CiBreed Retreat on October 1, 2024 to strengthen our network

This first CiBreed Retreat took place on October 1, 2024 in L01 (von-Siebold Str.). This internal conference served as a replacement for the canceled conference, which had to be canceled for personnel and structural reasons. The opportunity was taken to network and get to know each other better internally.
Eight CiBreed groups presented their departments, equipment and fields of research and space was created here for new, joint research ideas and opportunities for cooperation. Five scientific presentations by CiBreed junior scientists gave an excellent presentation of the scientific spectrum of our center: From breeding for animal welfare to quinoa breeding, data processing, gene regulatory processes and root sciences.

The grand finale of the CiBreed Retreat was the first CiBreed Science Slam, which was organized by our dedicated young scientists from the CiCom team. Four brave slammers presented their research from a completely different angle, with lots of humor and creativity: Henri Laugel, Mila Tost, Bruno Marchetti de Souza and Ivan Lopez-Valdivia.

WELCOME to the iPAB class of 2024/25

This time, more students made it to Göttingen in time than ever before: 17 of the new iPAB students of Intake 2024/25 were able to attend our iPAB Welcome Event on 15.10.24, one week before the start of lectures. The students were warmly welcomed by CiBreed Director Prof. Dr. Stefan Scholten. He then gave the group a tour of the DNPW. The iPAB coordinator Dr. Liane Schulz-Streeck gave an overview of the study program, the module selection and the internship as well as a guided tour through the Institute of Animal Husbandry and Genetics and the lecture halls. A fun quiz on Göttingen and breeding, organized by iPAB tutors Savvina Xekalaki and Usama Afzal, brought the day to a successful close with lots of chocolate. Once again, we say WELCOME to all new iPABs and we wish you successful studies and a great student life in Göttingen!

Why did you specialize in your current field?
I grew up on a farm with pigs, cattle and horses. I was already fascinated by animal breeding back then. In 2003, I started studying agricultural sciences at the University of Bonn. In addition to specializing in animal science, I attended courses in biotechnology and genetics. An internship at a boar station showed me the diversity of animal breeding. This intensified not only my knowledge but also my fascination for quantitative genetics and animal breeding. After my diploma thesis, I had the opportunity to write my doctoral thesis in the same subject area.

How would you describe your research in one sentence everyone could understand?
With animal breeding I want to improve animal welfare and sustainability applying complex statistical and genetical methods.

What was your path towards your professorship?
After the doctorate, you reach the point where you start to think about where you are going. I am a very curious person and find it exciting to explain complex relationships. The opportunity to build on my scientific work in my post-doc phase was an important step in my professional career. I also worked part-time in the business world for 7 years, which showed me what demands are placed on you there. Working in science also gives you the freedom to further investigate your own specialisms.

Are there opportunities for (iPAB) students to do research with your group?
But of course, drop by and we'll make a plan.

What are your favorite activities outside of work?
Having quality time with my family and our dog. Sometimes, I play a little bit piano on a really low level.

What courses are you going to teach & when will they start?
I have started this winter semester with the course Quantitative genetics and Population genetics. In the next semester I want to offer Applied effective R programming in animal breeding and genetics and Breeding Lab Internship.

Interview of Prof. Dr. Christine Große-Brinkhaus

What can be improved to have women in leading scientific positions? What steps can the breeding community implement to ensure more females are more involved in research?
There are several programs for the promotion of female scientists. However, these also need to be found; the communication and visibility of these programs could be improved. I would also like to motivate young women who are interested in breeding and genetics to approach their colleagues and me.

Considering the work-life balance as a researcher, do you have suggestions for young scientists?
This is a really difficult question. It is important to make time for family and friends and to plan this in. It also helps to take a break if you come across a scientific problem and can't get any further. Don't just ask colleagues, but also family and friends who can show you a different perspective.

Interview of Prof. Dr. Michael Hölker

Why did you specialize in your current field?

I have always been very interested in reproduction. For example, when I was still a child, I bred - or rather propagated - budgies, cockatiels and aquarium fish. The important thing was always that there would be "more animals"... Later, after studying veterinary medicine, I came into contact with the topic of embryo transfer and the in vitro production of bovine embryos. At the time, I was incredibly fascinated by the fact that up to 50 oocytes could be obtained from the ovary of a slaughtered cow. The possibility of fertilizing all these eggs with the semen of a (selected) bull virtually electrified me. Unfortunately, even then only about 30% of these eggs developed into embryos suitable for transfer and of these only about 50% resulted in the birth of a calf. The question of the reasons for this and which factors influence the developmental competence of the egg cells and embryos never left me.

