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Animal breeding strategies can improve meat quality attributes within entire populations

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**Animal breeding strategies can improve meat quality attributes within entire populations**

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**Abstract**

The contribution of animal breeding to changes in animal performance is well documented across a range of species. Once genetic variation in a trait exists, then breeding to improve the characteristics of that trait is possible, if so desired. Considerable genetic variation exists in a range of meat quality attributes across a range of species. The genetic variation that exists for meat quality is as large as observed for most performance traits; thus, within a well-structured breeding program, rapid genetic gain for meat quality could be possible. The rate of genetic gain can be augmented through the integration of DNA-based technologies into the breeding program; such DNA-based technologies should, however, be based on thousands of DNA markers dispersed across the entire genome. Genetic and genomic technologies can also have beneficial impact outside the farm gate as a tool to segregate carcasses or meat cuts based on expected meat quality features.

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