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Jonathan B Weitzman

Email: jonathanweitzman@hotmail.com

In the April 12 [Science](#), Hanotte *et al.* describe efforts to define the genetic history of African cattle pastoralism, their [origins](#) and migrations (*Science* 2002, **296**:336-339). Hanotte *et al.* performed a continent-wide sampling of indigenous African cattle including 50 populations from 23 countries. They analyzed cow samples using 15 autosomal microsatellite markers to calculate principal component values and to construct interpolation maps. Hanotte *et al.* present extensive statistical analysis of the cross-continent variation; they conclude that African cattle originate from the domestication of wild cows within the continent. But they found evidence for Near-East and European genetic influences, and suggest that cattle migration paths spread to southern regions via an eastern route.

References

1. *Science*, [<http://www.sciencemag.org>]
2. Ancient DNA suggests a recent expansion of European cattle from a diverse wild progenitor species.