



Breeding Programme of the European Association of Specialised Beef Breeds Society Limited.

Updated and Adopted by the Council of the EASBB, 08st - September - 2020.

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Name of Breed.

The Name of the Breed is Romagnola.

Breeding book of the Romagnola Breed.

The Breeding book of the Romagnola breed shall include:

- a) Particulars of the pedigree and performance of pedigree European-Union Romagnola cattle, which are eligible to be entered therein.
- b) Particulars of herd letters, herd names, breeders and owners, past and present.
- c) Such other information as the Council of the Society may from time to time decide.

Aims of the Romagnola Breeding Programme.

The primary aim of the breeding programme is breed preservation. With regards to Regulation 1974/2006/EC. Annex IV Thresholds for endangered breeds (referred to in Article 27(4)) the Romagnola is regarded as an endangered breed and to that extent – Italian breeders receive financial support through the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) by paying per head of productive animal that is registered to the breed.

<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32006R1974&from=EN>

In consideration of its endangered breed status and with respect to REGULATION (EU) 2016/1012 – The EASBB Society aims to maintain confidence in the integrity of the Romagnola breed and proposes to achieve those aims through the following means:

1. The dissemination of information and potential cooperation with the European Regional Focal Point for Animal Genetic Resources (ERFP) relating to the rare and unique reservoir of genes within the Romagnola breed and the important role that the Romagnola can play within the context of Animal Genetic Resources and preservation of the genetic diversity between breeds, animal welfare, production and sustainability goals within the European Union.

<https://www.animalgeneticresources.net/>

<https://www.nature.com/articles/s41598-020-57880-4>

<https://journals.plos.org/plosgenetics/article?id=10.1371/journal.pgen.1004254>

2. To reduce the level of inbreeding and to decrease the carrier rate prevalence of deleterious genetic defects/diseases (Lethal and non-lethal) through the use of Genomics and advanced information technologies such as “Genetic Relatedness Matrix” (GRM).

3. To enhance the desired phenotypic and genotypic characteristics in the Breeding book population so as to reflect a greater and ongoing commercial reality for a specialised beef breed.

Geographical Territory.

The Geographical territory being the Republic of Ireland for the Society to conduct its breeding programme.

Breed Characteristics.

The Romagnola.

The Romagnola breed originates and derives its name from the Emilia-Romagna region of north east Italy. The Romagnola has a white coat with grey shading towards the front and black skin pigmentation.

It demonstrates a significant somatic development with a harmonious structure. The trunk is particularly well-developed in the transverse diameters, with particular emphasis in the hindquarters, where the thighs and buttocks reveal a broad, convex and markedly inclined musculature. This breed's short sturdy legs and strong feet, coupled with an outstanding capacity for adaptation to a wide range of varying climatic conditions have made it an ideal grazing animal. Calving takes place without any difficulty and the cows give birth to wheat-coloured calves that weigh an average of 40-45 kg's, but by the age of three-four months the coat changes to its mature colour. The Romagnola has an outstanding growth capacity The cows weigh between 600 and 900 kg's, whereas adult males reach 1200-1500 kg's. They are slaughtered when they reach a weight of 650 - 700 kg's, at the age of 16-18 months. Average slaughter yield is 62-63%.

Breeding Objective.

1. The breeding objective is to produce high quality animals of the pure type whose meat is ideally suitable for sale into the higher priced and in general more specialised market outlets of mainland Europe. This is achieved through the genetic improvement of traits such as slaughtering age, live weight gain, feed conversion efficiency, dressing-out percentage, carcass characteristics, meat quality, calving ease and fertility. This can be achieved in conjunction with ICBF.
2. To co-operate with animal science in general, as well as other recognised international organisations involved in animal improvement. (I.e., ICAR, Interbeef, Breedplan, IGS and ERFPP).

Registration of Animals.

Main Section

The Breeding book is composed of a main section with no subdivision. To qualify for entry into the main section of the Breeding book animals must meet the following criteria;

1. Be descended from parents and grandparents entered in the main section of the Breeding book for the Romagnola cattle breed.
2. Be identified according to the Breeding programme rules.
3. Have a pedigree established in accordance with the Breeding programme rules.

De-Registration of Animals

A breeder may de-register an animal, which is still in their name and ownership by notifying the Society office and returning to the Society's office its Zootechnical certificate, provided there are no pedigree progeny on the database for the animal being de-registered.

Supplementary Section

The Society may decide to open a supplementary section for the entry of animals which do not meet the criteria to enter the main section of the Breeding book. The criteria to enter the supplementary section will be as follows:

1. be identified according to these rules
2. be judged by the Society to conform to the Romagnola breed standard
3. have a minimum performance as laid down in these rules.

DNA Profile.

