

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

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The meeting to encounter the Latvian stakeholders for the Farm Animal Breeding and Reproduction Technology Platform was held in Riga on April 4th, 2007. The venue was the Ministry of Agriculture. Dainis Rungulis, representative of the Ministry of Agriculture, was chairing the meeting.

Representatives of the major animal industries and breeders organizations, Animal Science Research Institutes in Latvia and the Ministry of Agriculture were invited to attend the meeting. There were 42 people attending.

The meeting began by presenting, shortly, to explain the role and the functioning of the technology platforms in the EU policy; it was fully presented the FABRE TP. The presentation was directed to explain the reason of the creation of the platform and then the activities of the platform so far. Finally it has been described the first draft of the Strategic Research Agenda. The people attending the meeting were then stimulated to express their view on the FABRE technology platform in general and more specifically the comments, advises and criticisms about the first draft of the Strategic Research Agenda.

During the meeting, the importance of the mirror group role was explained. The representatives of the Ministry of Agriculture were interested to organize the national mirror group for Latvia.

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 audience expressed the concern that in Latvia the cooperation among scientists, industries and civil society is very rare
2. There are problems of funding resources for expensive laboratories equipment and for training young scientists, therefore more emphasis should be given to those fields
3. Research for improving the positive characteristics relative to human health of food should be a priority. The current competitiveness of Latvian food prices will be enhanced if coupled with high quality and healthy food
4. The genomic research to improve food quality should be highlighted
5. The audience express the need to improve research activities to diminish the level of disease controlled by the genotype
6. The research for resistance on TSE must be supported
7. In the strategic research agenda the milk quality must be included, especially the better apply the research for selecting the proper protein fraction for milk processing
8. Research on meat quality from pig industry, especially to consider the problem of animal stress for meat quality
9. The Latvian participants to the meeting expressed the general importance of future research in genomic research in animal farming
10. Research on resistance of disease having genetic determination for poultry industry must be supported
11. Research on horse genetic evaluation methods is also important for Latvia, therefore research in this aspect is important
12. Emphasis on genetic research for disease resistance in horses is important, especially the respiratory diseases

13. Research for sexing the semen is very important for future animal industry, for all species and not only for cattle
14. Very important is the research for proper and advanced data management for selection purposes
15. Training and research should be supported for the proper use of data collected in the farms
16. Training of young scientists and technicians for selection activities is very important. Training should be especially in the field of quantitative genetic for there is a lack of this specific expertise
17. Importance of research for animal genetic resources is strongly recommended by the Latvian animal science and industry communities
18. The majority of the participants mentioned that should be given more prioritization, for there is the possibility that such a large number of items in the SRA will weaken the research strategy, although the audience expressed satisfaction for the items listed in the current version of strategic research agenda
19. The audience criticizes the lack of proper representation of livestock systems within the EU countries. There is practically no representation of East Europe. In the main working group, the situation is the same.
20. It has been noted that training activities and dissemination should be supported. The audience underlined that training activities is essential to achieve the objectives of maintaining the world leadership of European expertise in animal breeding and reproduction technology