

Updates to the beef sub-index



GREENBREED

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Decline in dairy-beef animals

Farming Independent 

Dairy sector needs to gear up fast for the end of live exports by producing better calves

 Agriland

Carcass weight and conformation need to be improved in dairy-beef calves

FARMERS JOURNAL

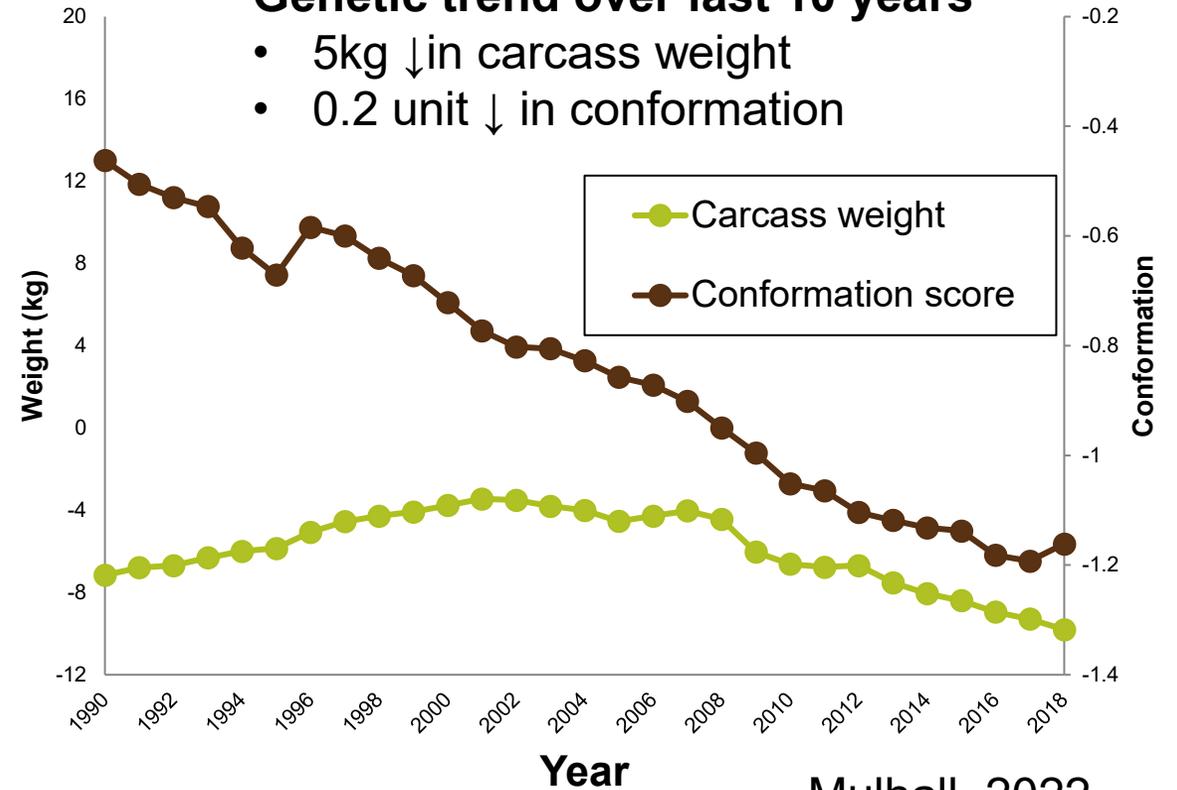
“Reducing the beef attributes in dairy cows has meant carcass weight has been very slow to improve

More animals falling out of carcass specs

	Cwt < 280	Fat < 2+	Fat > 4=	Conf < 0=	Age > 30 mo
Beefxdairy	29%	3%	5%	15%	8%
Dairyxdairy	18%	8%	2%	69%	23%

