



The first feedback meeting HAPPY Beef Cattle took place in Andelaroche (FR-03) on July 26, 2017. 28 breeders audited during the winter were present as well as their veterinarians from the beginning of the meeting and 40 other breeders joined them in the late afternoon.

This was an opportunity to introduce the Happy approach and to work with breeders and veterinarians on the animation to be implemented around the happiness of humans and animals in order to build a collective project and especially by involving the breeders from the starting of the project.

The work was done in small groups of 6 to 7 breeders so that everyone could take part in the debates.



An approach which shared experiences carried out in breeding

In a context of denouncing breeders more than to value their work, it would seem important to us to highlight the success of many of them and the relationships that farmers share with animals. After two years of initiating the process in beef cattle farms, we began the audits last winter in breeding farms at the Charolais region.

The Happy approach is based on the identification of the happiness of animals and farmers in breeding. We define it by studying 130 criteria.

For breeders, the concept of happiness is similar to the performance of the herd: the absence of a health problem in the herd is necessarily a positive value for the breeder, as well as the achievement of the set goals: vacation weeks, working hours Per day, level of EBITDA (earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation, and amortization) and also compensation.

For animals, all aspects of livestock production are analyzed: diseases: their number and their management (prevention, vaccination strategy), zootechnical results: breeding performance, calves dispatching, animal management: management of calving, Colostrum, allotment, dehorning, access to food, water. Their body condition is measured, as well as signs of injuries, cleanliness and filling of the rumen, this latter indicates the feed intake satisfactory and the access of the animal to food.

We also study the building: ventilation, luminosity, floor coverings, surfaces per cow, number of water access points, areas for animal practice and quality of sleeping. We perform the knee and spinning lady tests. The Knee test is to let them fall to their knees, if the operator feels a pain or was left with wet knees, this is not satisfactory, neither for the farmer nor the animal. The spinning lady test is to try to make a complete turn on a foot. Under normal conditions, it is impossible to make a quarter turn, in a building with slick floors, it is possible but not satisfactory.

We also assess the behaviour of animals: their flight distance, their behavior towards a stranger, their curiosity for the human being, their dispatching in the building, the docility of the calves, and the presence of aggressive behavior between animals. All these points reflect the social life to farmer and between animals and also the quality of human-animal and animal-animal interactions.

The Happy approach is also the opportunity to compile the best practices of those who limit the problems as much as possible and who live an extraordinary adventure with their animals.

In our database are therefore collected the practices of HAPPY FARMERS. We thus have a database that allows us, during the trainings, to rely on data from the field, for both the practices to be set up and for the objectives to be reached. The guidance is more credible, the objectives achievable and our recommendations reinforced.

What are the characteristics of breeders?

Description of the farms

Table 1: Livestock description: Livestock structure

	Happy Farms			Audited Farms		
	Average	Min	Max	Average	Min	Max
Labor Unit	1,3			1,4		
Farm UAA	140,4	75,0	270,0	166,3	82,0	485,0
Number of cows	94	60,0	200,0	110	55,0	240,0
Number of Bulls	3	0,0	8,0	4	0,0	8,0
Number of heifers	24	12,0	65,0	28	6,0	70,0
Average age of the herd	4,7	3,7	9,0	3,3	2,8	8,0
Number of total calving	94	54,0	198,0	106	50,0	223,0
Number of total calves	99	56,0	214,0	111	50,0	237,0

Very close proximity breeding, a trend to fewer cows but older in the Happy Herds.

