

## PERSONALITY PROFILES IN AUTOCHTHONOUS ITALIAN CATTLE BREEDS: A PILOT STUDY

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Knowledge of individual personality is a useful tool in animal husbandry and can be used effectively to improve welfare. This study assessed personality in five different cattle breeds (*Bos taurus*)—two cosmopolitan (Holstein and Brown) and three Italian autochthonous—through a personality questionnaire completed by handlers (milkers). The objective was to determine whether this method could detect differences in personality, linked to a variety of variables including breed, age and gender. The handlers' assessments found breed and individual differences in dairy and beef cattle. Differences in personality traits were quite evident between individuals but consistent within each breed. This result shows how certain personality traits are more marked in certain breeds in terms of curiosity, friendliness to milkers and responses to unknown people. This pilot survey shows the usefulness of questionnaires in cattle personality studies and its potential extension to other domestic and wild bovids both in- and ex-situ.