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New Zealand's LIC improving herd genetic diversity in collaboration with Sexing Technologies

22 November 2024 | News

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The LIC, a New Zealand agri-tech and herd improvement cooperative, has teamed up with a US genetics company, Sexing Technologies (ST) to empowers livestock farmers through the delivery of superior genetics and technology. The collaboration is focused on breeding the best cows to improve the national herd.

Richard Spelman, LIC Chief Scientist said â??Collaborating with ST to access their genetics means that weâ??ll be bringing in genetic diversity and traits of interest, such as improved udder conformation. The genetics will be available for New Zealand LIC farmers in 2026â?•.

ST Chief Executive Juan Morenoâ??s said â??working with LIC to access our herd genetic diversity is an exciting opportunity for ST. We have a vision to help create the best animals and the collaboration will mean that LIC, and therefore New Zealand farmers, will have access to US elite breeding heifersâ?•.

Richard Spelman, LIC Chief Scientist, said, â??This multi- year project is part of LICâ??s core business to invest in breeding programmes and research so we can offer the genetic diversity to our farmers.

Last year, LIC generated embryos for specific traits using elite LIC sires and a number of STâ??s elite female donors.

These were implanted at ST to create a first progeny of calves (F1) â?? these first animals are half US, half NZ bred. The resultant sires will have semen collected and will be available to LIC New Zealand farmers in 2026. The heifers born in USA

will then be used to generate embryos with elite LIC sires utilising cutting-edge US technology and skills. The male sexed embryos will be sent to NZ to provide future LIC semen for breeding, supporting continued genetic improvements.

â??Weâ??ve listened to our farmers â?? theyâ??ve been asking for greater diversity in our cow population, as well as improvement in udders to support the greater production per cow. Weâ??re excited to leverage off US cutting edge technology, as well as fast-tracking access to superior udder traitsâ?. â??Signing the contract with ST technologies USA marks an exciting step in the future of our genetic diversity,â? said Richard.