

What's ahead in this ABV release

April 2025 ABV Release Update

HIGHLIGHTS

- More genetic conditions reported
- National Breeding Objective review
- Herd '25 recordings available online
- 2024 Herd Improvement Report

Note animal rankings are not official until 1 pm Monday 7 April

Genetic conditions

DataGene is now publishing genetic conditions (genetic defects and characteristics) for cows and has expanded the number of genetic conditions and haplotypes reported through DataVat, the Good Bulls app, and spreadsheets (NASIS all). A new, separate Excel report for genetic conditions and haplotypes can be downloaded from DataVat (when logged in) under the ABV list menu. (*_GeneticCodes_Haplotypes.xlsx)

More details are available in [Tech Note: Genetic Conditions](#).

National Breeding Objective review

The initial consultation and analysis phases of the NBO review are now complete. Over the next few months, DataGene will be discussing the review recommendations with stakeholders. In summary, the key recommendations are:

1. All indices and all breeds
To reflect changes in the market, update pricing for milk components and input costs. Specifically, this means
 - Changing the protein:fat ratio from 2:1 to close to 1:1.
 - Shifting to using forecasted milk prices.
 - Updating feed and management costs.
2. Health Weighted Index
Enhance to better reflect the needs of seasonal herds with pasture-based systems by adding calving ease and gestation length.
3. The base (the average animal for breeding values)
Update in line with international best practice (Interbull).
4. Potential new breeding indices
Further investigate the value to industry of an index specifically for hotter regions and one for total mixed ration (TMR) operations.

5. Communication

Consider activities to improve industry understanding of the Feed Saved ABV and breeding strategies to increase teat length and improve rear teat placement.

Next steps: DataGene is currently discussing recommendations with industry stakeholders and is on schedule for implementation of recommendations 1-5 in the December 2025 public ABV release.

Read more:

[Fact Sheet: NBO recommendations \(a quick read\)](#)
[Updating the base tech note \(with technical detail\)](#)

Correction to Type ABVs

There has been a correction to Type ABVs for all breeds except Jersey. This correction has resulted in changes in Type ABVs for some bulls. The most noticeable impact is on a group of young bulls with low daughter numbers that have daughters classified in the past few years. However, older bulls are also impacted due to the changes in contemporary groups. Some females are affected. Jerseys are not affected because type evaluation for the breed uses a different model without type composites.

These changes occur from the ABV run of 19 March 2025 onwards. This correction is a one-off change, and future Type ABVs are a better reflection of genetic merit.

The correction is the result of an investigation following feedback from some bull owners that the Type ABVs for some young bulls seemed to be unexpectedly high. The investigation identified a small error in data extraction dating back to April 2020 and the implementation of composite type traits. This data extraction error meant that classifier and date of classification were not used correctly in the model.

We have now fixed and tested this correction.

Herd '25 recordings

More than 150 herd improvement enthusiasts attended Herd '25 at Bendigo in March. If you couldn't attend, the recordings are now available online. [Watch the recordings](#)

Herd Improvement Report

Read the latest trends in dairy genetics and herd improvement in DataGene's 2024 Herd Improvement Report. [Read the report](#)

Connecting data pipelines

Dairy businesses with GEA and DeLaval on farm software are invited to join the [DataConnect](#) project which will link their data with DataGene's Central Data Repository.

Connected businesses can access more accurate meaningful herd and animal reports on DataVat. Some data will also be used in the industry's genetic evaluation system, so the connection will contribute to more accurate (and potentially new) Australian Breeding Values and indices. For more information contact Peter Thurn or complete the [expression of interest form](#)

Genetic Progress Reports

Just a reminder that Genetic Progress Reports are updated after every public ABV release. They are published on DataVat and available for herds that herd test or genotype their animals.

2025 ABV Release Schedule

	Release	Bull rankings
April 2025	Tue 1	Mon 7
August 2025	Tue 12	Mon 18
December 2025	Tue 2	Mon 8
Full details: 2025 release schedule		

Recent journal articles

Axford, M.M. et al. (2025) Genetic variation in novel calf traits using a farmer-centred, co-design approach to data collection. [Journal of Dairy Science](#)

Scott, B.A et al (2025) Optimizing genetic diversity in Australian Holsteins and Jerseys: A comparative analysis of whole-genome and regional inbreeding depression effects, [Journal of Dairy Science, Volume 108, Issue 3, pages 2658-2668](#)

More information

Peter Thurn
Stakeholder Relations Specialist, DataGene
Ph: 0417 575 986 E: pthurn@datagene.com.au

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