



# **More meat on the bone when selecting beef bulls to cross with dairy cows**

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# More meat on the bone when selecting beef bulls to cross with dairy cows

## Background:

~ 57% self sufficiency of beef in Sweden  
~ 60% calves are born in dairy herds

~ 24% inseminations with beef breed on dairy 2023/2024

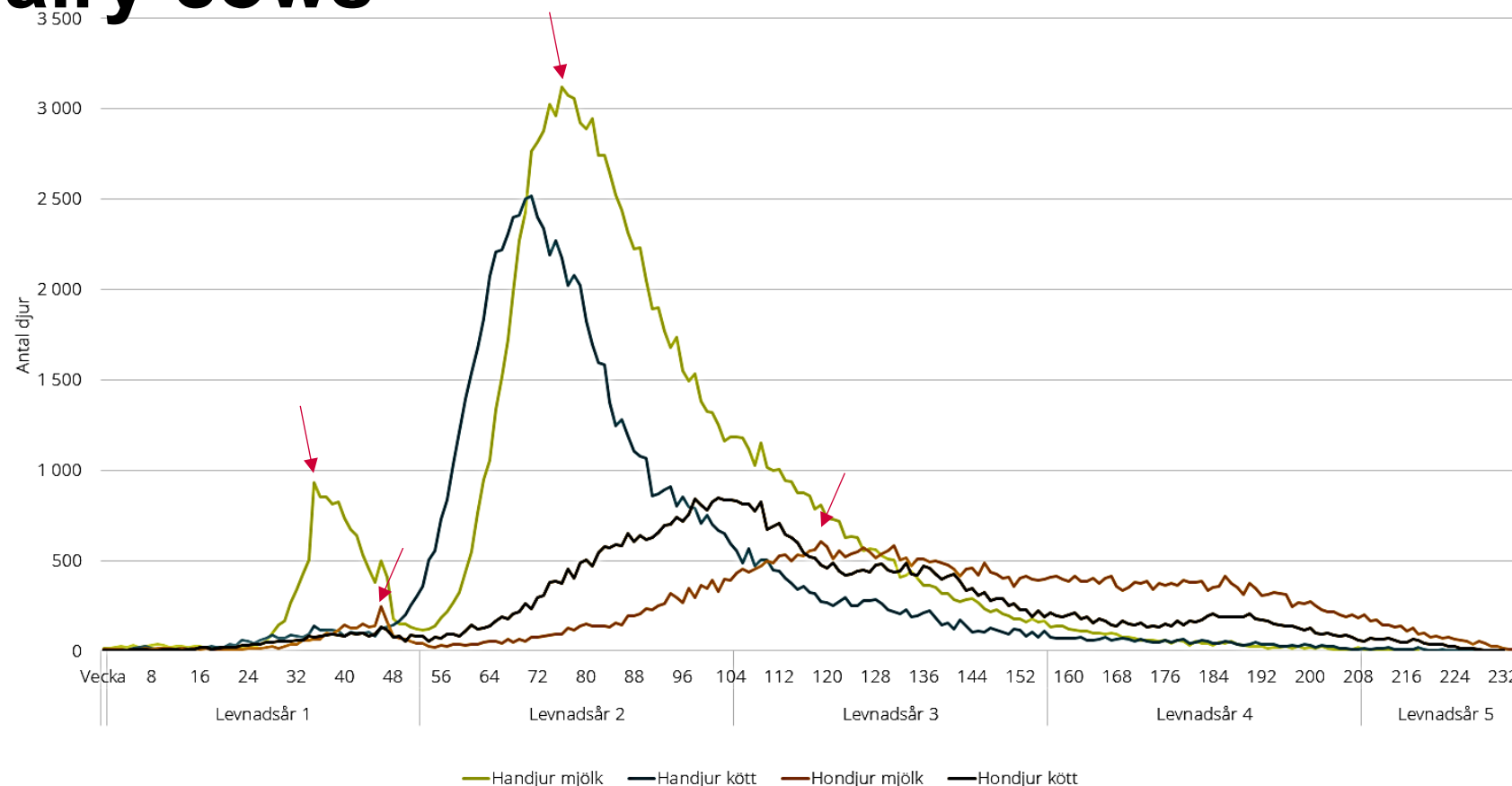


Figure 2.9. Slaughtered cattle born 2017, age in weeks when slaughtered shown for different sexes and production type of the herd where they were born (Swedish board of agriculture, 2022).