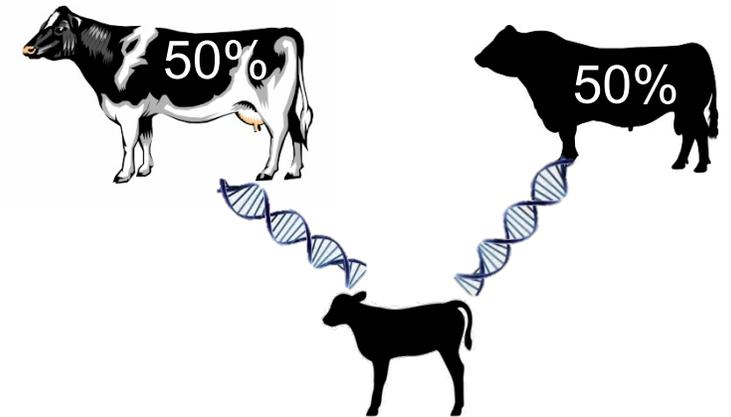
Genetic trend over last 10 years

- 5kg ↓ in carcass weight
- 0.2 unit ↓ in conformation



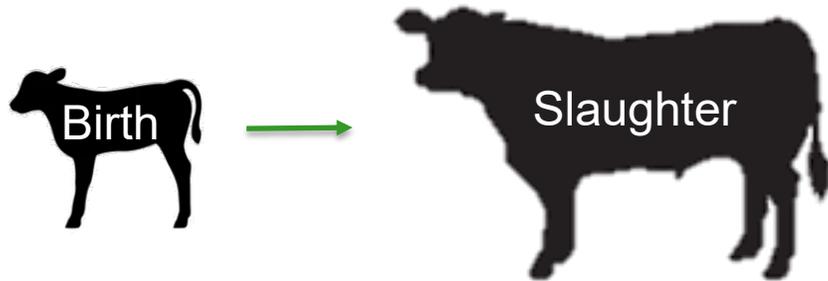
Need for beef sub-index in EBI

- 57% of the national kill is dairy origin
 - This is likely to increase further
- Is beef sub-index required in the sex semen era?
 - Beef bull only half the equation
 - Cow attributes to half the beef merit of calves

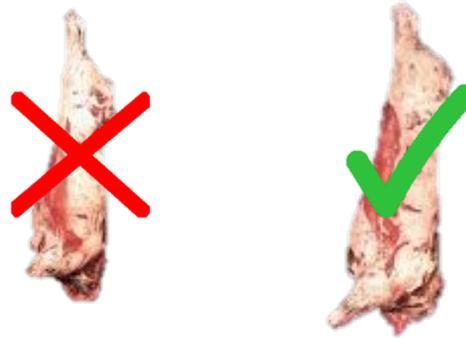


Changes made to the beef sub-index

Age at Slaughter



In-spec carcass



Economic values

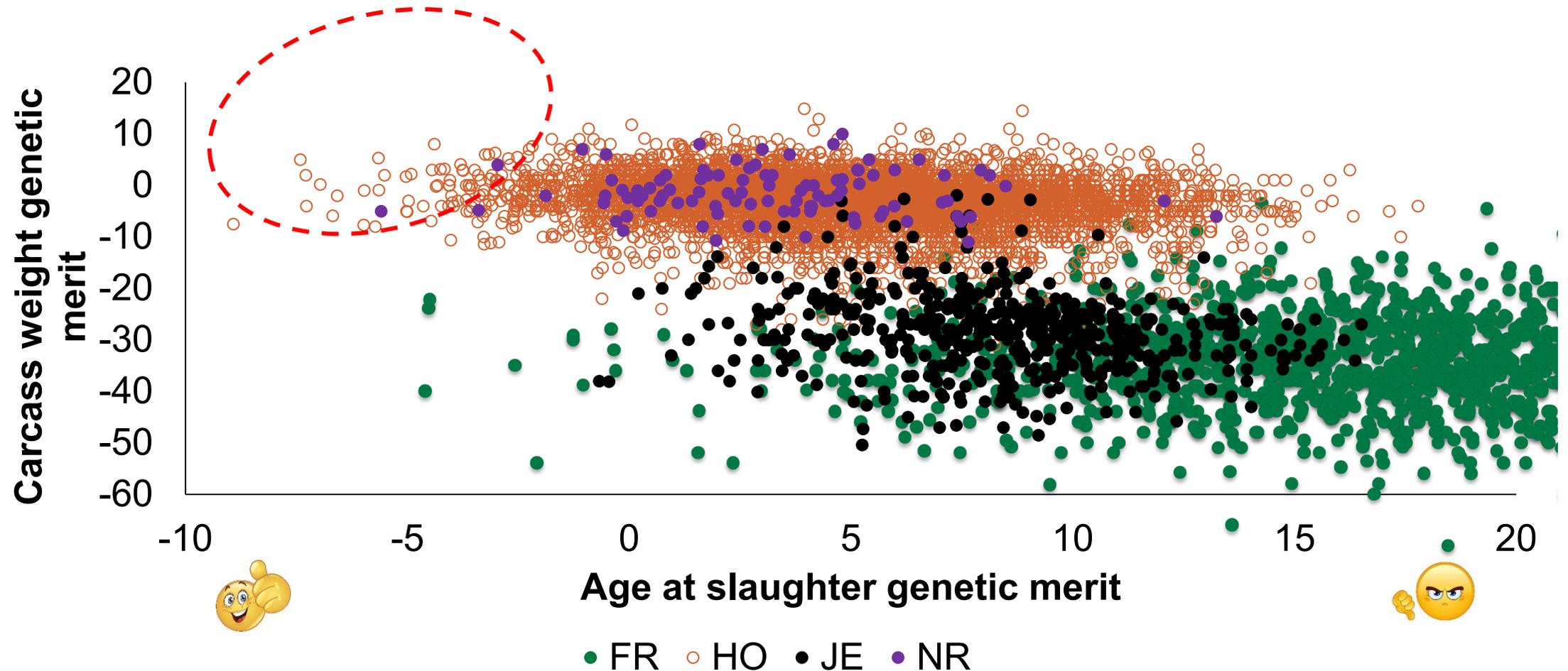


Age at slaughter

- National average = 28 months for steers
 - Majority slaughter between 18 to 32 months
- Environmental and economic benefit
 - Maintenance for an additional day, labour, facilities, capital, depreciation, vet etc.
- Breeding for younger age at slaughter is possible
 - Age at slaughter identifies easily fleshed animals
- First breeding objective in the world for cattle to include age at slaughter



How will it impact carcass weight?