The Society views the term 'DNA Profile' as either Genotype (SNP) or Microsatellite (MS). All animals born in Ireland including donor sires and dams; after the date of application of these rules (01st - November -2018) and having a DNA Profile requested must submit a Genotype (SNP). In the case of a sire located outside the state and where a Genotype (SNP) is not available - the Society will accept a Microsatellite (MS) as a sufficient DNA Profile. In the case of imported embryos and where a Genotype (SNP) is not available for either the donor sire or dam or both – The Society will equally accept a Microsatellite (MS) as a sufficient DNA Profile.

Control checks and the procedure(s) for registering calves are;

1. Notification of the birth on the ICBF Animal Event (AE) form, or online, duly completed giving details of date of birth, sex, ear tag number, dam, sire, and name of calf to be forwarded to ICBF for entry in the Association's Breeding book.

Note: The naming of a calf, confirms to the Society that the breeder wishes to enter the animal into the Breeding book. In naming a calf – a maximum of thirty (30) characters including spaces is allowable on the ICBF Taurus database.

Note: For late registrations i.e. Over six (6) months of age – The breeder must notify the Society directly and the animal(s) notified for registration must be Genotyped (SNP) at the expense of the breeder.

2. Any other procedure approved or directed by the Council of the Society from time to time.

3. In the case of twins and multiple births, calves will be notified as usual to ICBF.

4. The Society reserves the right to refuse to accept the notification of birth of a calf where the date of birth provided is deemed to be deficient or inaccurate.

5. Where calves are born as a result of a natural service procedure from a bull not owned by the breeder, a copy of the official Certificate(s) of Compliance for movement stating such movement(s) shall be forwarded to the Society at the time of notification of birth. Equally a Natural Service Certificate is to be completed by the owner of the bull and forwarded to the Society at the time of notification of birth.

6. Where calves are born as a result of an Artificial Insemination procedure - a breeder shall be responsible for supplying to the Society with each birth notification form, a certificate/A.I. docket signed by the Veterinary Surgeon or Inseminator approved by DAFM and the name and National Identification Number of the bull and female concerned and the date of insemination. This information may be provided Electronically via the ICBF through an A.I. Handheld computer by the Veterinary Surgeon or Inseminator approved by DAFM carrying out the AI service. Where calves are born as result of a D.I.Y. Artificial Insemination procedure then evidence of qualification and licence to carry out D.I.Y. A.I. is required by the Society. Equally a D.I.Y. A.I. insemination certificate is to be completed and submitted to the Society with each birth notification form. D.I.Y. A.I. is only acceptable within the herd of the operator or as approved by DAFM. The Society may from time to time request a list of semen purchased by the D.I.Y. A.I operator.

7. Where the sire and dam of a calf were not in the same ownership at the time of service or insemination – the following shall apply;

(a) For Natural Service: A Natural Service Certificate is to be completed by the owner of the bull and forwarded to the Society at the time of notification of birth.

(b) For Artificial Insemination: Where calves are born as a result of Artificial Insemination procedure - a breeder shall be responsible for supplying to the Society with each birth notification form, a certificate/A.I. docket signed by the Veterinary Surgeon or Inseminator approved by DAFM and the name and National Identification Number of the bull and female concerned and the date of insemination. This information may be provided Electronically via the ICBF through an A.I. Handheld computer by the Veterinary Surgeon or Inseminator approved by DAFM carrying out the AI service. Where calves are born as result of a D.I.Y. Artificial Insemination procedure then evidence of qualification and licence to carry out D.I.Y. A.I. is required by the Society. Equally a D.I.Y. A.I. insemination certificate is to be completed and submitted to the Society with each birth notification form. D.I.Y. A.I. is only acceptable within the herd of the operator or as approved by DAFM. The Society may from time to time request a list of semen purchased by the D.I.Y A.I. operator.

8. In the case of a sire located outside the state, the member shall supply a full Zootechnical Certificate issued by the Breeding book of origin and a DNA profile.

9. All donors and bulls used for breeding purposes must have a DNA Profile from an approved laboratory before progeny can be accepted for notification of birth and registration.

10. In the case of calves born as a result of embryo transfer, both donor sire and dam must have a DNA Profile and the resultant calf must have its parentage verified by an approved laboratory prior to the animal being eligible for registration.

In the event of a DNA Profile not being available for either the donor sire or dam, or both, the Zootechnical certification details of both the donor sire and dam must be provided to the Society, in association with all relevant embryologist certification. Calves resulting from such embryos may be eligible for entry into the Supplementary Section of the Breeding book if they are adjudged to conform to the breed standard.

Note: The embryos must in the first instance be understood to be derived from both a donor sire and dam that are recognized to be of the breed standard and must have pedigree/parentage information available.

11. Donor animals not already registered with the Society must be registered with the payment of appropriate fees.

12. The cost of any DNA profile will be paid by the member and the Society reserves the right to request the owner to do additional DNA profiling at his/her own expense if thought necessary by the Council.