# More meat on the bone – Study 1

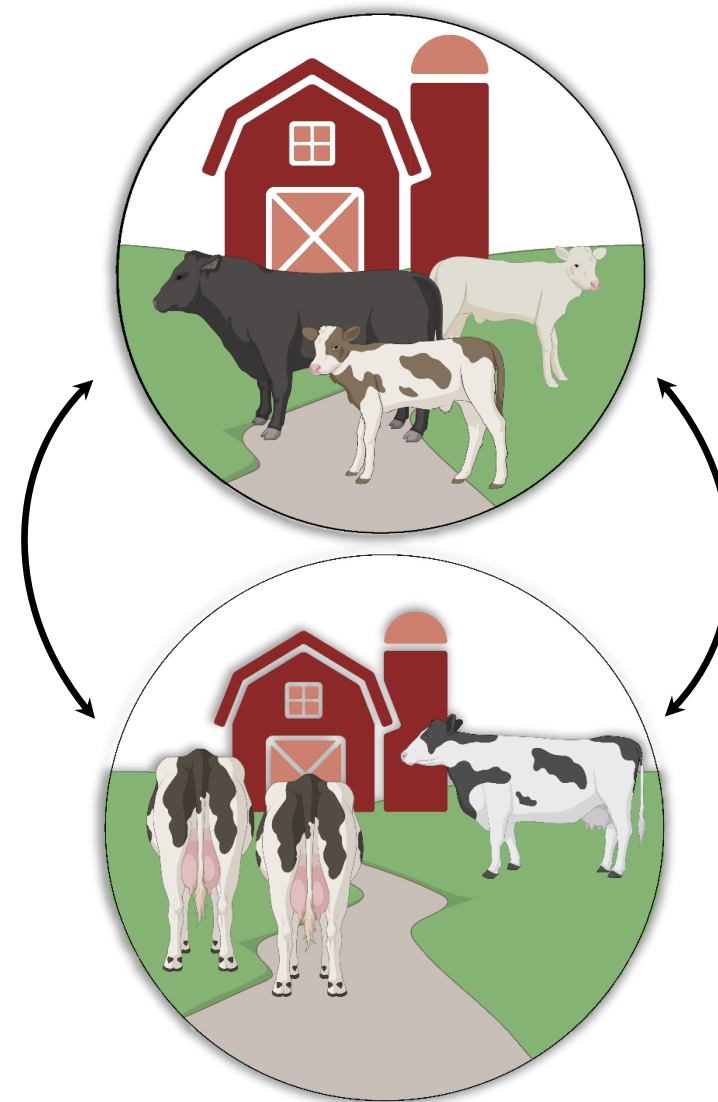
- Investigate farmers' views on the use of beef bull semen or Beef-Dairy (BxD) crosses and how that affects production systems, breeding and management strategies used
- Statistically describe and define Swedish production systems for BxD crosses
- Calculate new economic weights for updated breeding indexes, Nordic Beef on Dairy Index (NBDI)
- Investigate how well suited today's breeding index NBDI, the purebred beef breed indexes (AIX) and the production system adapted indexes are in relation to the crossbreed progenies performance





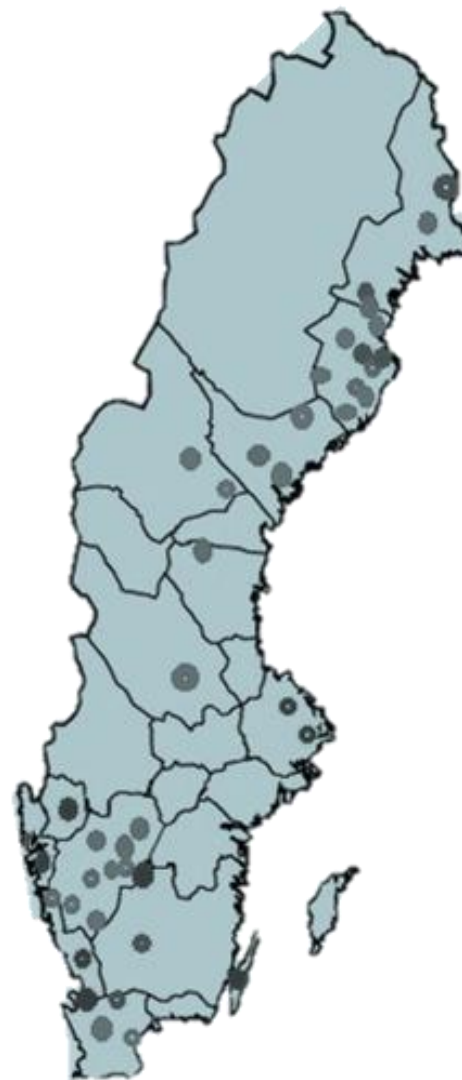
# Interview study: Farmers' views on production systems, management and breeding strategies for beef on dairy cattle crosses in Sweden

