

**Cooperation between
Nordic Dairy Organisations
– Easy and Difficult**

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Cooperation between Nordic Dairy Organisations

- Driving forces
- Scope
- Experiences

Driving forces

Around year 2000:

- Arla Foods was constituted and was not willing to put resources on similar projects both in DK and SE
- Letter of intent to constitute Viking Genetics. The knowledge that breeding evaluation would be more effective if using the whole Nordic cattle populations.

Generally:

- Similar ways to work, to think about soft values and to organize in the Nordic countries
- Similar development processes around dairy production
- Fewer farmers to pay increasing (?) costs
- Possibilities to make common investments which were not realistic for any single part
- Good possibilities to coordinate expert areas

Present cooperations

- Nordic Cattle Breeding Evaluation (NAV)
- NorFor
- Nordic Dairy Cattle R&D
- Dairy Nordic
- IT-tools
- Harmonization between milk recordings

Pre project:

- Common cattle data base

and

Why not more cooperation?

- Long and hard processes to coordinate ways of action, business models and IT-systems, especially when field work is involved
- Costly initial development (especially IT)
- Cultural differences in decision groups and project groups
- Conservatism. Unsecurity or unwillingness to give up the own sovereignty of decision

What's easy, what's difficult?

- Personal confidence
- Decision making
- Project management
- Customer focus vs academic/ technical focus
- Cultural differences
- Language

Personal confidence

- Balance between effective formal meetings and time consuming social activities for all people that can influence the cooperation
- Make project groups with at least some people, that know each other before
- The ambition to develop great and important things together and to have fun is probably the most important driving forces

Decision making

- Optimal involvement of different levels of decision making (political, managerial, project)
 - The boards (or corresponding) must support
 - Management decides about principles and directives and approves the results
 - Project leader responds for the project management and results

Project management

- The project leader – expert or generalist
- When formalize a separate company (if necessary)?
- Project planning
 - Important that everybody have a common picture of the goal
 - Important to ensure an agreement of the way to the goal
- Use the strong driving force in enthusiastic and competent co-workers
- Extreme professional skills in combined expert groups
- Resource conflict between project work and line work in the home organization (virtual organization conflict)
- Internal and external communication

Customer/user focus

- Balance between expressed needs from customers/users and new possibilities based on innovations
- Preparation and education of the users (farmers, consultants etc) in due time

Cultural differences between countries

- Different ways to express one's opinion
- Methods and speed in decision making
- Different needs of consensus
- Leadership style

Are Swedes really that normal?

”...Other people on the planet believe that the sole purpose of a meeting is to produce decisions.

Swedish meetings are short but many. They are arranged to give Bengan, Maggan and Lasse a chance to say what they think. If you want to reach a decision then you’ll have to arrange another meeting, because in the meantime Bengan, Maggan and Lasse have to go back to the office and ask Ninni, Kicki and Titti what they think.

This is, in Swedish, called the *förankringsprocess*. If Swedes mention the word “process”, then it’s better not to be in a hurry. There is a process for everything. This one means getting everybody involved in everything...”

Colin Moon

Swedish: förankringsprocess

=

Danish: overbevisningsprocess

So...
**Cooperation between Nordic Dairy
Organisations
is
often easy , sometimes difficult
and always extremely interesting and
inspiring**