Table 2: description of the farms: the farmer in his farm (1)

	Happy Farms			Audited Farms		
	Average	Min	Max	Average	Min	Max
Spouse on the farm (% of farmers.)	60,00%			39,13%		
Professional positions (% of farmers)	10,00%			13,04%		
Extra-professional mandates (% of farmers)	60,00%			47,83%		
Target of working time per day (H)	50,00%			30,43%		
Effective of working time per day (H)	9,6	7,0	11,0	9,5	7,0	13,0
Working time: Target achieved (% of farmers)	10,2	8,0	13,0	10,3	7,0	12,0
objectif of number of holiday week (n)	50,00%			39,13%		
Number of weeks of actual vacation (n)	1,9	1,0	4,0	1,5	0,0	4,0
Number of weeks of vacation reached (% of farmers)	1,1	0,0	2,0	0,6	0,0	2,0
Positive outlook of close entourage (% of farmers)	30,00%			26,09%		
Open to the public by wild Public (% of farmers)	100,00%			82,61%		
Animal trainings at least once a year (% of farmers)	100,00%			69,57%		
	90,00%			86,96%		

Less weeks of vacation and more working hours per day, this is the conclusion shared by all breeders. With less than 2 weeks of vacation per year and nearly 60 hours of weekly work, the reduction in working time has not yet reached beef cattle farms. It should be pointed out that half of the breeders Happy nevertheless declared that they had reached their goal of work per day. A trend towards emotion was observed. Good assumption, at a higher proportion, a positive outlook for the breeder entourage and the wide public. Cause or consequence of the greatest hosting practice in their farms?

Description of the breeders

Table 3: Description of the breeders: motivations

	Happy Farms	Audited Farms
Passion des animaux	40,00%	65,22%
Working conditions	0,00%	0,00%
Freedom to work	30,00%	26,09%
Control of life	10,00%	4,35%
compensation	0,00%	0,00%
Parents estate	20,00%	4,35%

The passion for animals and the freedom granted by the business represent for both groups more than three-quarters of their excitement for their professional choice.

Table 4: Breeders descriptions: most important tasks

		Happy Farms	Audited Farms
Animals Care	Exciting	60,0%	65,5%
	Binding	0,0%	9,0%
Calving	Exciting	20,0%	26,5%
	Binding	0,0%	4,5%
Food and mulching	Exciting	0,0%	4,5%
	Binding	0,0%	4,5%
Work of maintenance	Exciting	10,0%	0,0%
	Binding	50,0%	26,5%
Cereals work	Exciting	0,0%	0,0%
	Binding	0,0%	4,5%
Haymaking	Exciting	0,0%	0,0%
	Binding	0,0%	0,0%
Administrative	Exciting	0,0%	0,0%
	Binding	40,0%	0,0%

Unsurprisingly, animal care and calving are considered to be highly exciting breeders, while maintenance (buildings, equipment) and administration are considered constraints.

When asked about future developments, %80 of the Happy breeders and %91.30 of the audited breeders declared that they plan to change their structure.

Health and zootechnical results

Table 6 : health results

Calf mortality rate before 2 days	2,82%	0,00%	6,58%	4,20%	0,00%	10,16%
calf Mortality rate (2 months - weaning)	0,05%	0,00%	0,47%	0,49%	0,00%	2,15%
Morbidity rate of calves less than 2 days	0,85%	0,00%	3,57%	2,23%	0,00%	12,71%
% Cow morbidity	10,01%	2,61%	21,43%	8,11%	3,64%	18,46%
Digestive disorders	0,14%	0,00%	1,43%	0,35%	0,00%	1,82%
Respiratory disorders	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%	0,04%	0,00%	0,95%
Endometritis	1,11%	0,00%	4,35%	1,04%	0,00%	4,00%
Non-deliverances	4,56%	0,87%	8,57%	3,49%	0,00%	9,23%
Matrix turning	1,17%	0,00%	3,17%	1,43%	0,00%	6,15%
Matrix Twists	1,14%	0,00%	8,57%	0,52%	0,00%	2,00%
Abortions > 100 days	1,90%	0,00%	4,50%	1,21%	0,00%	3,64%
Abortions < 100 days	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%
Late calving	3,54%	0,00%	8,70%	2,84%	0,00%	13,33%

No difference observed between breeders. This is a breeding with excellent technical results. These excellent results are partly explained by the practices of calf breeding:

Table 6 : practices of calf rearing:

	Happy Farms	Audited Farms
% Good colostrum	58,00%	42,91%
% Medium quality of colostrum	33,50%	52,09%
% Poor colostrum	9,00%	13,75%
The calf receives colostrum within 2 hours of calving	60,00%	56,52%
Quantity of colostrum ingested by the calf within 2 hours of calving	2,5	2,4
The calf is drenched if it does not drink	100,00%	100,00%
Fresh colostrum is given to calves	100,00%	100,00%
Refrigerated colostrum is given to calves	0,00%	0,00%
Frozen colostrum is given to calves	50,00%	47,83%
Colostro supplements are given to calves	70,00%	60,87%
The keeping of the refrigerated colostrum is compliant	100,00%	100,00%
The keeping of the frozen colostrum is compliant	100,00%	100,00%
The distribution temperature of the colostrum is compliant	100,00%	100,00%
Equipment used		
Satisfactory Quantity of the material	30,00%	34,78%
Cleanliness of the equipment	90,00%	95,65%
Cleaning of the equipment	90,00%	95,65%
Water available from week 2	90,00%	69,57%
Fibers distributed from week 2	90,00%	73,91%
Concentrates distributed from week 2	80,00%	73,91%
Salt available	40,00%	47,83%

These practices show good control of calf rearing. It may be noted that if the number of specific material for colostrum seems insufficient, their cleanliness and the cleaning technique are excellent. Contamination by bacteria is a major factor in the failure of immune transfer, so it is important to ensure containers as clean as possible. In dairy farming, the practice of pasteurization is tending to take over.

Table 7 : Reproduction

Primiparous calving-claving interval	380	360	400	374	359	420
Multiparous calving-claving interval	366	340	380	376	360	420
Herd calving-claving interval	370	358	380	374	361	420
Goal rate of herd renewal	22%	10,00%	30,00%	25%	20,00%	30,00%
The current renewal rate	23%	18,33%	33,75%	23%	14,94%	31,11%
The renewal rate - Goal achieved	70,00%			47,83%		
Goal rate of herd reform	20%	10,00%	30,00%	24%	20,00%	30,00%
The current rate of the reform	22%	11,67%	31,43%	21%	12,50%	30,00%
The reform rate-Goal achieved	70,00%			43,48%		

Reproduction is controlled in both groups. We can point out a trend towards achieving more frequent goals among Happy.

These very positive reproductive results are to be compared with food practices.

Table 8 : Food

	Happy farms	Audited farms
Covering EN of Primiparous EP	77,78%	76,92%
Covering PN of Primiparous EP	100,00%	92,31%
Covering EN of Primiparous AP	55,56%	80,00%
Covering PN of Primiparous AP	100,00%	90,00%
Covering EN of Multiparous EP	66,67%	76,92%
Covering PN of Multiparous EP	100,00%	92,31%

EN: Energy Needs; EP: End of pregnancy; PN: Protein Needs; AP After parturition, OE: Oligo-element.

Contrary to what is usually observed, it may be noted an excellent coverage of the protein needs and under-coverage of the energy needs which seems, for the latter point, more acute in the group Happy. Conversely, the coverage of oligo-elements and vitamins seems to be better respected among the Happy.

Table 9 : Food balances

	Happy farms	Audited farms
Covering EN of Primiparous EP	77,78%	76,92%
Covering PN of Primiparous EP	100,00%	92,31%
Covering EN of Primiparous AP	55,56%	80,00%
Covering PN of Primiparous AP	100,00%	90,00%
Covering EN of Multiparous EP	66,67%	76,92%
Covering PN of Multiparous EP	100,00%	92,31%

The technical results with the conventional parameters doesn't show difference in our sample between breeders who have validated the Happy criteria of those that are being acquired. Results on water are less efficient.

Table 10 : Water

	Happy farms	Audited Farms
Device flow	20,00%	8,70%
Number of drinking points	30,00%	13,04%
Access to drinking points	90,00%	86,96%
Cleaning of troughs	30,00%	39,13%
Cleanliness of troughs	80,00%	69,57%
Water carried out analyses	10,00%	13,04%

Water is a constant in our audits and is often poorly controlled in animal breeding: the equipment, the flow, the number of drinking troughs and their accessibility often represent risk factors for animals. This is also the case here with too few analyzes carried out and too often insufficient flow.

