Transforming Agriculture Webinar Series: Genomic Tools for Animal Breeding

Speaker Bios

Dr. Paul VanRaden is a research geneticist in the Animal Genomics and Improvement Laboratory, Agricultural Research Service, United States Department of Agriculture, in Beltsville, Maryland. He joined USDA in 1988 after receiving his BS from the University of Illinois, MS and PhD degrees from Iowa State University, and conducting postdoctoral research at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. VanRaden has developed efficient statistical and computational methods to process phenotype, genotype, pedigree, and DNA sequence data for very large national and international dairy cattle populations. His methods and programs allowed the implementation of US dairy cattle genomic evaluations in January 2009, the first such system in the world. These same genomic methods are now applied routinely to many other plant and animal species. VanRaden has also developed new traits and genetic-economic indexes such as the Net Merit index, enabling the US dairy industry to efficiently select for a wider variety of important traits. In 2020 VanRaden was inducted into the Agriculture Research Service Hall of Fame for development and implementation of genomic prediction methodology.

João Dürr, Ph.D., has served as Chief Executive Officer at CDCB since September 2014. Before CDCB, João worked as the Executive Director of Interbull based in Sweden, Professor at Universidade de Passo Fundo in Brazil, and President of the Brazilian Council of Milk Quality (CBQL). A native of Brazil, João received his Bachelor's degree in agriculture at Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul, Porto Alegre, Brazil; followed by master's and doctorate degrees from McGill University, Montreal, in animal breeding and genetics.