



RUMINANT RESEARCH PRIORITIES 2011

Environmental issues

- Develop guidelines for good environmental control alongside profitable and sustainable production
- Develop systems to manage livestock wastes and optimise their nutrient value
- Assess opportunities for the livestock sector from bio-fuel by-products
- Understand the contribution of ruminants to climate change and develop means of reducing it

Animal Health

- Develop new and/or improved methods to tackle parasites, which are cost effective and safe for the operator, the animal and the environment
- Develop new and/or improved methods to tackle diseases that have significant economic impacts on the livestock industry e.g. lameness, BVD, IBR, Johnes and pneumonia
- Develop new management approaches and techniques to assess the health and welfare status of livestock, permit pre-clinical diagnosis, and prompt early action
- Develop alternative strategies to reduce reliance on chemical control of gastro-intestinal worms (e.g. breeding and management solutions)
- Understand the factors that contribute to the risk of zoonotic diseases from the livestock industry and how to effectively control them

Genetics

- Identify EBVs and genetic markers for useful traits (e.g. those which improve productivity, eating quality, survival rates of offspring, ease of handling, resistance to disease and parasites)
- Integrate molecular and quantitative genetic techniques to optimise genetic evaluations and selection for traits of economic importance and future commercial need

Improving Performance

- Improve the persistence, nutritional value and utilisation of forage crops to increase grazing days, improve performance, reduce costs and add to meat quality
- Identify new and sustainable approaches to animal nutrition and breeding that reduce costs of production and/or improve product quality

Product Quality

- Understand the factors that determine the quality (eating quality, consistency, microbiological quality or nutritional quality) of red meat from field to point-of-sale, and identify how to manipulate them (including physical/chemical factors, processing factors, environmental factors)
- Evaluate the use of new techniques in assessing meat and carcass quality
- Investigate the means of increasing the value realised from the carcass and reducing the cost of meat recovery, including the use of automated technology
- Understand the factors that contribute to the risk of zoonoses from ruminant meats