

## Stakeholder engagement for applying the most promising sustainable parasite control measures on farms with the Horizon Europe SPARC project

November 2024

*Who should be involved in making parasite control more sustainable in livestock production? And what do these stakeholders need? What measures can be tested on pilot farms? SPARC develops, elaborates and disseminates sustainable parasite control measures for European grazing ruminants. These measures must be practical and tailored to our specific farm conditions (animal species, sector, region). For this, SPARC partners are talking to the people involved in the growing European SPARC network. Together with SPARC ambassadors (farmers, veterinarians, farm advisors), these topics were also discussed during the consortium meeting on Oct. 24 and 25 in Cordoba, Spain.*

### Needs assessment within the SPARC network

The European SPARC network, currently consisting of approximately 400 stakeholders (35% farmers, 20% veterinarians, 5% advisors, 40% other organizations), is currently busy conducting needs assessments in the participating countries. Using focus groups and interviews, we are collecting the wishes, opportunities and obstacles of cattle, sheep and goat farmers as well as veterinarians and advisors on sustainable parasite control. Next, each country will test a number of sustainable worm control practices on pilot farms over the next two years. These practices will, for example, be based on the use of more diagnostics, pasture management, targeted (selective) treatment and the use of bio-active feed additives in order to optimize or even reduce the use of anthelmintics. The needs assessment will be completed and published in early 2025.

### Project meeting in Cordoba, Spain

Consortium partners and SPARC ambassadors met for the first time in Cordoba on Oct. 24 and 25. The 8 ambassadors present included both veterinarians and livestock farmers. The ambassadors' practical knowledge was very valuable during this meeting, especially in making the practical translation and exchanging knowledge and experience. With the SPARC ambassadors, we aim to create more impact in the field.



*“It is incredibly interesting to hear what the approach to sustainable worm control is like in the different countries” - Rianne van Helden, veterinarian, Ambassador the Netherlands*

*“It is important to educate farmers about the different pathogenicity of different species”- Kevin Harrison, sheep farmer, Ambassador UK*



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in Grazing Ruminants

The meeting ended with a training on how to make videos with a smartphone. Thus, the SPARC network can now get to work capturing best farming practices about sustainable parasite control. For the future, the SPARC consortium is committed to developing a SPARC knowledge platform, creating communication materials, and actively disseminating knowledge about sustainable worm control. Contribute to the dissemination by posting your best practice video on one of our European social media channels using the hashtag #wormsparcEU and share those with our channels @wormsparcEU, @SPARC Italia (FB), @sparc\_ita @wormsparcPL, @wormsparcLV, @wormsparcLT, @wormsparcRO @wormsparcHU, @animal-health-ireland, @ZLTO (NL), @Wormtool (BE), @labparasitology\_vri (GR), @bioereunitika\_ergastiria (GR), @moreduncomms (UK), @ganadosinparasitos (ES), @institutelevage (FR), @ciirpo (FR).



### *SPARC – Lighting the Path to Sustainable Parasite Control*

SPARC is a Horizon Europe project, established in 2024 with a mission to build a European Community of Practice involving all interested stakeholders and build a European vision and practices on sustainable worm control. The final goal is to increase the performance and the resilience of ruminant livestock farms by widely disseminating best practices, tools and solutions on sustainable worm control that improve (1) animal health and welfare on the farms; (2) economic performance, and (3) the environmental sustainability of the sector.

SPARC is a cooperation between 15 partners in 10 countries coordinated by Flanders Research Institute for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (ILVO) and Kreavet in Belgium. The partners involved are Ghent University (BE), Università Degli Studi di Napoli Federico II (IT), Hellenic Agricultural Organisation (ELGO)-DIMITRA (GR), Zuidelijke Land- En Tuinbouw Organisatie (NL), Institut de l'Elevage (FR), Animal Health Ireland (IE), Bioresearch Laboratories (GR), Agencia Estatal Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Cientificas (ES), Toinen Pro Art Fundacja (PL), Centre Interregional d'information et de Recherche en Production Ovinele Mourier (FR), Boehringer Ingelheim (DE), The Queen's University of Belfast (UK) and Moredun Research Institute (UK).

Connect with SPARC by visiting our website: [www.wormsparc.com](http://www.wormsparc.com) or by following us on social media @wormsparcEU. For media inquiries, please contact Johannes Charlier, SPARC project coordinator at [jcharlier@kreavet.com](mailto:jcharlier@kreavet.com)



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