Breeding Cattle from AUSTRIA
ZAR -

Federation of Austrian Cattle Breeders

Due to Austria’s outstanding production conditions, cattle farming here has had a long history and tradition. Our diverse and rich environment and up-to-date breeding programs (GESUNDheitsmonitoring.RIND) have created robust, healthy and high-yielding cattle breeds for different production and management systems. Austria’s primary cattle breeds are: Fleckvieh/Simmental, Brown Swiss, Holstein Friesian, Pinzgauer, Grauviel Cattle as well as various special breeds for beef production and other special purposes. Cattle farming still holds the most important position within the agricultural economy of Austria. The umbrella organisation for cattle breeding in Austria is ZAR (Federation of Austrian Cattle Breeders).

Main tasks of ZAR:
• Quality and performance control
• Processing performance data
• Genetic evaluation (jointly with ZuchtData)
• Representation of cattle-breeding interests and related interests in this agricultural sector
• Coordination of research activities in cattle farming
• Comment and evaluation of proposed legislation at the federal, national and EC level (animal welfare, animal health services, and relevant agro-political decisions)

Intensive contacts with similar organizations worldwide and memberships within the European head organization like (Interbuhl, ICAR, COPA-COEICA, Babroc, FBF etc.) are maintained by ZAR.

At the national level, there is intensive and ongoing cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture, the Chamber of Agriculture, Agrarmarkt Austria, the University of Natural Resources and Applied Life Sciences, University of Veterinary Medicine, the Agricultural and Forestry Data-Collection Center and other national organizations.

Nowadays, ZAR is the nerve center of Austrian Cattle Breeding on a national and international level.

By means of the cattle data base of Agrarmarkt Austria, animal transport is monitored and documented systematically. After introduction of the new EU-wide “Animal Identification Decree 1760/2000 (replaces decree 820/97),” all newborn calves became marked with two ear tags.

The tasks of the ZAR are coordinated in six working, in one control, and in six breeding committees.

ZuchtData

The processing of all performance and identification control data is done by ZuchtData in close cooperation with the Agricultural and Forestry Data-Collection Center.

Pedigrees and performance data are guaranteed by the registered breeding associations.

Areas of Activity:
• Breeding and genetics
• Performance testing
• Herd book

For breeding and genetics the operational and technical implementation and development is realized jointly with data processing centers in Germany.

Further, the provision of data for breeding programs, including controlling, consulting, and analysis of the breeding programs is provided. These breeding programs have been developed jointly with the University of Natural Resources and Applied Life Sciences Vienna and the breeding associations which are continuously provided with updated information according to the given conditions.

In the areas of performance testing and herd book, ZuchtData provides maintenance and the further development of the central data base with RDV- (Rinderdatenverbund) software and reports. The main purpose is to manage the data of selected performance and herd data.

Milk performance data recording is carried out according to the AT and Lactation-period (ICAR) methods. A wide range of fitness data are recording within these tests.

Beef performance data recording is done as an individual test in a test station as well as individual and progeny tests in the field.

Over 2,600 beef cattle breeders supply data for gain performance and reproduction.

Additionally important is the training, courses, and advisory services provided for functionaries and employees of the member organizations by ZuchtData.
Austria's cattle breeds at a glance

Special value is placed on the Fleckvieh's fitness characteristics including fertility, longevity, calving ease, udder health, milking speed, somatic cell count, and persistence. A large percentage of young Fleckvieh cattle are on alpine grazing which results in good overall health and longevity of life.

**Breeding target:**
38% Milk, 18% beef, 44% Fitness

A Cattle with good development and performance capacity along with good conformation with 6,000 kg milk in the 1st lactation and over 7,000 - 9,000 kg milk in later lactations with 4.0% fat and 3.4% protein

Population: 1.439,874
Registered cows: 301,572
Herds: 14,911
Share of breed: 75% (7.0% of cows on alpine grazing)

Austria's cattle breeds at a glance

**Fleckvieh/Simmental**
With over 1.44 million animals, the Fleckvieh/Simmental is the most widely-spread breed of cattle in Austria. Fleckvieh can be found from the mountains of the Alps to the wide plains east of Vienna. Recently, great gains have been made in the genetic milk productiveness of the Fleckvieh through breed management to the point that the Fleckvieh rivals pure milk-producing dairy breeds.

**Brown Swiss**
Brown Swiss can primarily be found within the western and central part of Austria. The high performance capacity of the Brown Swiss enable the cows to achieve a very high level of milk production with a high Kappa-Casein B content. The fitness traits of fertility, calving ease (95% normal calvings), udder health and excellent feet and legs are major positive foundational traits of the breed. The longevity of the breed (highest percentage of continual performance over time amongst all breeds) is further enhanced by the high percentage of young calves heifers being grazed on alpine pastures.

