

# Evolution of attitudes towards estimated breeding values in Flemish pig farmers

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# Flemish pig farms

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Have no own sires

Buy sperm in an artificial insemination center (AI)

Many private AI-centers are available and contracts are not common

Belgian Pietrain is leading sire

# Estimated Breeding Value (EBV)

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Estimation of genetic capacities

Belgian Pietrain Sires

- Daily gain
- Feed conversion ratio
- Carcass Quality



# Aim

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The research is part of a project about G×E-interactions in Belgian Pietrain sires in commercial conditions

In this study we want to discover an evolution in attitude towards EBV's during a running experiment on their own farm



# Hypothesis

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The use of EBV by pig farmers will increase when we show the effect of it on their own farm

# Material and methods

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8 farmers started the experiment

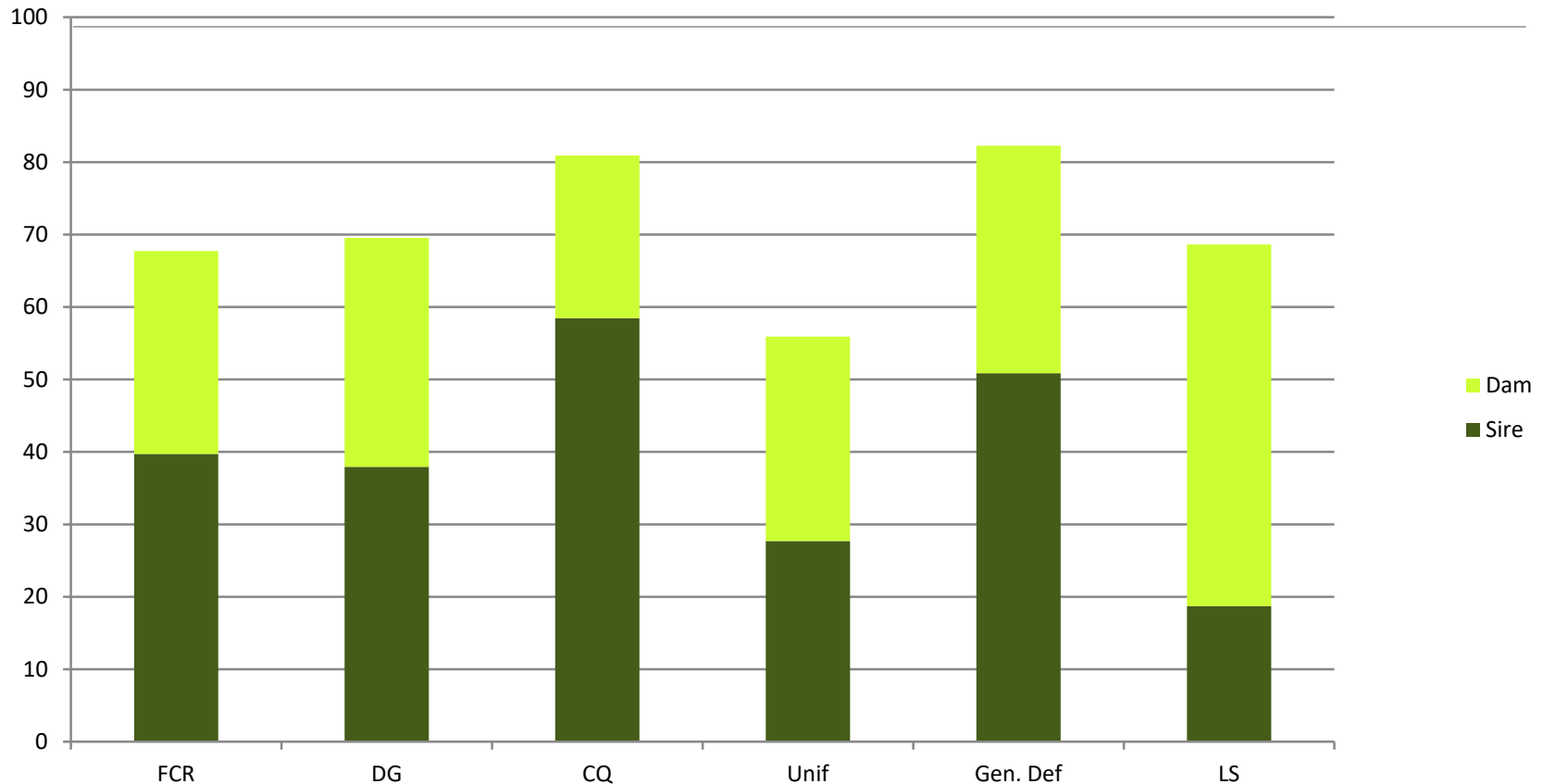
4 in-depth interviews were taken at different moments in production cycle