Description of comfort and buildings

A crawl space of more than 1 month is achieved in more than 80% of the Happy breeders (against 52.2%)

The Knee test is to let them fall to their knees, if the operator feels a pain or was left with wet knees, discomfort or feel any moisture. The test is then clearly "positive".

This knee test shows a difference between farms.

Table 11 : The knee test

	Happy farms	Audited Farms
Knee test satisfying sleeping calves	80,00%	47,83%
Knee test satisfying sleeping cows	40,00%	8,70%

These differences are partly due to the design of the buildings.

Table 12: Ventilation of Buildings

	Happy Farms	Audited Farms
Satisfactory air intake (side opening)	80,00%	78,26%
Satisfactory air outlet (ridge surface)	60,00%	47,83%
Satisfactory windbreak	70,00%	47,83%
Smoke OK	70,00%	39,13%
Satisfactory air speed	80,00%	73,91%
Satisfactory average building temperature	70,00%	86,96%
Satisfactory average building Humidity	90,00%	86,96%
Brightness of the building	80,00%	34,78%

The results, quite similar in both groups and demonstrating once again a good mastery, show a trend towards a better atmosphere (Exit, Windbreak, Smoke and Brightness) in Happy breeding.

Animals

Table 13: scoring of animals

	Happy farms	Audited Farms
Body condition scoring of Primiparous BB	3,1	3
Body condition scoring of Multiparous BB	3	3
% Fat Primiparous BB	0%	0%
% Fat Multiparous BB	8,30%	10,50%
% Lean Primiparous BB	0%	0%
% Lean Multiparous BB	15,60%	7%
% Primiparous deteriorated cleanliness BB	50%	65%
% Multiparous deteriorated cleanliness BB	25%	30%
% Primiparous abnormal legs BB	32,17%	32%
% Primiparous abnormal legs BB	24,70%	31,90%
Hocks Herds wounds	0%	0%

Here we find the manifestation on animals, of the perfectible atmosphere noted above. The point of cleanliness is to be observed. As indicated in the graph, the health impact is very low because the other risk factors are controlled but this situation can lead to a negative perception by people outside the breeding or even customers of his breeding.

Table 14 : Animals behavior

	Happy	Not Happy
Average flight distance	100%	52,80%
Absence of fears of strangers	100%	100%
Animals curiosity	100%	23,80%
Animals dispatching in the building	100%	86,90%
Satisfactory rising and lying down of animals	100%	95,60%
calves docility	100%	73,90%
Satisfactory human - adults animals relationship	80%	39%
Satisfactory human - young animals relationship	90%	52,10%

It is here, with the achievement of the set objectives, that the more significant differences are found between the two groups.

The average flight distance is measured with the extended arm at 45 ° (relative to the body) and the distance at which the animal begins to step back. The test is usually done with animals with the feed fence. Animals curiosity is considered normal when about 10 cows are around the operator at least 2 minutes. The docility of the calves is evaluated by noting the number of calves that must be approached to reach 2 of them. A maximum of four is tolerated, beyond that, the situation is qualified as unsatisfactory. Interactions with animals are evaluated by validating the time devoted specifically to these tasks: vocal interactions, strokes, passage in the middle of the animals.

Our audited sample of breeders of last winter is not representative of the Charolais region breeders. These are breeders with excellent performance and good practices already well established.

