



Every month 18 bull calves are admitted into the Genetic Station of Carrù, at an average age of 45 days. The calves are placed in a quarantine barn in order not to come into contact with the other calves of the Station, as provided for by the health regulations.

In this first period of three months, - which is a delicate one due to possible adaptation problems to the new environment, to the collective boxes, the new feeding, etc. -, the bull calves are checked on their monthly weight gain and on the absence of defects. Furthermore the consanguinity test is carried out, which is at the basis of the genetic selection.

Health Inspections

At their admittance the subjects undergo all the health inspections required by law for admittance into a Selection Station, in order to verify the absence of the following diseases:



Tubercolosi (TBC)

Brucellosi (BRC)

Leucosi bovina enzootica (LBE)

Leptosirosi Bovina

Rinotracheite bovina infettiva (IBR)

Diarrea Virale Bovina (BVD)

Blue Tongue (BT)...

During the quarantine phase other two tests are carried out before moving the calves definitively into the 'real' Genetic Station, where they will undergo the Performance Test.

Feeding

The daily ration consists of three different types of food: milk, feed-stuff and hay. The rations of artificial milk are progressively reduced up to weaning at about 4 months of age. At the same time the rations of 'weaning' feed-stuff are increased, the limited starch composition of this feed-stuff (32.6%) allows the regulation of weight increase in this delicate phase. The third ration component, the hay, is available ad lib.

The choice of the 15 best bull calves

At the end of the three months of adaptation/weaning a first selection is carried out which results in the continuation of the Test of the best 15 calves and the removal of 3 calves which are returned to the owners.

In order to be able to continue, the calves must:

- * not have any health problems
- * have no morphological defects (arthrogryphosis, thick tongue, short-jawed) or genetic defects
- * have their pedigree confirmed by the consanguinity analysis through DNA comparative
- * have shown during the first three months to have a good growth potential

After a last Health Inspection the 15 chosen subjects are transferred into the barns of the Genetic Station to continue the Performance Test.