

## Press Release

### European Commission Study of New Genomic Techniques:

Brussels, 30<sup>th</sup> April, 2021

EU Animal Breeders and researchers represented by EFFAB and FABRE-TP welcome the launch of the European Commission Study on the status of new genomic techniques.

[The publication of the study](#) is an important day for researchers, breeders and farmers and everyone involved in the Animal Breeding and Reproduction sector with impacts on the future of research, innovation and sustainability of the livestock and aquaculture sector in Europe.

“The study finds that the current European legislation on GMOs is not fit for purpose for some NGTs” and is hampering research in the EU, confirming “that there is considerable interest in research on new genomic techniques in the EU, but most of development is taking place outside the EU.”

It is important to highlight that the study recognizes that NGTs have the potential to contribute to a more sustainable food system as part of the objectives of the European Green Deal and Farm to Fork Strategy. Indeed, Genome Editing has the potential to be an additional tool for animal breeders in order to meet both farmers and society concerns for a sustainable food system.

While gene editing can be used for making precise changes in the animal genome, precautions should be taken and applied with the greatest care in order to ensure food safety, animal health and welfare, at the same time guarantee these precise changes carry only desirable traits and not any unexpected ones.

The study notes that “Safety data are mainly available for genome editing in plants, making it difficult to draw relevant conclusions on other techniques and applications in animals and micro-organisms.” **As EFFAB and FABRE-TP, we will be pleased to help building up the scientific knowledge required to draft new legislation in partnership with stakeholders and competent authorities in the field of Animal Breeding.** This is the only way it will be possible to meet both farmers and society concerns for a sustainable food system.

In a collaboration scientists need to build trust in science with our fellow citizens, politicians and authorities before applying this technology. We agree that not only research but also dialogue is a must in order to ensure smart, fair, and safe use of these techniques.

Research institutes, companies, cooperatives and associations of EFFAB and FABRE TP that are working in animal breeding and reproduction in Europe are all convinced that novel animal breeding techniques (NABTs) like genome editing can provide efficient additional tools to increase the sustainability of the animal breeding sector.

We are also aware of the fact that we must keep learning and investigating NABTs and their effects. For this specific reason, NABTs like genome editing also deserves a place on the EU Research agenda.

*“We call for a fair and open dialogue between researchers, companies, authorities and the citizens of Europe. We must create safety data and new legislation based on science in order to bring more solutions for both breeders, farmers and our society.”* – Ana Granados Chapatte, Director of EFFAB.

In October 2018, the Commission asked the EU Reference Laboratory (EURL) to draw up, together with the European Network of GM Laboratories (ENGL), a report on the possibilities and limitations of analytical detection methods for GE techniques on plants, micro-organisms and animals. While the first report on plants has been published in March 2019, there is still no report covering animals. We, EFFAB and FABRE-TP, call for the urgent publication of this report.

*EFFAB is the voice of European Animal Breeders at the EU level. EFFAB is active in ruminant, pigs, poultry, aquaculture and insect breeding and reproduction. FABRE TP represents universities and research institutes across Europe in the field of animal genetics. Together, the two organisation's will take the necessary time to build the future together.*

## **CONTACT INFORMATION**

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