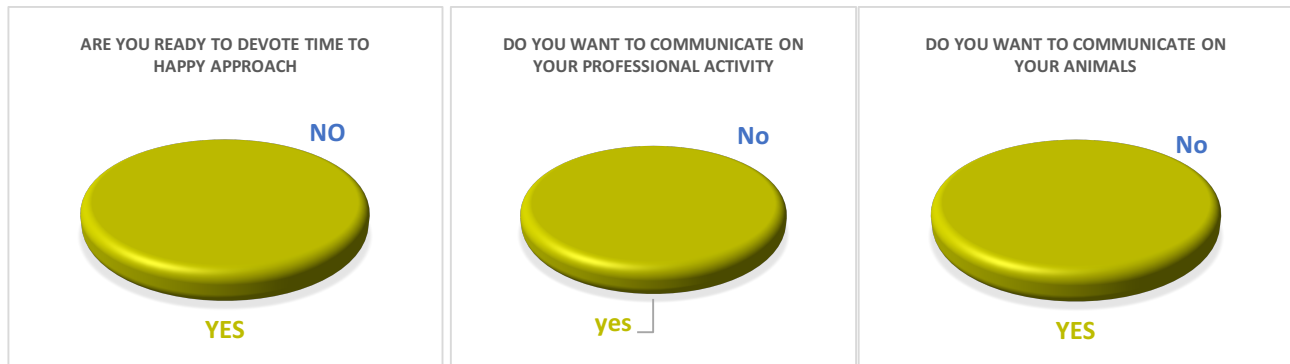
After all, there is an emerging trend between those who are already certified Happy and those who will be certified soon. The main differences are mainly based on the behaviour of their animals and on their "mood" since they are plentiful likely to have achieved their objectives.

These results allow us to approve our survey and also allow to put into perspective the comfort of the animals, the zootechnical performances and the breeder's fulfillment.

The second part of the day was devoted to group work on the notion of happiness in breeding and the expectations of breeders.

What are the breeder's involvement ?

Graphs 1, 2, 3: breeders and communication



The involvement of breeders is total and intense! In a context of mistrust of the breeding, even of claim, the breeders wish to take the floor again.

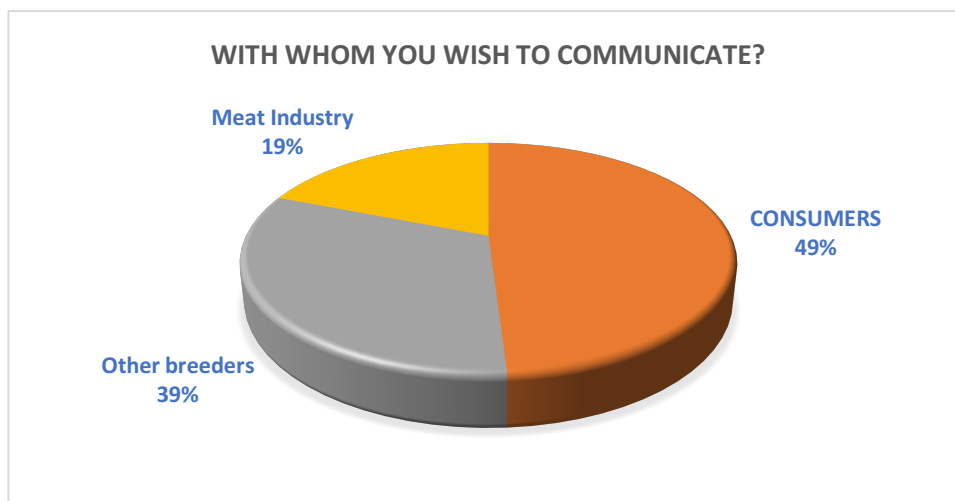
After too long delegated communication, breeders want to resume control "our grandparents have fed the world and journalists accused us of destroying the planet, we must change that! ".

They are aware of their current limitations "We do not know how, we have not learned" as well as their arguments: "our genetics, our landscapes, the control and the quality of feeding our animals are assets to showcase". "We work naturally, we use high quality products of that we produce on the farm"

It remains to find again the habit of sharing "we should meet more often between breeders, share our know-how and associate us to communicate"

Transparency does not frighten them, they even want to make an argument "we have nothing to hide, on the other hand we must acquire a good pedagogy! And" targeting children, it is the children who educate parents now! "

Graph 4 : With whom communicate ?



The Open Days are privileged, but also social networks, regional newspapers and the mainstream press.

