

IGENITY Insider



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Welcome to the introductory issue of the *IGENITY® Insider* newsletter. It's written to help address the many educational needs of the dairy cattle industry that are related to DNA testing and technology. This issue shares recent updates about IGENITY, examines the benefits of comprehensive DNA profiling for dairy cattle production and details how IGENITY ensures accurate results through quality control. We hope you find this issue to be informative, and we look forward to sending you other *IGENITY Insider* newsletters and educational tools in the future.

Please pass this newsletter on to anyone else who could benefit from the information. If this issue was forwarded to you and you'd like to receive your own copy in the future, please click here igenity@bader-rutter.com to subscribe.

Merial and Select Sires Provide Producers Inside Information through IGENITY® DNA Profiles

Merial and Select Sires have teamed up to offer the dairy industry a breakthrough in comprehensive DNA testing through IGENITY® profiles. Together, global animal health leader Merial and North America's largest AI company, Select Sires, have a vision of providing dairy producers with advanced tools to help them make better-informed everyday decisions about the breeding and management of cattle. [\(more\)](#)

Making DNA Testing More Practical by Making Analysis More Comprehensive

Though it may seem that DNA testing is a futuristic idea, it is actually a reality for dairy producers, and it is here to stay. For years dairy producers have put DNA technology to work in their herds by testing for genetic recessives like CVM and BLAD, or to identify carriers of red coat color genes. [\(more\)](#)

Ask the Expert — Dr. Stewart Bauck



Q. How can I be sure the test results for IGENITY® MultiMARK, including CVM and red coat color, are accurate?

A. Merial stands behind the results from IGENITY MultiMARK, which can include CVM or red coat color. Producers can rest assured that IGENITY® results are fully validated, accurate and reliable. [\(more\)](#)

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Ron Long Joins Merial's IGENITY® Team



Merial has announced that Ron Long has joined the company in a consulting role for IGENITY®. Specifically, Long will be a vital link and resource to Select Sires field representatives who service and distribute IGENITY tests to dairy producers. This announcement follows last year's agreement made by Merial and Select Sires to co-market IGENITY DNA profiles and services in the United States. ([more](#))

Fact or Fiction

- The Holstein Association will accept IGENITY RealRED™ or CVM results. *Fact.* The association will accept the results as long as the animal's or dam's registration number is on the Sample Information sheet. Producers can request IGENITY test results be sent directly to Holstein Association.
- IGENITY® testing does not involve any genetic manipulation. *Fact.* Recombinant molecular genetic technologies are not used in any way in the IGENITY analyses. The DNA tests identify a natural variation in cattle DNA that has evolved with the species.
- IGENITY results are accurate and can be trusted. *Fact.* Since IGENITY analyses identify a specific DNA base molecule on specific chromosomes, the results are highly accurate. Extensive quality control testing is done to ensure accurate test results from IGENITY labs.
- IGENITY tests can only be run from a hair sample. *Fiction.* IGENITY accepts blood or nasal swabs for dairy samples. Hair is not an acceptable source of DNA for diagnostic testing.



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Dairy producers in the United States and Canada can access IGENITY profiles through their local Select Sires representatives. These representatives can assist producers in administering the tests and applying the results to selection, management and marketing decisions. Select Sires has the industry's only sire lineup profiled with IGENITY MultiMARK.

The two companies continue collaboration on research to develop new DNA profiles and services. Producers should ask their Select Sires representative to suggest ways in which IGENITY can give them the genetic edge to increase profitability in their herd.

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Though it may seem that DNA testing is a futuristic idea, it is actually a reality for dairy producers, and it is here to stay. For years dairy producers have put DNA technology to work in their herds by testing for genetic recessives like CVM and BLAD, or to identify carriers of red coat color genes. But now it is time to take the next step and utilize DNA testing to make marketing, mating and selection decisions. Analysis of economically important traits, through DNA technology, can complement existing on-farm breeding and management protocols to allow for the most in-depth look ever into an animal's genetic potential early in life.