- Farmers in Sweden producing
  - Dairy
  - Dairy and beef
  - Beef
- Qualitative semi-structured interviews
  - Views, farm background
  - Thematic data analysis
  - Inductive approach



# Farms of interest

- Farm suggestions found through contact with people with good local knowledge
- Selection criteria, 42 farms suggested
  - Farm located in Sweden
  - Farms distributed all over Sweden
  - Dairy: Interest in crossbreeding. Uses or have been using beef x dairy crossing.
  - Beef: Uses or have been using beef x dairy crosses in production



# Farms included in study Preliminary results

- 21 farms interviewed

## Dairy herds

**Systems:** Loose-housing with AMS or milking parlor

**Milking cows:** 72-330

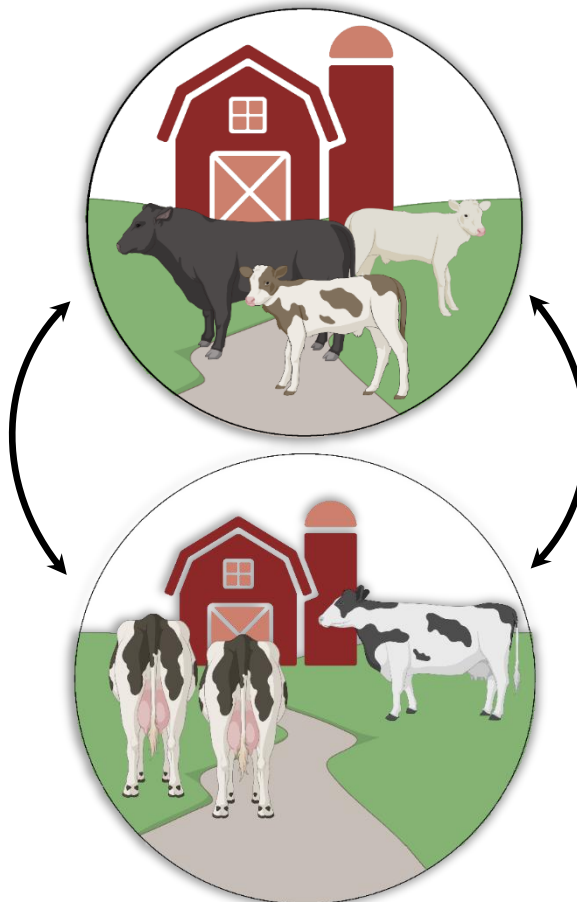
**Milk production:**

10 000-14 600 kg ECM/year

**Beef semen:** ~5-75%

**Sex-sorted semen:** ~5-100%

**Dairy breeds:** Swedish Red, Holstein, "ProCross"



## Beef herds

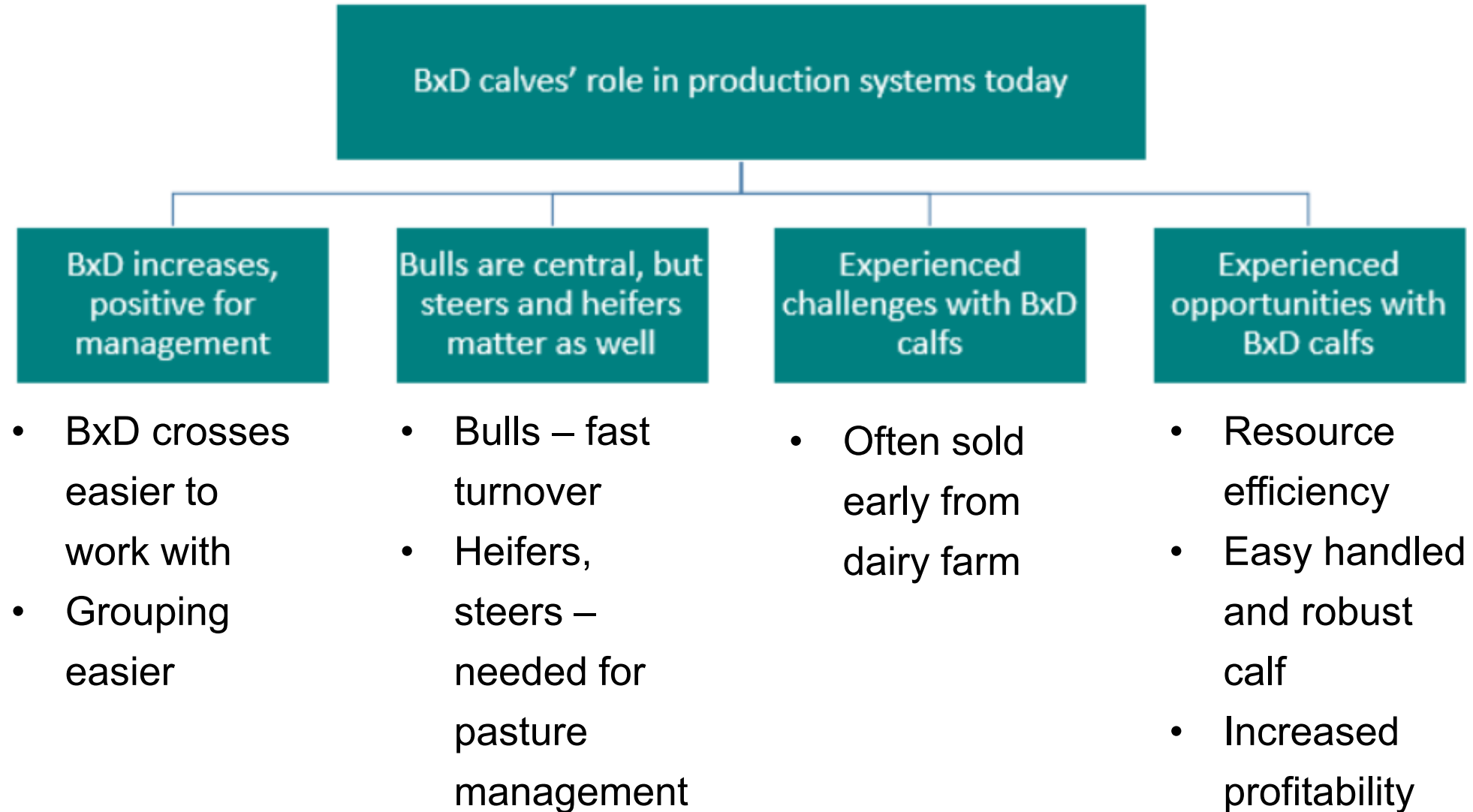
**Systems:** Loose-housing indoor or indoor combined with pasture