Regarding high stakes for the sector, it is important of doing collective communication and prevent any individual communication as repeatedly been shown to be ineffective.

Happiness is a topic that can serve as a teaser even if "the notion of happiness is surprising, not usual, but not embarrassing" All of them spotlight their passion for animals and their businesses: "even if the workload

is important, we can still have teatime snack with our children, it is a luxury is also that happiness. Few, if any breeders can do it "

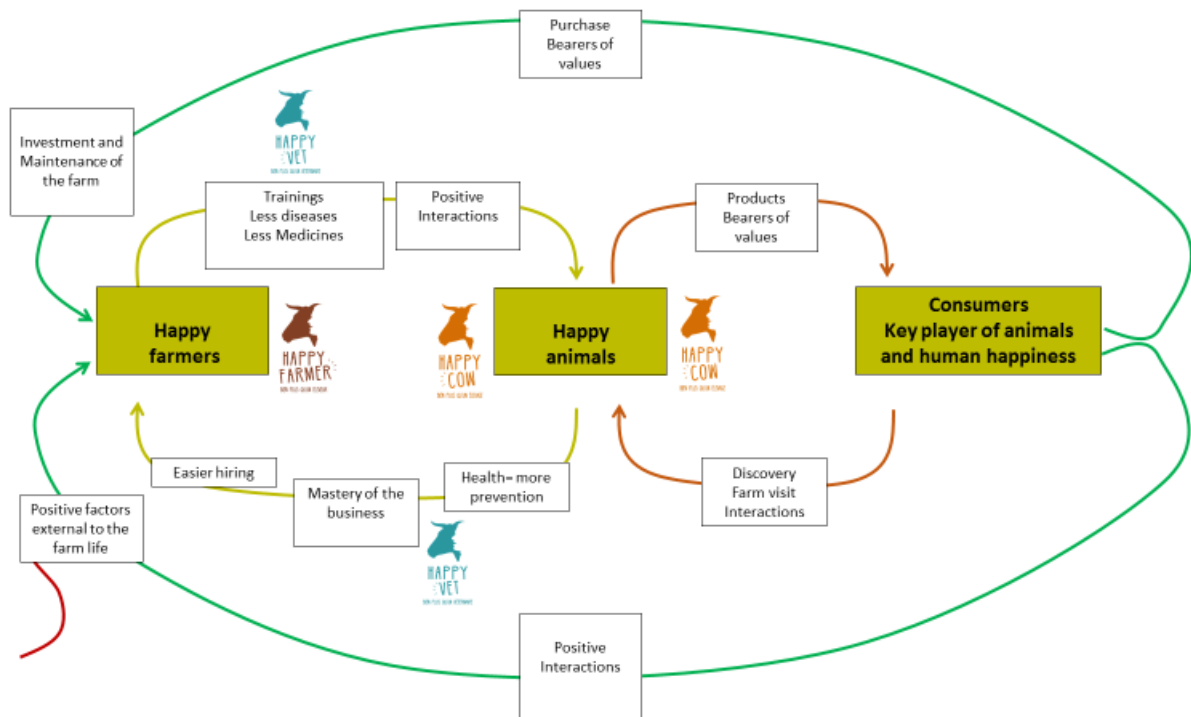
All the breeders interviewed say they care about the happiness of the animals.

The Happy approach meets their expectations and corresponds to the achievement of their work "we must set up a Happy! " We need gratitude "

This happy first suckler day has laid the foundation of the joint work to be set up the upcoming months. New breeders will join the Happy Farms network, new breeders will be audited.

Together we will work on communicating the quality of the work done, man-animal relations and the happiness of all in breeding to make it a Value Added for all: from animal to consumer.

It is important to provide consumers with understandable benchmarks and to allow them, through their purchases of selected products, a respectful production of human and animals.



At the end of the day the breeders HAPPY were awarded their diploma recognizing the quality of their performances.



Within a few weeks we will also give them the "marketing package" to initiate the communication on the happiness of the animals: business cards, the Happy notebook, leaflets explaining the approach and also posters!