**Breeding target:**
50% Milk, 5% Beef, 45% Fitness

Registered cows: 44,833
Herds: 4,246

**Holstein**
Holsteins can be found throughout all of Austria. Holstein Friesians and Red Holsteins are high-yielding dairy animals. The goal is to breed a profitable, long-living, highly-productive dairy cow. This is deemed achievable provided the cattle are adaptable, are able to convert a high mass of forage efficiently, stable health, good fertility rate, and a sound genetic foundation. The Holstein's highly functional udders with good milking speed allow a high milk production throughout many lactations and match well with up-to-date milking technology.

**Breeding target:**
45% Milk, 40% Fitness, 15% conformation

Holstein Friesians and Red Holsteins are high-yielding dairy animals. The goal is to breed a profitable, long-living, highly-productive dairy cow. This is deemed achievable provided the cattle are adaptable, are able to convert a high mass of forage efficiently, stable health, good fertility rate, and a sound genetic foundation. The Holstein's highly functional udders with good milking speed allow a high milk production throughout many lactations and match well with up-to-date milking technology.

**Breeding target:**
45% Milk, 40% Fitness, 15% conformation,
Population: 135,941
Registered cows: 46,502
Herds: 4,262
**Pinzgauer**

The autochthonous Pinzgauer breed is one of the last in the Alpine region with the capacity to adapt well to harsh environmental conditions. The highly developed maternal instinct and calm temperament make Pinzgauer a more and more important breed for suckling herds. With excellent juiciness, fine fibers, and good marbling, the Pinzgauer beef is also of very high quality.

**Breeding target:**
- 36 % milk, 14 % beef, 50 % fitness
- 6,000 kg, 40 % fat, 3,45 % protein with high longevity, enormous resistance and health.

**First calving (months):** 33.8

**Height of the rump:** 140 – 145 cm

**Life weight:** ca. 650 kg;

**Share of breed:** 2.0 %

**Registered cows:** 7,049, Herds: 1,013

**Population:** 37,446

**Health.**

**6,000 kg, 4.0 % fat, 3.45 % protein with 36 % milk, 14 % beef, 50 % fitness**

**Breeding target:**
- Beef is also of very high quality.

**fibers, and good marbling, the Pinzgauer Herds. With excellent juiciness, fine**

**Beef: Registered cows 1.437, Herds: 390**

**Population: 17,797**

**Share of breed: 0.9 %**

**Beef: Registered cows 1.437, Herds: 390**

**Life weight: approx. 600 kg**

**Height of the rump: 129 – 139 cm**

**First calving (months): 34.2**

**Productive life span (yrs.): 4.94**

**Height of the rump: 140 – 145 cm**

**First calving (months): 33.8**

**Productive life span (yrs.): 3.57**

**35.6 % of all cows on alpine grazing**

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**Milk performance:**
- 5,863 - 3.86 % F - 3.28 % P (305 days)

**Beef production:**
- Carcass weight: 55 %
- Auction sales: 1,211 g

**Production options:**
- Dairy dual purpose breed and/or beef breed, crossbreeding with beef and dairy breeds with excellent capacity to adapt, best suitable for pasturing.

**Arbeitgemeinschaft der Pinzgauer Rinderzuchtverbände**
- A-5751 Maishofen, Mayerhoferstr. 12
- Tel. +43 (0) 6542 68229 11
- Fax +43 (0) 6542 68229 81
- www.pinzgauer-cattle.com
- www.pinzgauerrind.at

**Grauvieh**

Around 1,000 small-scale farms utilize this medium-sized, multi-purpose breed in the inner-Alpine regions (on 70 % of the Alpine pastures over 1,600 meters elevation). The special strengths of the Grauvieh cattle include their low maintenance, outstanding forage digestibility, ease of calving, vitality, robust stature, functional udders with excellent milk quality. This makes them especially suitable for low input systems.

