

International collaboration for multinational evaluations in sheep

Results from Brian Wickham Young Person Exchange Program

Technical Session 7 - New Developments in Sheep, Goats and Camelids within ICAR

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Thank you!



My Tour Objectives

- How similar are protocols and trait definitions for CH₄ and feed intake between countries? (Session 8)
- What are the key features of the data in each country that need to be accounted for? (Session 8)
- Political, IP, and legal issues which need to be overcome to share data?
- Is there sufficient genetic linkage between countries?
- Updating the ICAR wiki for Feed&Gas and Small Ruminants

Unified approach to trait definitions for methane and feed intake



- Further alignment of Methane and Feed Intake protocols is unlikely
- Methane breeding values reported as g/day, mL/min, %
 - Is it corrected for, correlated with, in a ratio with feed intake?
- International evaluations of methane and feed intake need to account for different reporting requirements

Guidelines for data storage

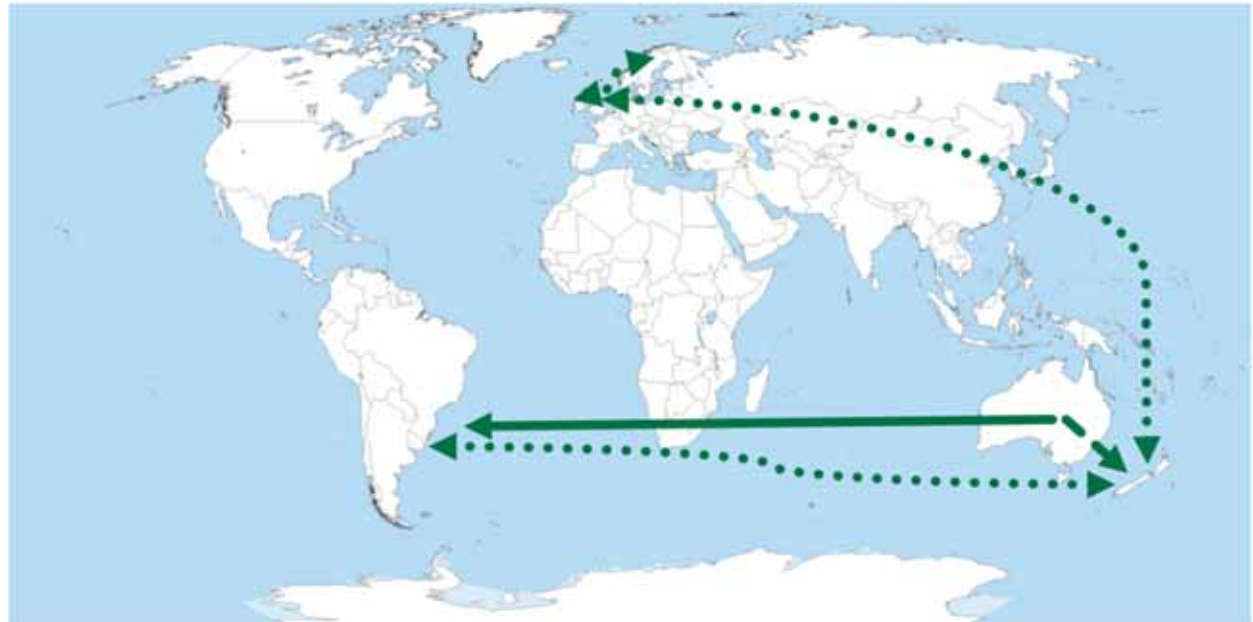
- Raw data, calculations, phenotypes, and metadata are all important
- Standardised processing steps would be helpful
- What we really need is a way of storing the protocol and processing information

Data sharing agreements should be normalised

- Methane and feed intake data has been collected over the last 20 years
- Data sharing should be “future proofed”
- We should have these before projects start
- *“If we can demonstrate the benefit to our industry/breeders/funders”*
- Universal for difficult-to-measure traits that are measured through research projects
- We need to work together to build the proof

Genetic linkage needs to be improved

- Unidirectional, limited to a small number of breeds, driven by leading breeders
- We need a framework, support from industry bodies, and red tape to be cut
- How to justify why a foreign sire was used in your reference population
- We need a precedent for ongoing sharing of genetic material



We need to support young people

- The BWYPEX is a life changing experience
- Not everybody will get that opportunity, but we can support BWYPEX and new initiatives
- We should encourage exchange of PhD and early career scientists
- Collaboration starts with relationships
- *" Thanks also for the ongoing support and positive attitude to collaboration" - Peter Amer*
- There is a will, we just need a way

Conclusions

- If we get it right for methane we can do it for other traits.
- Phenotyping protocols are aligned
- We need to standardise data storage and sharing protocols
- We need to demonstrate that improving genetic linkage is of value
- Proactive integration of data sharing into new project proposals
- Current international initiatives can establish a vital precedent
- We need to encourage young people to spend time within each other's teams



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