"IGENITY recently combined multiple DNA tests into a single profile called IGENITY MultiMARK," says Jennifer Daniels, associate product manager of IGENITY®. "The IGENITY MultiMARK profile can be run from the same tissue sample used to test for CVM, BLAD and red coat color, so producers can have a comprehensive profile of inside information on each animal to make more confident selection and management decisions."

Helping producers achieve goals faster

The inside information producers can gain from a comprehensive profile can help them enter the new era of dairy cattle production. Producers now have more options and tools available for selection and management than ever before if they take advantage of the information available through IGENITY MultiMARK.

"The IGENITY MultiMARK profile goes beyond screening for genetic recessive diseases," Daniels says. "It helps savvy producers to optimize cattle breeding and management. It provides an easy-to-use, integrated report detailing the results from the most comprehensive DNA profile available in the industry."

Dairy producers should use the comprehensive power of IGENITY, today, to:

1. Identify carriers of CVM, BLAD or red coat color genes
2. Fully profile multiple genetic markers of economic importance — and provide a wealth of inside information about an animal's genetic potential — all from a single DNA sample
3. Test heifers early in their lives to provide a powerful genetic basis for the many breeding, selection and marketing decisions dairy producers make throughout the animals' lifetimes
4. Apply the latest DNA testing technology as it continues to play a larger role in the dairy industry

Better decisions — greater competitive edge

Every dairy operation is different with unique challenges and goals. Regardless of the goal of the dairy, comprehensive DNA profiles allow producers to choose the most important traits for their operation and apply advanced information to everyday decisions they make — as a result, helping to achieve their herd goals faster.

"We have seen how this advanced science can be turned into success in both heifer pens and milking parlors

across the country," Daniels says. "IGENITY is committed to making DNA profiling practical for producers, regardless of size, geography or management system."

Producers have to first consider the goals they have for their operation. Is it industry-leading genetics or high-value heifers, or perhaps it is simply more profitable production? Whatever the goals, comprehensive DNA profiling through IGENITY MultiMARK provides the inside information to help producers succeed through:

- More savvy breeding decisions
- More confident heifer selection (buying or selling)
- More informed selection of donor dams and recipients
- More knowledgeable voluntary culling decisions

An evolving science

This comprehensive DNA profile of IGENITY MultiMARK is a powerful tool that can provide immediate value to all segments of the dairy industry. However, dairy producers should expect DNA discoveries to continue.

"Advancements in DNA technology are being made every day, and IGENITY MultiMARK will evolve to include new discoveries," Daniels says. "Savvy producers who put DNA technology to use today will be in the best position to take advantage of new DNA advances as they become available."

DNA technology is here to stay and will become more advanced over time. It only makes sense for producers to make marketing and selection decisions based on the most inside information possible.

"Progressive producers need to use all the information they have available to achieve herd goals faster," Daniels says. "This will only help to make their operations more efficient and profitable over time."

For a complete list of DNA products available through IGENITY MultiMARK, click http://us.igenity.com/dairy/igenity_dairy_products.html.

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"Our vision at Kingsmill is to produce industry-leading genetics, and we will use all available tools and technology to help us achieve our goals faster," says Mitch Hockett, partner at Kingsmill Farm II and assistant professor at North Carolina State University. "We have been watching the development of DNA technology with enthusiasm and have confidence that it can help — both breeders and buyers — make better-informed selection, management and marketing decisions throughout an animal's lifetime."

IGENITY MultiMARK is a comprehensive DNA profile involving a wide range of genetic markers that evaluate traits of economic importance. By profiling every Kingsmill consignment with IGENITY MultiMARK, Kingsmill can maintain its competitive edge in the industry and provide buyers greater confidence in their purchasing decisions.

"Select Sires is pleased to be working with Kingsmill Farm," says Chuck Sattler, genetics program vice president at Select Sires. "Kingsmill's vision has helped it develop an outstanding set of elite Holstein genetics, and now it can take its breeding program to the next level by using advanced DNA technology — available only through IGENITY MultiMARK profiles."

