

# What's ahead in this ABV release

## August 2022 ABV Release Update

### HIGHLIGHTS

- Sustainability Index
- Expanded genomic reference population
- Herd 23 date claimer
- Farmers can now view their bulls on DataVat

### Public release & official bull rankings

Just a reminder that there is no longer a pre-release week with public ABV releases. Bull rankings are not official until the following Monday. The key dates are:

- **Tuesday 9 August, 4 pm:** public ABV release (bull rankings won't be official until following Monday)
- **Thursday 11 Aug, 12 noon:** cut off for change of NASIS active status.
- **Monday 15 Aug, 1 pm:** official release of Good Bulls Guide, App (and bull rankings).

### Sustainability Index

DataGene is now publishing a Sustainability Index, for people who want to fast track breeding for reduced greenhouse gas emissions intensity.

Breeding with the Sustainability Index will achieve greater reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and increased production, but it will result in slower genetic gains for fertility, mastitis resistance and cell count compared to the choosing bulls from the Balanced Performance Index (BPI).

For those who convert DIF files into excel, you'll need to use an updated DIF extractor. [Click here to download.](#)

Learn more:

- [Fact Sheet](#) (for a quick read)
- [Tech Note](#) (for more detail)

### Expanded genomic reference population

Australian Breeding Values are more reliable than ever, thanks to the addition of more than 11,000 animals to the genomic reference population in recent weeks.

The Jersey reference population has grown by nearly 20% with more than 3000 extra genotypes. And the addition of more than 8000 Holsteins has lifted the breed's data pool by almost 14%.

This is the one of the biggest single data boosts the national reference population has ever recorded and is a result of "catch-up" following delays in tail hair collection and processing due to COVID-19 and weather events.

Adding animals into the reference population has improved reliability of breeding values for cows and bulls. For Holsteins, fertility has benefited the most with an average increase of 0.7% in reliability for bulls and 0.9% for cows. For Jerseys, overall type leads the improvements with an average reliability increase for bulls and cows around 2%.

While the individual proof movement for each trait is generally small, sometimes the cumulative trait movements has added up to a larger movement in an index like the BPI, which has led to some reranking of bulls.

### Updated Mastitis Resistance ABV

An adjustment has made to the way the Mastitis Resistance ABV is calculated, effective 26/7/22. After this once off change, animals will have a more consistent Mastitis Resistance ABV from one run to the next. For most animals, the change in Mastitis Resistance ABV was within 2 points, but a small number of animals changed by as much as 6 or 7 points in either direction.

The Mastitis Resistance ABV contributes to both Balanced Performance Index (BPI) and Health Weighted Index (HWI). For most animals, this change has minimal impact on their BPI and HWI values.

### Updated Good Bulls App

DataGene has updated the Good Bulls App to a new version (version 2.0.0), which will be released on 15 August. Go to the App Store (for Apple devices) or Play Store (for Android devices) to update the App. Here are instructions on how to update an app on [Apple](#) and [Android](#) devices.

## New edition of ABV Pocket Guide

DataGene has updated the ABV Pocket Guide to include the Sustainability Index. Printed copies will be distributed in the new few weeks. [View online](#).

## Transferring cow records between herds

DataGene has prepared some extension resources to encourage farmers to correctly transfer records when they buy cows from other herds. The resources include:

- [Fact Sheet: Transferring cows between herds](#)
- [Case study: Peter Fullerton, WVic](#)
- [Case Study: McGrath family, WVic](#)

## Linking herd bulls to farms on DataVat

Farmers can now view their bull's genomic results on DataVat. Genomic service providers can link bulls to herds by entering the herd's National ID into the bull record. This will also facilitate the transfer of bulls between herds as they are sold. A group of 8500 bulls have been matched to their herds to create a starting point that will be built on over time.

## Data Access and Standards Committee

Expressions of interest are invited for DataGene's new Data Access and Standards Committee. Positions are available for software providers (3), and people with dairy farming skills (2).

Expressions of interest close Friday 26 August 2022.

[More information and expression of interest form](#)

## Genetic Evaluation Standing Committee

Expressions of interest are invited for two people with dairy farming skills to join DataGene's Genetic Evaluation Standing Committee. Expressions of interest close Friday 26 August 2022. [More information and expression of interest form](#)

## Don't miss Herd 23

Herd 23 will be held on Wednesday 15th & Thursday 16th March 2023, at the All Seasons Resort, Bendigo. More details to come.



## Work in progress

The DataGene team is working on a number of projects which should be ready for implementation in the coming year.

They include:

- Updated genomic markers (73k chip).
- Updated model for Semen Fertility Values.
- Separate bases for red breeds, allowing for within herd ranking of crossbreds.
- Haplotype detection with Australian genotypes.

## World Congress

DataGene and DairyBio recently took to the world stage, presenting our latest work at the World Congress on Genetics Applied to Livestock Production (GCGALP). Watch [Professor Jennie Pryce's cool video](#) presentation to the Congress.

## DairyBio research

Take a sneak peak of what DataGene could be delivering in the future by watching a video of [highlights from DairyBio's current research](#).

## Calf Vitality research update

La Trobe University PhD student, Michelle Axford is working with dairy farmers to develop a breeding value for calf vitality. More than 50 dairy farmers are reporting on the vitality of their new-born calves (including stillborn) and sending through samples for genotyping.

While thousands of calves have now been sampled and recorded, she is still striving for more and will continue to collect samples and data through the Spring 2022 calving season. The additional data will add strength to the analysis - especially when it comes to the stillborn and dead calf analysis. [Click here to send an email for more information](#).

## Access data at DataVat

DataGene no longer publishes data reports on DataGene.com.au. All data reports are now available through DataVat.

## Acknowledgement

DataGene is an initiative of Dairy Australia and the herd improvement industry. DairyBio provides the research pipeline to develop and maintain Australian Breeding Values.

## More information

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