13. The Society reserves the right to withdraw any Zootechnical certificate without refund if at any time the animal fails parentage verification. The onus is on the breeder to ensure that all details on the Zootechnical certificate are correct. The Society will not be responsible for lost or mislaid forms.

14. The Society reserves the right to carry out, at their own discretion, random DNA profiling, at the breeder's expense on all animals. Every 10th calf birth or a minimum of one animal per year notified to the Society will have to undergo DNA profiling to verify parentage. In the event of an animal failing this verification, the Society may then decide to have all animals proposed for registration by the breeder DNA Profile verified. The Society reserves the right to withdraw any Zootechnical certificate without refund if the animal fails parentage verification. The onus is on the breeder to ensure that all details on the Pedigree Certificate are correct. BDGP animals are excluded where a DNA profile has been received/requested.

15. Only paid-up members of the Society shall be allowed to register animals in the Society's Breeding book.

Information on the System for Recording Pedigrees of Purebred Animals.

The system used for recording Pedigrees of Purebred Animals is an Electronic Database known as “Taurus”.

For each animal entered on the Database the following information is recorded where applicable: Name of the Animal, Date and Country of Birth, Parents and Grandparents, Sex, Ear-tag identification, Name and Address of Breeder, Name and Address of Owner, Section of Breeding book, Twinning Status, Progeny of Embryo Transfer, Results of Performance Testing, Date of Genetic Evaluation, Genetic Defects and Peculiarities, Insemination or Mating Information, Other relevant Information to the Registration Process.

Identification of Animals.

1. Each animal shall be identified at birth with the National Bovine Identification number.
2. Each member must make application to register an approved Prefix name comprised of not more than sixteen letters. This prefix name shall not have been allocated to another member of the Society, either in the past or at present. This shall be applicable to all animals bred and notified by that member, either alone or jointly with any partner’s or other persons in any one herd.
3. In addition, each animal must be named. The first letter of the name must be that of the current Society year letter, for example each animal born in 2021 shall have a name commencing with the letter “K”.

Imports / Exports.

1. Each imported animal must be registered with the Society as soon as possible by submitting the official Breeding book Zootechnical certificate of the country of origin together with the normal registration fee. In the case of bulls, a DNA Profile certificate must be submitted together with the normal registration fee.

2. Imported embryos should be registered with the Society, applying the same criteria and fees as home-produced embryos. Copies of official documentation must be supplied as appropriate, including copies of the official Breeding book Zootechnical Certificate and DNA profile certificates of both donor animals to allow for parentage verification, together with the appropriate fee.

In the event of a DNA Profile not being available for either the donor sire or dam, or both, the Zootechnical certification details of both the donor sire and dam must be provided to the Society, in association with all relevant embryologist certification. Calves resulting from such embryos may be eligible for entry into the Supplementary Section of the Breeding book, if they are adjudged to conform to the breed standard.

Note: The embryos must in the first instance be understood to be derived from both a donor sire and dam that are recognized to be of the breed standard and must have pedigree/parentage information available.

3. Donor animals not already registered with the Society must be registered with the payment of appropriate fees.

4. Imports and exports of animals, embryos, semen etc., should comply with the national legislation in place at the time. Where the purchaser requires a Zootechnical Export Certificate, the Society will supply it at the fee specified.

Change of ownership.

Members shall inform the Society of the sale of any of their registered or notified cattle, meaning cattle, the births of which have been officially notified to the Society, but which have not yet been accepted for registration in the Society's Breeding book. Each member shall complete the transfer form on the reverse of the Zootechnical certificate or the appropriate transfer certificate for notified cattle and forward this to the Society for noting and onward transmission to the new owner. An export transfer fee may be charged for both male and female animals. Purchasers of animals should return the official Zootechnical certificate together with the appropriate transfer fee to effect change of ownership.

Zootechnical Certificate.

1. A Zootechnical Certificate, with the animals' ancestry shall be issued to the owner by the Society when all registration criteria and payment of registration fees are met. The onus is on the owner of the animal to verify that all information on the Zootechnical certificate is correct and if not, to contact the Society's office with corrections.

2. All available results of genetic peculiarities and genetic defects will be issued in line with REGULATION (EU) 2016/1012 and shall be recorded on the Zootechnical certificate. If these results are publicly available on the internet, then reference shall be made to the website where the most up-to-date results can be found. A web-link will be provided to all results on the Zootechnical Certificate.

3. A programme of official weight recording, progeny and performance testing and linear scoring may be operated in conjunction with the appropriate official approved body. Such data shall be entered where available on the Zootechnical certificate as decided by Council.