What courses are you going to teach & when will they start?

I teach "Livestock Reproduction Physiology“ (M.SIA.A04.Mp, M.Agr.0069, M.Agr.0070, M.Pferd.0022) and offer a practical course "Ausgewählte Reproduktionsbiotechnologien" (M.Agr.0149) and "Nutztierwissenschaften II" (B.Agr.0022).

What was your path towards your professorship?

I first studied veterinary medicine and then learnt how satisfying research can be by writing my dissertation. I then followed the classical path: A post-doc position led to the management of an embryo reproduction laboratory. My scientific activities and collaborations with other international scientists resulted in many publications. These cumulated in the preparation of a habilitation thesis, which in turn enabled me to apply for vacant professorships. Ultimately, my alternative to science was practical veterinary work. Whilst I very often found scientific work to be rewarding, this feeling was far less common in veterinary work.

What was your motivation to apply for the Göttingen professorship?

There were two main reasons: On the one hand, I had the feeling that I needed to change something in my academic life and the professorship in Göttingen was a good opportunity at the right time. On the other hand, my academic environment at my previous place of work was increasingly disintegrating with the retirement of the chair holder.

Are there opportunities for (iPAB) students to do research with your group?

If the students are interested in scientific questions in the context of early reproductive biology or assisted reproductive biotechnology, this is certainly an option.

What are your favorite activities outside of work?

I generally enjoy spending time with my family, especially in the outdoors. I like hiking, fishing or boating. I like travelling, looking at historical buildings, reading and, ultimately, reading new scientific articles without time pressure as a hobby.

Considering the work-life balance as a researcher, do you have suggestions for young scientists?

This is a hard question. I would recommend always working scientifically on the topics that give you pleasure. Never lose your curiosity and allow yourself to rejoice in your successes. On the other hand, you should not permanently neglect real life and social interaction. I have always believed that times of extensive work and little free time should be followed by times for reflection and socialising.

We are pleased to announce that the EMABG program is starting a new round

The European Master for Animal Biodiversity and Genomics (EMABG) is a joint master program funded by the EU. It is designed to answer the scientific, practical, and societal challenges of animal breeding, biodiversity and genomics. Students can apply for scholarships and spend their studies at two of our six Consortium universities: NMBU, SLU, Wageningen University, BOKU, AgroParisTech, and University of Goettingen.

After all students in the program spend their first semester at NMBU, they will then go on to subsequent universities depending on their study tracks. We are expecting five EMABG students coming to Goettingen each summer semester staying for one year. EMABG students in Goettingen mainly complete modules from the M.Sc. Integrated Plant and Animal Breeding program (iPAB).

The first new students have already been selected and admitted and we are very much looking forward to welcoming them for the summer semester 2026!

CiBreed at the Night of Science

What did the first banana actually look like? And which wild animal did the domestic sheep descend from? You can discover these and other secrets about animal and plant breeding at our booth. Solve the breeding memory, learn more about the amazing achievements in breeding then and now and discuss modern methods in breeding research with the scientists.

A team of CiBreed scientists and students presents our center at the Night of Science on **June 21, 2025 in the ZHG**.

Come along, we look forward to your visit!

Join the CiCom team!

CiCom is the communication team of CiBreed. Consisting of MSc and PhD students, our group aims to facilitate research collaborations and interactions between the several CiBreed research groups in animal, plant and forest breeding. We also help in organizing CiBreed events like the upcoming CiBreed workshop.

Henri Laugel
PhD (Plant Breeding Methodology)

Johanna-Sophie Schlüter
PhD (Breeding Informatics)

Marie Bellersen
PhD (Animal Breeding and Genetics)

Dennis Kamelin
MSc (Crop Plant Genetics)

Contact us!

