

January 2024 Newsletter



Annual Meeting and Vaccination of lambs in Italy



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HAO-DEMETER
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The 2024 annual meeting was held in Naples, Italy, and was hosted by UNINA at the Botanical Garden of Naples



The meeting was attended by all partners involved in the project, including the scientific advisor Marshall Lightowlers (University of Melbourne - Australia)

The progress and results achieved in each work package, as well as the planned future activities, were presented and discussed by each partner during the meeting



Vaccination of lambs in Italy

One of the objectives of WP3 is to validate the use of the EG95 recombinant vaccine for the first time in the selected Mediterranean countries using different vaccination protocols. According to this, sheep farms resulted positive to CE have been allocated to four different groups as follows: (i) 5 sheep farms subjected only to vaccination (lambs) (Farms VAX); (ii) 5 sheep farms subjected only to dogs' treatment with praziquantel (Farms PZQ); (iii) 5 sheep farms subjected to both vaccination (lambs) and treatment of dogs with praziquantel (Farms VAX + PZQ) and (iv) 5 sheep farms (CTR-POS) were used as control farms without any treatment activities.

In Italy, after obtaining an "off label" permit from the Ministry of Health, the vaccination programme started in December 2021. To date, a total of 437 lambs have been vaccinated with the first two doses and about 363 lambs received also the booster dose after 1 year.



In January 2024, in order to assess the impact of the control strategies applied, in the selected sheep farms, all sheep (treated and not) were subject to *in vivo* diagnosis of CE, using ultrasound technique. To date, none of the screened sheep have tested positive for CE.

In January 2024, Marshall Lightowers (UoM, Australia) visited the UNINA (ITALY) team to participate in field monitoring and provide training on the vaccination of lambs in southern Italy.

