

Report of the meeting to encounter the Romanian stakeholders for the Farm Animal Breeding and Reproduction Technology Platform

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The meeting to encounter the Romanian stakeholders for the Farm Animal Breeding and Reproduction Technology Platform was held in Bucarest on March 27th, 2008. The venue was the local Institute of Animal Research.

Representatives of breeding industries, research institutions, governmental offices, farmers associations, AI services and milk recording were present. There were 19 people attending the meeting.

First there was a short presentation to explain the role and the functioning of the technology platforms in the EU policy. The FABRE TP was presented as the platform of interest. The purpose of the presentation was to detail the objectives of the platform and the activities that were done so far. Later it has been described the first draft of the Strategic Research Agenda. The people attending the meeting were also invited to express their views on the FABRE technology platform in general and more specifically the comments about the first draft of the Strategic Research Agenda and the local specificities.

The participants also were exposed to the idea of creating a mirror group in Romania.

After collecting the comments, the list was sent back to those who attended the meeting for possible corrections and additions. The final list is then detailed:

1. The participants noticed that the training activities and dissemination was not properly considered in the SRA. They considered that training activities is very important to maintain the world leadership that European expertise have in animal breeding and reproduction technologies
2. Another suggestions was to dedicate more emphasis for local breeds of small ruminants, especially for sheep. The research for local sheep breeding systems is important for animal farming in marginal areas that are commo in Romania and therefore the research applied to improve the overall efficiency of those systems will be crucial for the wellbeing of people thereby living
3. The audience also thought that for Romanian conditions the breeding objectives should be less than optimum about productive level. The breeding objective should be to have an animal that fits well and has high efficient production in the systems in which is bred. Again, using the example of marginal lands, the animals bred I those areas shold be able to give good production. The suggestion was therefore to consider breeding and reproduction technologies for low input systems
4. The participants strongly criticize about the poor representation of livestock systems for some of the EU countries. It is clear that in the management of the Technology Platform there is no representation of Southern and East Europe. In the working groups the situation is almost the same. Moreover the audience noticed that there is not a single Romanian experts was called to participate to work for the thirteen working groups.
5. There should be more emphasis about technology transfer for animal breeding in extensive systems, especially for marginal areas.
6. Researches should study how to apply research on prolificacy, artificial insemination and reduction of age at first breeding

7. The audience believes that there should not be so much emphasis in the Strategic Research Agenda (SRA) on GM organisms, especially because the current EU policies will forbid their creation and use
8. The breeding schemes for small ruminants must be better planned. The breeding schemes for small ruminants has been mainly copied by the cattle schemes. The utilized schemes for small ruminants were not quite appropriate for for the many differences between cattle and sheep and goat production and reproduction systems. The survival of sustainable livestock system in the marginal areas is possible only with proper studies and application of breeding schemes for small ruminants
9. The people participating to the meeting thought that much more emphasis should be given to improve the longevity, reproduction traits and fitness. Much discussion was done about the influence of genetic improvement for increasing the production quantity and quality and the average inbreeding level causing, therefore, reduction in fitness and reproductive traits
10. Cattle longevity is important for the economic efficiency of dairy farms. Unfortunately nowadays the longevity is an important constraints in the dairy sector. Research is necessary to improve this character by acting on the specific factors that has an effect on animal longevity
11. Breeding robust animals is very essential for the economic efficiency of animal farms. Resistance to disease is therefore a trait to study for selection. Researches to indicate the factors of resistance to diseases is therefore an important objective to include in the Strategic Research Agenda
12. Very important is also the research to develop pig breeding that have so large influence in the economy of livestock sector in Romania
13. The participants also would like to underline that in Romania the wool industry is still important. Therefore, because of the economic relevance of this production especially in marginal areas, more studies for selecting for quantity and quality of wool is important.