



Summary of the SMARTER Spanish Round Table

XXIV Foro Nacional del Ovino (Valladolid (Spain), 8th June 2022)

The round table of the SMARTER project in Spain was held during the *XXIV Foro Nacional del Ovino* (National Sheep Forum). The *Foro Nacional del Ovino* is an annual meeting in which different issues in the small ruminant sector are addressed and which concentrates on a 3-day meeting on those issues of most interest in the Spanish sheep industry. This Forum is a point of exchanging experiences and ideas with more than 300 attendees, including researchers, companies in the sector, technicians and farmers, meet. The objective of the SMARTER seminar was to analyze "What the sheep of the future will be like". The seminar explored the problems many small ruminant farms face in adapting their evolution to new, more efficient, sustainable production models. The central core of the seminar, which was developed in a first session in the morning and closed the day's work in a second session in the late afternoon, was the progress of the European SMARTER project. This project has made genetic improvement for efficiency and resilience traits the key tools for the future of sheep in the EU.

Regarding the seminar program could be consulted here: <https://foroovino.com/ForoOvino2022/programa>. The morning session had three presentations and a general discussion. The first presentation by Juan-José Arranz focused on the SMARTER project: objectives, work packages structure, the consortium structure, including European and international partners, and a summary of the results obtained so far. The second talk, by Dr Pilar de Frutos, explained the basis of the "feed efficiency" character, how to measure it, what are the limiting factors when it comes to implementing it in breeding programs on a routine basis and how it will be important in the sheep of the future. To end the morning session, Dr Aroa Suárez Vega commented on the complexity of resilience in an animal environment and production system in the face of new nutritional challenges, emerging diseases and environmental challenges due to global warming. The opportunity to use these efficiency and resilience traits in breeding programs to obtain more resistant and resilient animals in the near future was also discussed.

In the afternoon, the seminar continued with a presentation of two talks via videoconference. On the one hand, Dr Ignacio de Barbieri from the INIA of Uruguay explained how the Uruguayan sheep industry is working to obtain efficient and resilient sheep. To this end, more than 40 phenotypic traits are recorded and measured in the country's sheep breeds. Afterwards, Dr

Jean-Michel Astruc (IDELE, France) presented the tasks and results of WP6 of the SMARTER project. This WP aims to analyze the possibilities of international genetic improvement, commenting on the different experiences carried out so far in the project and the pros and cons of using international genetic evaluation in small ruminants. The day finished with a round table study on the problems of international genetic evaluation with two case studies. In the first case Dr Eva Ugarte from NEIKER, analyze the case of Latxa (Spain) and Manech (France) breeds. The second case deals with Cosmopolitan breeds, with application in the Assaf sheep breed, by Fernando Freire, manager of Ovigén and ASSAFE. Dr Juan José Arranz coordinated the round table that ended with questions from the audience and an open dialogue between the speakers and the attendees.

Here are some links that have reported on the SMARTER seminar:

- <https://foroovino.com/ForoOvino2022/prensa-390100-proyecto-Smarter-avanza-parametros-heredables-relacionados-eficiencia-resiliencia.html>
- <https://foroovino.com/ForoOvino2022/prensa-391717-Eficiencia-y-resiliencia-centran-una-exitosa-primer-jornada-presencial-del-Foro-Ovino.html>
- <https://www.interempresas.net/ovino/Articulos/390100-proyecto-Smarter-avanza-parametros-heredables-relacionados-eficiencia-resiliencia.html>
- <https://www.portalveterinaria.com/rumiantes/actualidad/38125/el-foro-nacional-de-ovino-regresa-al-formato-presencial.html>