

**Subject : Umsögn um þingmál 15, frumvarp til laga um breytingu á lögum um velferð dýra, nr. 55/2013 (bann við blóðmerahaldi)- Umsagnaraðili: Laurent Journaux / FGE**

Ágæta Alþingi / Dear Members of the Parliament

France Génétique Elevage (FGE) represents the interprofession of ruminant genetics in France. Within the framework of the public consultation being held within the Alþingi, we would like to provide some clarifications regarding the use of PMSG in our sector.

In the absence of a large-scale alternative, FGE would like to remind of the need to have this molecule available to carry out Animal Insemination (AI) protocols in small ruminants. These means of reproduction are essential for the efficient management of selection programs.

In France in 2020, 743,000 sheep AIs for a total flock of 5,330,000 ewes and more than 73,400 goat AIs for a total flock of 885,000 goats were performed.

In sheep and goats in France, AI is a fundamental method of reproduction, with the following key benefits :

- On the sanitary level: to have a guarantee on the males used (strict regulation) and to fight against diseases with genetic sensitivities like ovine scrapie;
- On the genetic level: conduct selection programs (create and disseminate genetic progress) in line with the current and future expectations of breeders and the industry. This concerns in particular today the characteristics of resistance to diseases and resilience of the animals which allow to control the use of drugs and treatments and to address future expectations (adaptation to the climate change, local production);
- In terms of genetic diversity: to build selection programs for the different French breeds, taking into account the specificities of intra-breed breeding systems. Insemination facilitates the exchange of males and thus contributes to maintaining genetic diversity, including for local breeds or breeds with small numbers.

- In terms of herd management: to allow the breeder to have access to genetic progress, to the best breeding stock in relation to his system, to choose and organize his breeding and rearing system in relation to market expectations.

This is why we support the activity of blood collection, under strict conditions of respect for animal welfare, in particular for the horses needed to produce eCG.

At the same time, the French industry is investing massively in research to find other ways to achieve and rationally use AI. But this work is long, sometimes involving fundamental science, and will not lead to results that can be transferred to the field on a large scale for several years. This is why, in the short and medium term, access to natural eCG in sufficient quantity and quality, produced with the greatest respect for the animals and at a cost that can be borne by breeders and their selection companies, is essential.

With my highest consideration,

Laurent Journaux



Directeur France Génétique Elevage