National Association of Animal Breeders

NAAB POLICY – REQUESTING A BREED CODE

July 25, 2022

The National Association of Animal Breeders (NAAB) maintains a database of uniform breed codes to describe both dairy and beef breeds. The uniform breed codes are used to assist in the identification of the donor animals to allow traceability of semen units that are produced and distributed from semen production locations.

The breed code is embedded in the NAAB Uniform code which also identifies the Marketing and/or Stud location code and a code number identifying the donor bull with the NAAB member organization or marketing company. The breed code also provides an important element in the traceability of donor animals using the dairy and beef cross reference databases when utilized in the NAAB Uniform Code. For dairy, the breed code in the NAAB Uniform Code is actively used by data processing centers to link on farm performance data to the correct sire.

ICAR (International Committee for Animal Recording) provides the following guidance for the addition of new breed codes to a breed code database:[1]

> *Any party requesting that a breed is added to the list of codes should provide unequivocal evidence that:*
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> 1. *The breed does not belong to a breed already on the list.*
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> 2. *The breed is recognized as a separate breed, e.g. recognized by a breed society.*
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> 3. *There is significant international exchange of genetic material from the breed, e.g. by showing country of origin, number of doses (semen straws) produced in country of origin, number of doses (semen straws) exported. Breeds can be added to the code list, provided semen from bulls of the breed is exported in a significant number and to a significant number of countries.*
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>   *In 2004 "significant number" means that more than 10 000 doses have been exported in more than 3 countries. These figures may change according to the experience in processing such demands; then new rules will be published.*

NAAB will follow this guidance in evaluating requests for new breed codes to the NAAB database of uniform breed codes. Any party that is requesting a new breed code will need to provide the following information to NAAB to support their request:

1. The breed does not belong to a breed already on the list.

    a. The requesting party must provide literature supporting the application that the breed is unique and whose traits are passed uniformly to offspring over several generations. This literature should show a common usage of the requested breed from current breeders.
    b. The requested breed must not belong to an existing breed and have the purpose of a new breed code to distinguish the animals from the current breed population.
    c. The requested breed code must not be made to change the breed code of an existing breed.

2. The breed is recognized as a separate breed by an existing breed society, registry, or association and pedigree information is readily and publicly available.

    a. The requesting party must provide evidence of a breed registry, herd book, etc. that applies to the tracking of registered animals within that breed. The registered animals must be part of a unique breed registry and not part of a breed registry that has a current assigned breed code.
    b. The requesting party must provide evidence that the registration and services provided, such as the tracking of registered animals and the recording of pedigrees, are open to all and are publicly available to view.
    c. The requesting party must provide evidence that the breed is available to be kept and used to all interested breeders and is not licensed to a commercial entity

3. There is significant commercial exchange of genetic material from the breed if the request is for the purpose of exchange of semen or embryos.

    a. The requesting party must provide evidence that a significant number of semen units and/or embryos have been produced and commercially marketed domestically and/or internationally.

NAAB will evaluate the information provided by the requesting party and decide on whether to assign a breed code. If the application is successful, NAAB will work with the requesting party to assign a unique breed code based on the name of the breed and update any needed information on the NAAB database of uniform breed codes and NAAB website. The breed code for a particular livestock species shall not be duplicated. If the request for a breed code is not successful, NAAB will inform the requesting party that a new breed code will not be assigned, and donor animals will need to use a breed code already listed in the NAAB database of uniform breed codes.