- Before start of the experiment
- After birth of the first piglets
- Before slaughter of the first pigs
- After feedback of slaughter results of all the pigs

4 repeated open questions to avoid external influence

6 or 7 sires with excellent EBV were used on all the farms

# In your opinion, how much influence do sire and dam genetics have on progeny performances?



(FCR: Feed conversion Ratio, DG: Daily Gain, CQ: Carcass Quality, Unif: Uniformity, Gen. Def: Genetic defects, LS: Litter Size)

# What is your familiarity/opinion about EBV?

	Before exp.	Birth first piglets	Before first slaughter	After exp.
<b>Farmer 1</b>	Unknown	Useful	Useful	Reliable and Useful
<b>Farmer 2</b>	Known	Unreliable	Unreliable	Markedly Reliable
<b>Farmer 3</b>	Known	Unreliable	Unreliable	Reliable
<b>Farmer 4</b>	Unknown	Unuseful	Unuseful	Important
<b>Farmer 5</b>	Known	Important	Important	Important
<b>Farmer 6</b>	Known	Reliable	Reliable	Markedly Reliable
<b>Farmer 7</b>	Known	Not interesting	Not interesting	Markedly Reliable
<b>Farmer 8</b>	Useful but Unreliable	Useful but Unreliable		



# What is your familiarity/opinion about EBV?

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<b>Farmer 3</b>	Known	Unreliable	Unreliable	<b>Reliable</b>
<b>Farmer 4</b>	Unknown	Unuseful	Unuseful	<b>Important</b>
<b>Farmer 5</b>	Known	<b>Important</b>	<b>Important</b>	<b>Important</b>
<b>Farmer 6</b>	Known	<b>Reliable</b>	<b>Reliable</b>	<b>Markedly Reliable</b>
<b>Farmer 7</b>	Known	Not interesting	Not interesting	<b>Markedly Reliable</b>
<b>Farmer 8</b>	Useful but Unreliable	Useful but Unreliable		

# How do you choose your terminal sire?

	Before exp.	Birth first piglets	Before first slaughter	After exp.
<b>Farmer 1</b>	External advice, visual info	External advice, visual info	External advice, visual info	EBV
<b>Farmer 2</b>	Own sire and Choice made by AI	Own sire and Choice made by AI	Own sire and Choice made by AI	EBV, relatives and own tests
<b>Farmer 3</b>	Choice made by AI	Choice made by AI	Choice made by AI	EBV, relatives
<b>Farmer 4</b>	Choice made by different AI's	Choice made by different AI's	Choice made by different AI's	More different AI's with higher attention
<b>Farmer 5</b>	External advice and choice made by AI	EBV	EBV	EBV
<b>Farmer 6</b>	Choice made by AI	Choice made by AI	Choice made by AI	EBV, relatives
<b>Farmer 7</b>	Visual info and Choice made by AI	Visual info and Choice made by AI	Choice made by AI and own tests	Choice made by AI and own tests
<b>Farmer 8</b>	EBV and relatives	EBV, relatives		

AI = Artificial insemination center

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<b>Farmer 3</b>	Choice made by AI	Choice made by AI	Choice made by AI	<b>EBV, relatives</b>
<b>Farmer 4</b>	Choice made by different AI's	Choice made by different AI's	Choice made by different AI's	More different AI's with higher attention
<b>Farmer 5</b>	External advice and choice made by AI	<b>EBV</b>	<b>EBV</b>	<b>EBV</b>
<b>Farmer 6</b>	Choice made by AI	Choice made by AI	Choice made by AI	<b>EBV, relatives</b>
<b>Farmer 7</b>	Visual info and Choice made by AI	Visual info and Choice made by AI	<b>Choice made by AI and own tests</b>	<b>Choice made by AI and own tests</b>
<b>Farmer 8</b>	EBV and relatives	EBV, relatives		

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# Evolution to EBV use

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Two farmers not yet making their sire selection based on EBV's but

- Farmer 7 based his selection on own farm tests
- Farmer 4 said he was going to start with EBV's, for now he already compared his different AI's

# Extra information from EBV?

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Question: Which extra information do you want of the EBV?

- When farmers believe EBV they asked for more information about other traits
  - Genetic defects,
  - Uniformity,
  - Vitality

# Conclusion

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Farmers give a lot of attention to genetics

→ Still limited use of EBV

Lack of belief in reliability of EBV

→ Disappears when they effectively see it

When they believe in EBV's

→ Extra information is wanted

7 farmers is a small sample

## Questions?

- Partners:
  - Livestock Genetics, KU Leuven
  - ILVO – Animal Sciences & Social Sciences Unit
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