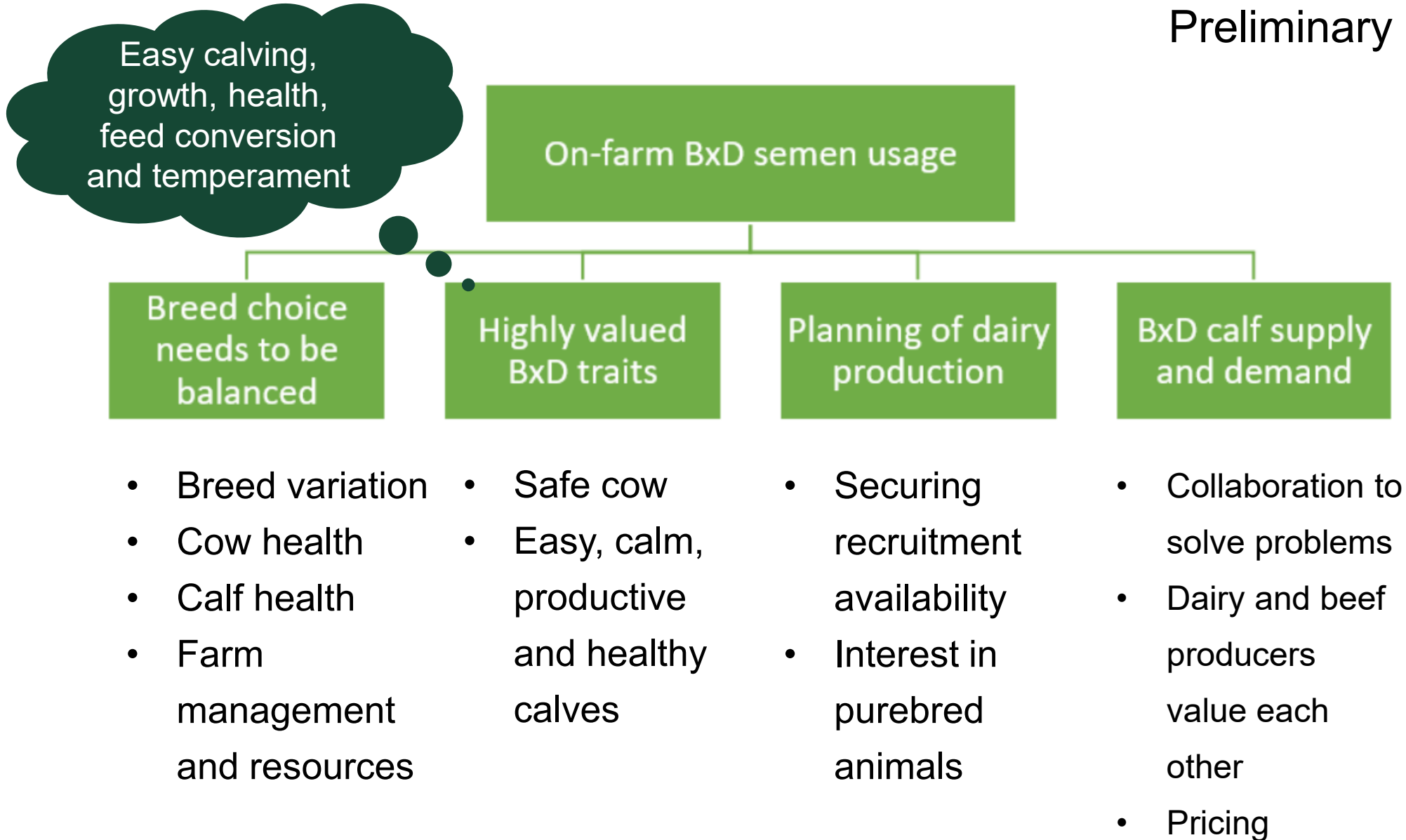
**Slaughtered cattle:** ~ 36-1200

**Age at slaughter:** ~8-30 months

**Heifers and/or Steers wanted:** ~0-100%

**Dairy breeds:** Swedish Red, Holstein, "ProCross",







# Take home message from interview study

- Generally positive attitude to BxD
- If beef producers could choose → BxD crosses over purebred dairy
- Barriers for BxD
  - Cow centered view, safe for the cow?
  - Recruitment planning
- Drivers for BxD
  - Collaboration, In between farm deals
  - Easier sold calf
  - Easy handled and robust calf
  - Resource efficiency
- New traits for cross-breeding index?
  - Temperament, more health traits, feed-conversion



## More meat on the bone – Study 2

- Investigate farmers' views on the use of beef bull semen or Beef-Dairy (BxD) crosses and how that affects production systems, breeding and management strategies used
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## More meat on the bone – Study 3

- Investigate farmers' views on the use of beef bull semen or Beef-Dairy (BxD) crosses and how that affects production systems, breeding and management strategies used
- Statistically describe and define Swedish production systems for BxD crosses
- Calculate new economic weights for an updated crossbreeding index, Nordic Beef on Dairy Index (NBDI)
- Investigate how well suited today's breeding index NBDI, the purebred beef breed indexes (AIX) and the production system adapted indexes are in relation to the crossbreed progenies performance





# Thank you!

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