

In order to bring the reality of young calves now being born in line with the level of recent cows, the five-year base change has been made during this routine run (December 2020) for all traits evaluated in the Walloon region of Belgium.

The genetic base is now calculated on the population of Walloon cows with records born in 2015 for the 2020HC base and for the population of Walloon Dual-purpose Belgian Blue cows with records born in 2015 for the 2020BC base. A specific base is in progress for the Eastern Belgian Red and White animals.

In addition, and this is the reason for the change late in the year, the dairy economic index (V€L) and the functional economic index (V€F) have been adapted in relation to the perspectives of the evolution of the milk market as well as the considerations and observations made by the actors in the field and according to the observed improvement. Further details concerning these adaptations are already available on the ELINFO website (<http://www.elinfo.be>) and will be detailed in Wallonie Elevages of January 2021.

In order to allow concerned breeders to appreciate changes in bulls indexes (base change and adaptations of V€L and V€F), following are the expected differences between new (2020HC) and old base (2015HC), it is then necessary to remove these values from the values on the old base:

Milk (kg)	72 kg
Fat (kg)	4 kg
Protein (kg)	3 kg
Udder health(SD 10)	1,8
Longevity (SD 10)	5,4
Female fertility (SD 10)	4,4
Direct calving ease (SD 10)	2,6
Maternal calving ease (SD 10)	1,5
V€L (in euros)	15 €
V€F (in euros)	36 €
V€C (in euros)	1 €
V€M (in euros)	4 €
V€P (in euros)	20 €
V€G (in euros)	78 €

Thus, for example, for a bull that had a €400 V€G value in August 2020 (at the last publication of the Walloon indexes), it is expected that the average current value (in December 2020) for the V€G of this same bull will be €322. The base change has no consequences in terms of animal ranking since it is applied to all animals. However, the adaptation of the V€L and V€F, does involve some changes in the ranking of the bulls but in a quite limited way (rank correlation of approximately 0.95). Cow ranking is influenced even less by the adaptation of these economic indexes!