SMAll RuminanTs breeding for Efficiency and Resilience (SMARTER)

Título
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EU Project number
772787

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Duración
Desde 01.11.18 hasta 31.10.22 (48 meses)

Abstract
Small ruminants in Europe are mostly reared in difficult environments such as mountains/hills, arid, humid or low forage resources areas, where rearing cattle is difficult to impossible. In many of these environments, domesticated small ruminants are the only source of livelihood. Additionally, small ruminants use rangelands and contribute to maintaining an open environment, improving biodiversity and preventing fire damage in dry areas. To maintain these benefits in environments vulnerable to environmental and economic challenges, small ruminants need to be resilient and efficient.

SMARTER will use new and collaborative strategies to improve resilience and efficiency of the sheep and goat sectors at the animal (A), population/breed (P) and system/farm (S) levels. The overall goal of SMARTER is i) to phenotypically and genetically characterise and understand novel related traits, ii) to improve and develop new genomic prediction techniques, and iii) to establish new breeding and management strategies that include those novel resilience and efficiency related traits according to their importance and relevance to various systems, breeds and environments.

The project will promote optimised resilience of small ruminant farming systems, which are key pillars of socio- economic sustainability and eco-system services in rural communities throughout Europe and beyond.