Buyers will have a chance to be a part of Holstein-breed history at the Summit at Kingsmill Sale on June 9 at the farm in Durham, N.C. The sale is set to be a celebration of international genetics that progressive buyers of elite Holstein genetics will not want to miss.

"We believe that in order to achieve our goals and help the industry, DNA technology should be used along with traditional selection tools," Hockett says. "This allows us to know more than we ever have before about the genetic potential of the animals we market and gives buyers confidence as we help them build their own herd with industry-leading genetics."

Hockett adds that the farm chose IGENITY MultiMARK to profile all consignments because it is simply the most comprehensive DNA analysis in the industry. The inside information revealed by IGENITY is a powerful and increasingly important complement to existing on-farm selection and management tools.

"Results of IGENITY MultiMARK are reported in a simple, easy-to-use way, which helps producers easily understand and manage this advanced information," Sattler says. "To get started with IGENITY MultiMARK, producers should talk to their Select Sires representative today."

Formed in 2003, Kingsmill Farm II, LLC, is a partnership between David Falk, Sharon Norton and Mitch Hockett. With approximately 900 milking cows and 80 ET donor dams, the farm focuses on elite, industry-leading, registered Holstein genetics. Kingsmill II strives to bring production and type together in the animals it owns, breeds and markets. By taking the best genetics available and using bulls that are not only in demand, but provide corrective matings, it produces highly sought-after offspring. Kingsmill II is involved in all parts of the dairy industry, from state-of-the-art technology and research to industry-leading production and show-winning type.

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"Merial is very excited to have someone of Ron Long's caliber working with our team," says Jennifer Daniels, associate product manager of IGENITY. "His knowledge of producers' needs and his understanding of their questions related to breeding programs will be extremely helpful to Select Sires representatives who service and sell IGENITY DNA profiles and the producer customers who use them."

Long — a legend in the dairy industry

Based in Marysville, Ohio, Long will be a liaison between Merial and Select Sires. His primary responsibilities will be to lead training sessions, on-farm consultations and customer meetings for all of Select Sires' 10 regional cooperatives. These activities focus on educating the Select Sires sales team and producers on opportunities associated with DNA testing.

"I'm looking forward to working with Merial and Select Sires," Long says. "DNA testing is gaining in significance to the dairy industry, and I am eager to work with producers to help them use DNA profiles to make more confident selection, management and marketing decisions for their herds."

Dairy producers are no doubt familiar with Long's most recent work as vice president, dairy sire procurement for Select Sires. His 30 years of service to Select Sires began with laying the groundwork for the Select Mating Service™ (SMS) and then with his involvement for many years selecting the best young sires to enter Select Sires' Program for Genetic Advancement™ (PGA) young sire program.

"Ron is very well-respected by our field representatives and customers alike," says David Thorbahn, general manager of Select Sires. "His years of practical experience in genetic selection and herd mating will be a tremendous asset in helping producers best apply the advanced technology of IGENITY DNA tests and services."

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To ensure accuracy, Merial requires a robust quality control program at the lab, both during the design and setup of the test as well as routinely thereafter. For IGENITY MultiMARK, Merial put rigorous standards of quality in place during the design of each of the lab analyses. Currently, routine quality assurance steps involving three independent approaches are performed:

- One approach is to confirm accuracy by periodically running samples of “known results.” For example, a previous IGENITY RealRED™ sample will be retested to make sure the analysis returns the same result.
- The second approach is to send samples to separate labs to compare results. There should be a high level of agreement between the labs — if not, an immediate investigation is required.
- Finally, duplicate samples should be submitted “blindly” to the lab. That is, the same sample is sent to the lab twice, with two different identifications, to confirm that the results are the same from each.

Merial is confident of the results reported through IGENITY MultiMARK. In fact, any producer that questions a result can ask that the sample be reanalyzed for confirmation of the results.