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In-spec carcass traits

- Failing carcass specs issue in dairy-beef animals

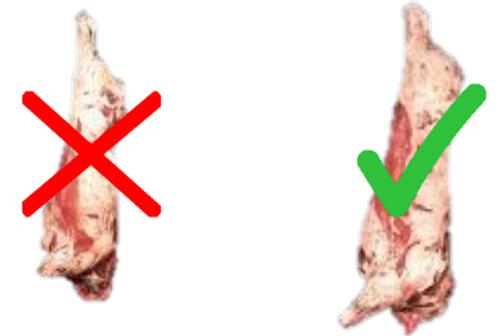
- Price penalties

- Very poor conformation (<O=)
- Over (>4=) or under fat (2+)
- Under (<280kg) and over carcass weight (>380kg)

	Cwt < 280	Fat < 2+	Fat > 4=	Conf < O=	Age > 30 mo
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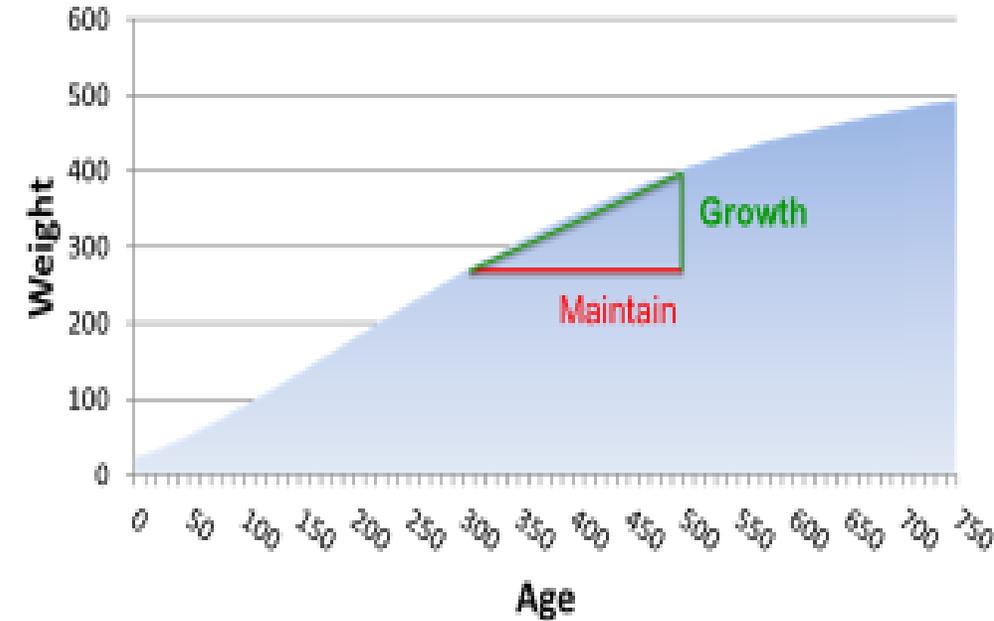
- Development of the in-spec traits

- Probability of animals being in-spec
- Higher in-spec trait = higher percentage of progeny reach carcass specs



Economic updates

- Last updated in 2013
- Steers €3.82/kg (O=) – average of Holsteins of last 5 years
 - Assumed a value of €4.50/kg (was only €2.90/kg)
- Cost of production also increase
 - Energy cost for growth and maintenance of the Kg gained
 - 0.55 c/kg → 0.73 c/kg liveweight @ 50% KO% (€2.58/kg of carcass weight)
- Age at slaughter
 - Cost 1.35/kg
- Conformation - €10.32 → €13.18 per unit
 - Based on value of meat cuts per unit increase



Validation of new beef sub index

	Old beef sub-index			New beef sub-index		
	Bottom 20%	Top 20%	Diff	Bottom 20%	Top 20%	Diff
Carcass weight	307	322	15	308	320	12
Weight spec (280 to 380)	72%	75%	3%	73%	76%	3%
Conformation spec ($\geq 0=$)	26%	37%	11%	25%	40%	15%
Fat spec ($\geq 2+$ and $\leq 4=$)	85%	85%	0 %	84%	87%	3%
Age at slaughter	771 d	768 d	-4	781	761	-20

- New beef sub-index
 - Larger divergence on age at slaughter, conformation and spec
 - More animals reaching specifications at a younger age

Summary

- Reflects economic costs and value of beef finishers
 - Age at slaughter new cost being accounted for
 - Penalises animals that fail carcass specifications
- Increased variation between dairy sires on beef sub index
 - €50 difference between the top and bottom 20%
 - Compared to €29 in previous beef sub-index
 - More severe impact on the extremely poor sires for beef
- Aligns with other beef indexes
 - Beef in the DBI and CBV will be same as the beef sub-index in the EBI

