

# New approaches for training and capacity building

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Innovation for Sustainable  
Sheep and Goat  
Production in Europe



National Sheep Association



# Why a Case Study format?

Encourage good interaction between researchers, advisors, vets and farmers

Understand if the approaches really did have an impact

What challenges did farmers face implementing innovations?





**National Sheep Association**

1892 National Sheep Breeders Association  
Improve the breeding management of sheep

1969 National Sheep Association

Representing the views and interests of  
sheep producers throughout the UK.

Funded by its members

Involved in every aspect of the sheep  
industry.

Encourage best practices and an  
understanding of the contribution of sheep



# NSA Next Generation Programme



Supports innovative and enthusiastic young people

Young shepherds

Future Shepherds

Training Events Advice

# NSA Next Generation Programme

- Half price membership NSA
- Dedicated website
- Lambing List placements
- Events specifically for young shepherds
- Next Generation Shepherd of the Year
- Travel bursaries
- Advice, matching with mentors
- Assistance for those seeking employment or work experience
- **NSA Next Generation Ambassador programme**



# NSA Next Generation Ambassador Programme

Up to 12 people selected annually from England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, meet likeminded people throughout the UK and form networks for the future

Five sessions, 2-3 days, range of topics encouraging personal and technical development

flocks

industry



Equip with skills  
to manage profitable and sustainable  
support and promote the sheep

Meet key people within the sheep sector  
Share experiences





# NSA Next Generation Ambassador Programme

Is the programme valuable?

Ambassadors

NSA management



Participants in 2017 and 2018 programmes interviewed

Past participants surveyed

NSA management interviewed



# NSA Next Generation Ambassador Programme

## Benefits to Ambassadors

More confident and competent

Better understanding of different systems and knowledge of industry

Ability to question

Peer – peer networks and friendships

Direct interaction with NSA

Information

*“what you think is best  
for you is not  
necessarily best for the  
industry”*





# NSA Next Generation Ambassador Programme

## Benefits to NSA

Competent sheep farmers

Active ambassadors for the industry

Ambassadors stay in touch, support their networks and the industry

60% industry activities

46% regional committees



## NSA Next Generation Ambassador Programme

Could be introduced in partner countries

Needs an association to support the initiative

Training programmes tailored to the country

Ambassadors given opportunities and actively supported to take up roles





Fiona Lovatt 2012

sheep veterinary consultancy  
works directly with sheep farmers,  
veterinary surgeons, veterinary  
students, retailers, abattoirs and the  
pharmaceutical industry

Flock health clubs to improve  
relationships with farmers



# Flock Health Clubs



Initiated 2016

Vet facilitated sheep farmer groups

- Improved relationship between the vet and their sheep farmers
- Greater involvement of the vet with more flocks
- Farmers receive cost-effective veterinary advice
- Monthly 'club subscriptions' provide a steady income

# Evaluating the impact of Flock Health Clubs (FHC)

**FH Ltd believed that the initiative was useful**

**What did farmers and vets think?**

15 phone interviews conducted with Vets

27 farmers surveyed during FHC meetings across UK





# Evaluating the impact of Flock Health Clubs (FHC)

## Farmer views

85% felt that membership fees are value for money

88% highlighted that the main benefit was the ability to develop and exchange knowledge between other farmers and their club vet

No farmers surveyed felt that there were any disadvantages to membership



# Evaluating the impact of Flock Health Clubs (FHC)

## Farmer views

85.2% said that FHCs facilitated positive changes

in their knowledge levels

77.8% noted positive changes within their management practices

66.7% had improved their relationship with the vets and their likelihood of calling them had increased





# Evaluating the impact of Flock Health Clubs (FHC)

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## Vet views

Members often from top 5-10% flocks and innovative

Better relationships and interaction, pro-active management

Better health on farm; reduced parasites burdens and lameness

Encouraged increased sheep knowledge



# Evaluating the impact of Flock Health Clubs(FHC)

## Conclusions

- ❖ Improved the relationships between vets and member clients
- ❖ Groups should be no bigger than 25 congenial forward - thinking people
- ❖ A practice could host 4 meetings a year on and of farm
- ❖ Range of topics reflecting the season, the local issues or sustainability factors
- ❖ Plenty of time for discussion
- ❖ Food

# Evaluating the impact of Flock Health Clubs(FHC)

## Conclusions

- ❖ Vet practices often selected members and offered them a range of benefits
- ❖ Membership of FHC increases farmer knowledge and encourages them to be proactive about animal health
- ❖ Farmers liked the opportunity to develop and exchange knowledge with other like - minded farmers and the club vet-social support



# Flock Health Clubs

Could be introduced in  
partner countries

Committed umbrella advisor  
to support vets

Meetings tailored to local  
requirements



# More information

isage.eu/innovation-leaflets/



You are here: [Home](#) > [Innovation leaflets](#)

## Innovation leaflets

One of the core actions of iSAGE project has been to carry out innovation case studies aiming to explore how key selected innovations can increase the sustainability and viability of the sheep and goat production sector. Thirty-one innovations have been selected in a multi-step participatory process. These innovations have been mainly implemented by industry partners of the consortium. Below you can find innovation leaflets that summarise the key outcomes of those case studies including advice for successful implementation.

[REPRODUCTION\\_No 26\\_Reproductive performance of crossbreeds\\_TURKEY](#)

[REPRODUCTION\\_No 26\\_Reproduction performance goats](#)

[REPRODUCTION\\_No 25\\_Assisted reproduction technologies\\_TURKEY](#)

[REPRODUCTION\\_No 24\\_Reproduction control in easycare breeds\\_TURKEY](#)

[PRODUCTS & MARKETING\\_No 21\\_Funtional food production\\_Conjugated Linoleic Acid\\_TURKEY](#)

### Stay in Contact



**Sign-up for more project info**

### News

- iSAGE scientist wins prestigious award
- Breeding weatherproof sheep to adapt to climate change
- Innovation leaflets
- iSAGE UK regional training course and workshop from 3 to 6 December
- iSAGE Newsletter Issue n. 3





# Thankyou

