 | 2.23 |



Sizerghfarm Lookout Vilma



Dunsby Lookout Clara 72 and
Dunsby Lookout Cynthia 37