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*Shaping Lives...
Empowering Communities...*

Center for Smart Agriculture

Organic Farming



Module 7: Animal Husbandry

Session 1: Animal husbandry under conversion



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- Breeding objectives can be discussed in terms of changing the genetic makeup of a population of animals, where population is defined as a recognized breed. Choice of breeding goals and design of an effective breeding program is usually not an easy task. Complicating the implementation of a breeding program is the number of generations needed to reach the initial goals.



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- Ultimately, breeding goals are dictated by market demand; however, it is not easy to predict what consumers will want several years in advance. Sometimes the marketplace demands a different product than was defined as desirable in the original breeding objective



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- When this happens, breeders have to adjust their program, which results in less-efficient selection than if the new breeding goal had been used from the beginning. For example, consumers want leaner beef that is tender. Thus, ranchers have changed their cattle-breeding programs to meet this new demand. These trends have gradually changed over the last few decades; for example, Angus cattle are particularly noted for the quality of beef produced. The use of ultrasound is now widespread in determining the fat and lean content of live animals, which will hasten the changing of carcass quality to meet consumer demands.



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- A breeding objective is generally specific to a particular market, therefore it is important to understand customer and [market requirements](#).
- Depending on the target market, some traits or characteristics have greater economic importance than others eg growth rate as an influencer of live weight at sale.
- Monitoring the current herd or flock performance against customer or market requirements and considering how this performance and the requirements might change over time.
- Some traits are highly heritable or readily passed on from one generation to another. Greater progress towards breeding objectives can be achieved by targeting traits that are highly heritable.
- Focus on traits of economic importance rather than traits that have more to do with 'tradition' or 'personal preference'



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THANK YOU