4. The Council may at any time cancel the entry of an animal in the Breeding book, which shall be found to contain any false or inaccurate particulars or statement or to have been made on the faith of any false or inaccurate particulars or statement given or made to the Society. On the cancellation of the entry of any animal in the Breeding book, the Zootechnical certificate of registration issued by the Society will be cancelled and any fees paid to the Society shall be retained by the Society.

5. In order to further authenticate the Zootechnical certificate of registration, each Zootechnical certificate will be embossed with the Society Stamp/Seal.

Performance testing and Genetic evaluations.

1. The Society will use whatever progeny and performance data where available e.g. ICBF “Euro-Star” system of genetic evaluation. The “*Euro-Star*” Genetic index is the end result of a series of routine steps known as a ‘Genetic Evaluation Run’. For example, for a Stock Bull, a genetic evaluation run will identify all of the calves of a Bull and compare their performance records to those of the other animals reared alongside them in the same herd. Any Genomic data together with records from relatives of the bull are also included. Some traits/EBV’s have more of an impact than others on the resulting index, simply because they are of greater economic value.

The ICBF has two main Beef Genetic indexes i.e., a ‘*Replacement*’ *Index* and a ‘*Terminal*’ *index*. These two indexes have grouped traits/EBV’s together depending on their importance for achieving an overall breeding goal.

The ‘Replacement’ Index estimates how suitable females will be for calving ability, milk and fertility and ultimately estimates the potential profitability as a breeding female. The traits/EBV’S that a breeding female needs to be profitable are grouped together. They each carry a different weighting in the Index depending on how economically important they are.

The 'Terminal' Index estimates how profitable a Bull's progeny will be for liveweight, carcass conformation and ultimately being finished for slaughter. The traits/EBV's that make up this index are weighted in relation to their economic importance.

2. Genetic evaluations and Breeding book services in general are facilitated through a service agreement between the Society and the ICBF.

3. The Society may operate an online Breeding book to allow breeders monitor evaluations and assist them in making informed decisions on the management of their herd.

4. The Society encourages members to join the 'Beef Data and Genomics Programme' (BDGP) as this will increase the volume of Genomic data available to the Society.

5. Breeders shall notify the Society of any genetic peculiarities and genetic defects on their animals. Equally breeders shall notify the ICBF and submit an online congenital defect reporting questionnaire which can be accessed via the following weblink;

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/5CG9RY8?sm=x6Vqcq%2bsueU0qiHJ721FBg%3d%3d>

The following is a list of genetic defects/diseases that are currently available for testing on the IDB Beadchip:

1. Paunch Calf Syndrome (PCS)
2. Congenital Pseudomyotonia (PMT) PMT_164, PMT_211, PMT_284
3. Inherited Cataract Disease (ICD).

Genomics.

The preservation of the Romagnola breed is of absolute importance to the Society. The Romagnola which is currently regarded as an endangered breed is greatly lacking in genetic diversity. This lack of genetic diversity has resulted in a situation where the Global population of Romagnola is suffering from what science describes as “Inbreeding Depression”. This has ultimately led to the existence of a large number of genetic defects/diseases (Lethal and non-lethal) at an extremely high carrier rate prevalence together with a marked overall decline in performance of quantitative traits and health. Through a science-based approach and active engagement with geneticists/scientists at leading Universities and research institutes throughout the world the Society has been actively working so as to reverse this situation. The Society views the science of “Genomics” as key in this role. At present all genetic diseases that have a known causative mutation(s) are available for testing/genotyping on the IDB Beadchip.

For other known genetic diseases and newly emerging ones that affect the Romagnola but as of yet the causative mutation(s) have not been identified – The Society continues to investigate these diseases and collaborate with Lead geneticists/scientists so as to eventually identify the causative mutation(s). In order to gradually improve the genetic diversity of the Romagnola – The society considers the technology of ‘GRM’ (Genetic Relatedness Matrix) as optimum in this regard. ‘GRM’ allows for the true inbreeding coefficient to be calculated at a molecular level and ultimately is vastly superior than the traditional paper-based method.

Technical Activities Outsourced.

The technical activities of the European Association of Specialised Beef Breeds Society Limited (EASBB) are outsourced to the Irish Cattle Breeding Federation Limited (ICBF).

ICBF provide the following services;

(a) The Taurus Database which contains all data relevant to the European Association of Specialised Beef Breeds Society Limited (EASBB) Breeding book.

(b) All genetic evaluations for the European Association of Specialised Beef Breeds Society Limited (EASBB).

(c) Training for the European Association of Specialised Beef Breeds Society Limited (EASBB) staff, in matters relevant to the European Association of Specialised Beef Breeds Society Limited (EASBB) Database.

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Schedule of Fees.

Registration Fees:

Calf registration - €50

ET Calf registration - €50

Male or Female Import fee - €50

Transfer of ownership, Male and Female - €10

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