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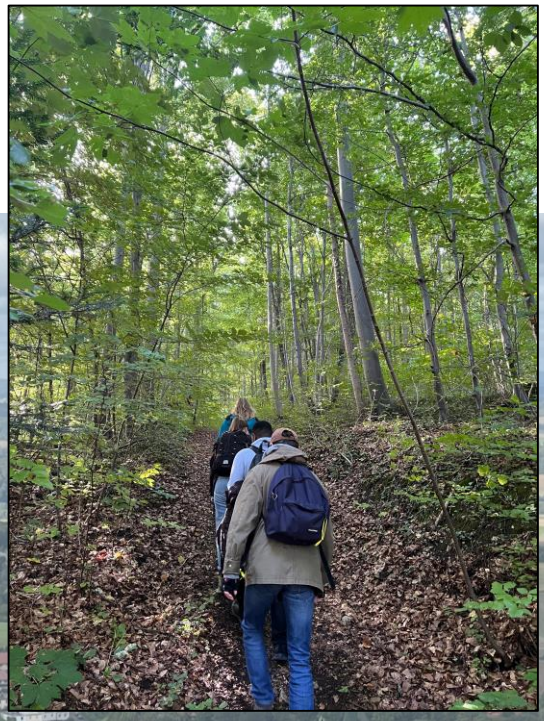
@CiBreed

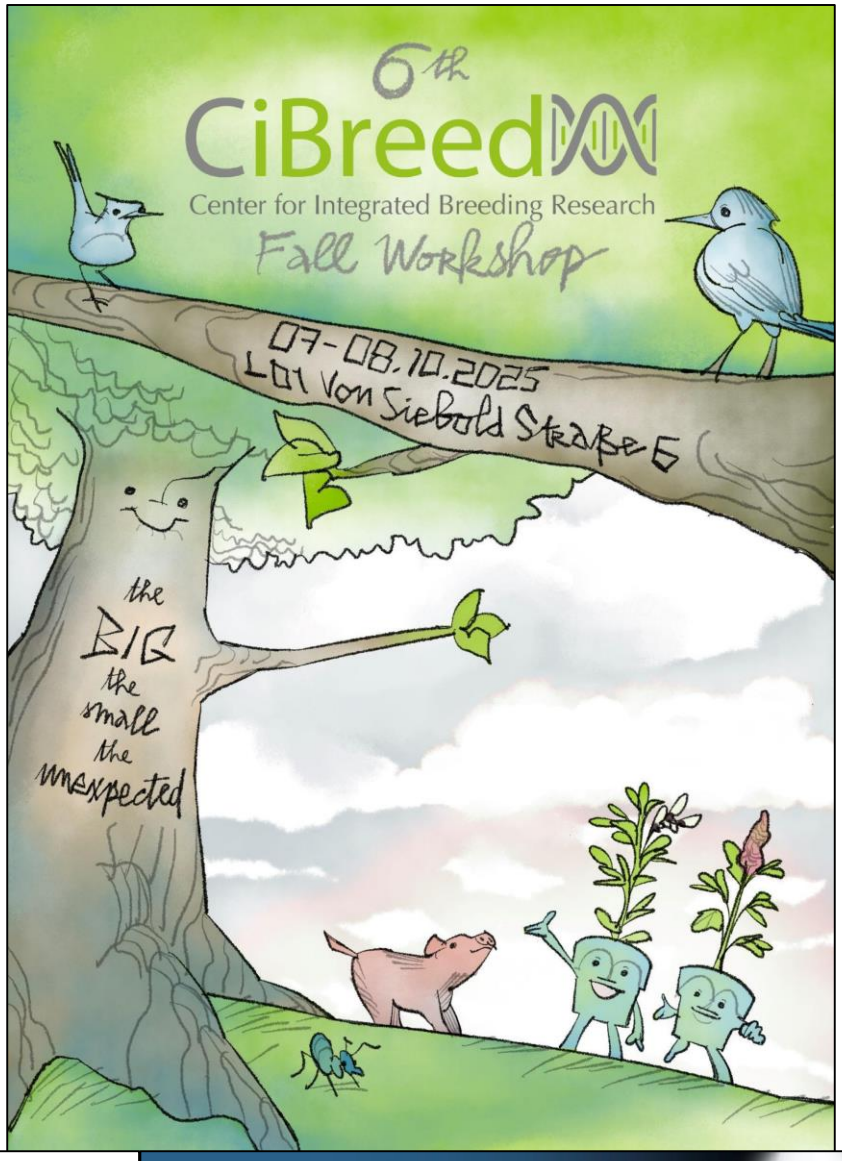
@CiBreed Communication

CiBreed Student Weihnachtsmarkt Tour 2024

CiBreed Hike (09.2024)



Join us for our upcoming CiBreed Workshop!



Interested in showcasing your research in a **fun and engaging way**? The CiCom Team will be hosting a **Science Slam** at this year's **CiBreed Workshop!**

More information coming soon on our Instagram and LinkedIn…

@CiBreed

@CiBreed Communication