

Session 6: Challenges and Developments in recording and sampling for sheep and goats.

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CHALLENGES ON MILK RECORDING AND SAMPLING IN THE LATXA DAIRY SHEEP BREEDING PROGRAM

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Latxa is a local dairy sheep breed located in the south of the Pyrenean Mountains, mainly in the Basque Autonomous Community and the Foral Community of Navarra and it has a strong genetic link with the sheep population called Manech on the French side of the Pyrenees.

The improvement program of the breed began in 1981 and in these 40 years it has been adapted to the needs of the moment, with the general objective of improving its productivity to increase the economic profitability of the farmers, maintaining the traditional production system, rusticity and adaptation to the environment that characterizes this breed.

Nowadays, the breeding goal of the Breeding Program is more balanced and focuses on the improvement of the milk yield, fat and protein percentage and udder morphology. At the research level, functional longevity and adaptation to climate change are being studied.

In this presentation we propose to review the methods and equipment used for milk recording operations in the Latxa breed, with an emphasis on the main challenges we face regarding the specificity of the dairy sheep milking routine and on the main prospects for the future. We will as well give the general lessons and experiences drawn from the other Spanish dairy sheep breeds involved in a breeding program with milk recording.

