

Topic

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Cross breeding with beef cattle breeds to increase the value of surplus young stock

Technical efficiency



Economic Resilience

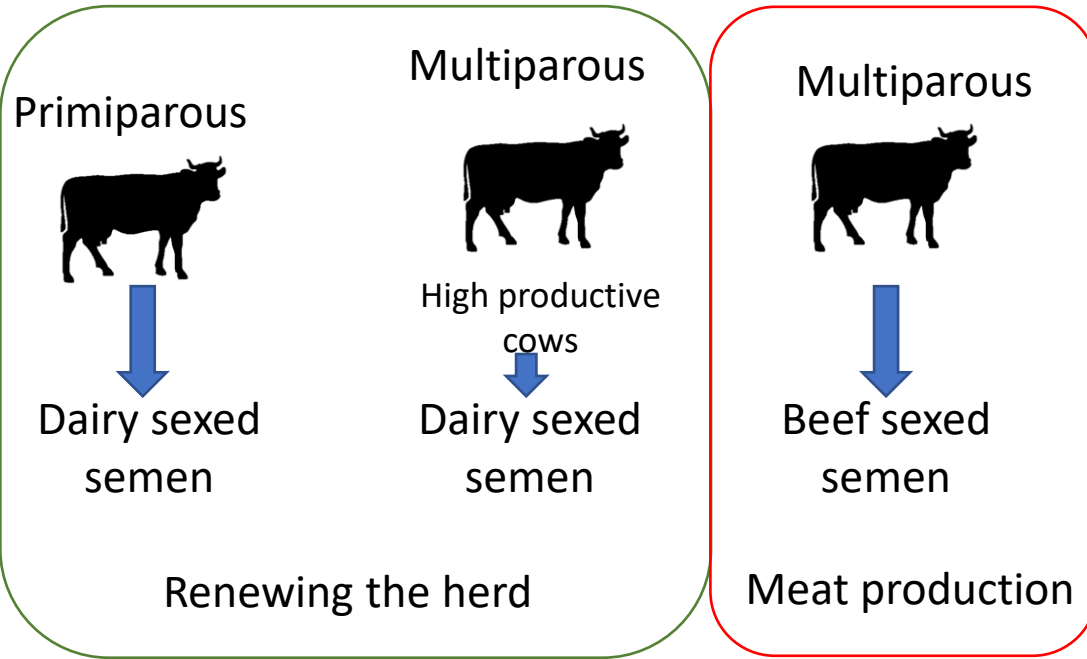


Background

The price of Inseminating dairy calves is very low or null. The innovation propose to increase the value of calves by inseminate dairy cows with semen from beef bulls breed to produce calves for meat production.

How does the strategy work?

- Invest in beef sexed semen
 - Male calves have a greater value and the difference in the selling price offsets the cost of the sexed doses
 - Ensure to utilise the correct breeding technique and straw preparation when using sexed semen as increasing the number of inseminations will increase the cost of breeding
- Focus genetic investments on cows with high genetic potential for performance and fertility, and keep lower genetic value multiparous for crossbreeding to beef sires
- Use multiparous cows with lower genetic value for beef sires



Positive features

- Increased income, generated by higher calf value in dairy farms due to a better conformation and higher meat value (crossbred calves can be sold about 200€ more than dairy calves)
- Cross-breeding calves is more efficient in terms of selling price, slaughter yield and feed efficiency, with guaranteed easy calving
- Potential for lowering Global Warming Potential (GWP) of dairy-based systems while improving beef quality
- Higher growth rate than dairy-bred calves (up to 100kg heavier at 16 months)
- Heterosis or hybrid vigour – improved fertility, performance and health

Be careful, especially on these points

- Ensure cows submitted for breeding are fertile
- Select bulls that are easy calving and meet the breeding objective of the herd

Equipment involved? Investment?

- Breeding advisers and breeding association to identify the best semen
- Cost of beef sexed semen
- Method of sale to capitalise on the increased value of the crossbred calves (e.g., livestock sales/market, cattle purchaser/exporter)

Assessment of method