**Breeding target:**
- 20 % milk, 20 % beef, 60 % fitness
- Milk: 5,000 kg, 4.0 % fat, 3.4 % protein
- Beef: good daily gain and best beef quality

**Population: 17,797**

**Registered cows: 3,686; herds: 901**

**Beef: Registered cows 1,437, Herds: 390**

**Life weight: approx. 600 kg**

**Height of the rump: 129 – 139 cm**

**First calving (months): 34.2**

**Productive life span (yrs.): 4.94**

**100 % of young cattles and 44.7 % of all cows on extreme alpine grazing. Milk performance (all cows):**
- 5,031 – 3.88 % F – 3.33 % P (305 days)

**Beef production:**
- Daily gain up to 1 year: 1,207 g Carcasse weight: 58 – 60 % – best beef quality, fine fibres and good marbling

**Production options:**
- Dairy breed for harsh conditions, beef breed for any kind of production conditions, suitable for cross-breeding with all breeds.

**ARGE Tiroler Grauvieh**
- A-6020 Innsbruck, Brixner Str. 1
- Tel. +43 (0) 592 92 1840
- Fax +43 (0) 592 92 1849
- www.tiroler-grauvieh.at

**Beef Breeds**

In addition to the traditional dual-purpose breeds like the Fleckvieh, Pinzgauer, and Grauvieh Cattle, a variety of non-domestic beef breeds have established themselves in Austria. These beef breeds are being utilized in pure breeding as well as commercial cross-breeding with dual-purpose domestic breeds.

Currently, 25,582 cattle are registered in 2,769 herds from the following breeds: Charolais, Blonde d’Aquitaine, Blue Belgian, Limousin, Angus, Beef-Fleckvieh, Scottish Highland, Galloway, Hereford and others.

In 2018, approximately 190,000 fertilizations were carried out utilizing these special beef breeds and another 30,000 utilizing Beef-Fleckvieh. Also significant are the sales of bulls for commercial suckling herds as a basis for pasture utilization.

**ÖNGENE**
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- A-4601 Wels - Thalheim
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- Fax +43 (0) 7242 470 11 15
- www.oengene.at

**Special Breeds**

The association ÖNGENE (the Austrian Association for the Conservation of Genetic Reserves), along with the Austrian states and Ministry of Agriculture has developed a program for the conservation of genetic material for individual breeds. In endangered breeds in which the number of cows falls below a certain level, the main target of these programs is not the selection of high-performance genetic material, but the maintenance of a diverse genetic basis. Since most of these endangered special breeds are genetically more appropriate for the production of beef, the individual associations are usually integrated within the relevant beef breeding associations at the state level. Apart from the Pinzgauer and the Grauvieh, the following special breeds share in this program: Murinöder, Carinthian Blondvieh, Waldviertler Blondvieh, Tux-Zillertaler, Original Braunvieh, Ennstaler Bergshechen, and Pustertaler Sprinzen.

Given their robustness, these special breeds are most suitable for beef production under harsh environmental conditions or within part-time farm systems.

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Top Genetics from Austria

Annually, over 40,000 breeding cattle (heifers, cows, and breeding calves) are marketed at over 140 auctions (50 % are exported to over 60 nations worldwide). All breeding cattle and embryos from Austrian producers are free from tuberculosis, brucellosis, leucosis, BVD, IBR/IPV, and BSE. Veterinarian attention and care for the herds as well as the sharing of health data collected, helps to insure an excellent standard of animal health among Austrian cattle breeds. Annually, the Austrian cattle-breeding program is represented at over 25 international fairs and conventions.

Consequent breeding work, up-to-date breeding programs, enthusiastic cattle breeders, state-of-the-art data processing and modern technology in artificial insemination are the base of our success.

Export of breeding cattle: Fleckvieh/Simmental, Braunvieh (Brown Swiss), Holstein Friesian, Pinzgauer, Grauvieh, and various beef and special breeds.

Herd book: jointly with performance recording and the breeding associations.

Quality and performance control, processing performance data.

Project Management and Development Planning: Targeted support for initiatives and projects that serve the improved marketing of Austrian breeding cattle. In various projects, ZAR has become a primary contact for various partners both in and outside of Austria.

Cattle-breeding interests are represented in all agro-political decisions.

Coordination of research activities in the cattle farming.

Public Relations: Trade fairs, conventions, publications, photo database on http://bilder.rinderzucht-austria.at

For years, the quality of Austrian bulls has represented the highest quality available in Europe. The international promotion and marketing of Austrian semen and embryos is carried out by the export platform „GENETIC AUSTRIA“ (www.genetic-austria.at).

Artificial Insemination: This is the most important tool for the implementation of the breeding programs and the guarantee for successful genetic progress. In the main cattle breeds, around 95 % of the cows are artificially inseminated.

All five Austrian artificial insemination centers are certified by the European Union.

The Austrian cattle breeding associations have a pool of highly-trained and experienced experts from the sectors of animal production, artificial insemination, biotechnology, population genetics, marketing, data processing, and communications.

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