



Integrating innovative **TECH**nologies along the value Chain  
to improve small ruminant welf**ARE** management

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## **Press release 5**

### **The 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual meeting – update on the TechCare project**

TechCare (innovative **TECH**nologies along the value Chain to improve small ruminant welfare management) did its first face-to-face annual meeting since the project started in September 2020! TechCare is an innovative action project financed by the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation programme, grant no. 862050). Up to 40 people from the 19 consortium partners all met in Glasgow (Scotland) on the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> September 2022. Over the two days, partners from the UK (MRI), France (IDELE, CNBL, INRAe, PageUP, Agdatahub), Italy (AGRIS, EAAP, Abinsula), Israel (ARO, Spark), Norway (NIBIO), Spain (UAB, Oviaragon), Greece (ELGO-DIMITRA) and Romania (BUAS), led by SRUC (UK), discussed the progress of the project over the last 2 years, and the future plans. Five advisory members (from Italy, Greece, Spain and the UK) also joined in the discussion (two of them via Zoom) and gave their feedback to the project team. The project is progressing well, with the welfare issues in small ruminant systems having been prioritised by stakeholders at the start of the project, followed by an inventory of potential precision livestock farming (PLF) tools that could help monitor or manage these welfare issues. Trials and prototyping of some of the identified PLF tools are on-going on pilot farms and on experimental farms, and data exchanges and manipulation, to develop early warning systems, are to be the next step in the approach. Deployment and further testing of the retained tools with the early warning systems will be carried out at the end of next year on some commercial farms in Europe. Discussions and feedback were essential at this stage, and it was extremely beneficial to meet in person to ensure the whole consortium is ready for the next steps of the project. Some of the consortium also had the opportunity to visit the 2 pilot farms in the UK (SRUC's research farm in Crianlarich and MRI's research farm near Edinburgh), to see in-situ the stage of advancement of the trials. Both farms are testing similar technologies to manage welfare in different environments. The SRUC farm is a large hill farm with rough grazing land, whilst the MRI farm is an upland farm with reseeded pastures. The technologies tested encompass monitoring weight change with EID weighcrate, using proximity loggers for access to resources (e.g. feed), using accelerometers to look at behaviour change linked to parasite challenges, and testing UHF tags. Individual and in-field welfare assessments are carried out regularly to match the information and data obtained from the technologies with any welfare issues identified. Data are still being collected for further analysis and inclusion in early warning systems. Overall, a very fruitful meeting for the project in a very sunny Scotland!









Stakeholders are central to the project, so if you are interested to join in these discussions, please contact us.

Website: [www.techcare-project.eu](http://www.techcare-project.eu)

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