

PAPESHE

Protection of Autochthonous population
of Pelagonia Sheep breed in the cross-
border area

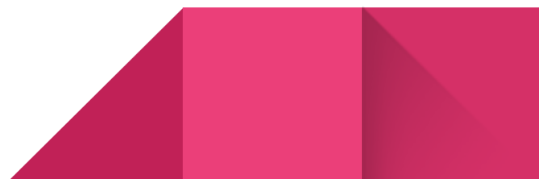


1st Newsletter

September 2019



Profile of PAPESHE project



The objective is to save, protect and valorize existing populations of the Pelagonia sheep breed in the cross-border area, which are currently in danger of extinction, through coordinated synergies. The PAPESHE project through an interdisciplinary holistic approach pursues to:

- record the existing situation of the Pelagonia breed in Greece and FYROM
- describe the relevant research regarding the production characteristics of the breed
- establish the necessary infrastructure for genetic improvement initiatives in the cross-border area (CBA)
- improve the quality and hygiene of milk and dairy products from autochthonous breeds in the CBA
- propose market-based strategies which will increase the incomes of sheep farmers and benefit the whole value chain of sheep farming in the CBA
- convince sheep farmers about the benefits of indigenous sheep breeds and to increase public awareness towards the protection of genetic diversity
- promote networking among actors in the CBA to achieve synergies in increasing the quality of farmer education

The main outputs of PAPESHE will include:

1. A genetics laboratory, an Artificial Insemination laboratory and a nucleus farm for future experimental actions
2. A database with information about Pelagonia sheep populations in the CBA
3. Improvement of quality and hygiene of dairy products in the CBA

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4. Training of farmers on best hygiene techniques for milk.
 5. An integrated strategic plan for the conservation and development of Pelagonia sheep.

The budget of the PAPESHE project is € 771,738 and concerns research on sheep farming and in particular the endangered native breed of sheep Florina - Pelagonia of the research team.

Partnership



1. Aristotle University of Thessaloniki - School of Veterinary Medicine
2. Hellenic Agricultural Organization DEMETER-Research Institute of Animal Science
3. Geotechnical Chamber of Greece - Branch of West Macedonia
4. Faculty of Veterinary Sciences Bitola
5. Municipality of Dolneni
6. Centre for Rural Development

PAPESHE

Why? Where? How? For who?



The sheep production sector of the cross border area Greece - North Macedonia, **despite its economic, environmental and social importance, is currently challenged**. Local sheep farmers do not always have animals well-adapted to the local harsh climate conditions. This increases production costs and the operation of the whole value chain and also imposes severe threats on local ecosystems: the genetic diversity of the cross border area is threatened by massive imports of foreign sheep breeds aiming to improve the milk and meat productivity of farms.

The Pelagonia sheep breed is endowed with numerous advantages which could address these issues. Apart from their historical links to the cross-border area and their high adaptability,

Pelagonia sheep have **high milk production and good prolificacy** which depict their improvement potential. Also, they have **milk and meat of very high quality**. Nonetheless, their advantages are not fully appreciated in North Macedonia because of lack of infrastructure (milk tanks).

Nowadays there very few certified purebred Pelagonia sheep in the **Greek territory**, while in **North Macedonia** relevant information is scarce but there is a critical mass of animals with Pelagonia phenotypes.

The declining populations of Pelagonia sheep are mainly due to information deficiencies to the general public as well as to a lack of training of sheep farmers.

- **Consumers** are unaware of the environmental benefits of genetic diversity or of the good quality characteristics of products from autochthonous breeds.
- **Farmers** are not always trained to understand the indirect benefits of rearing autochthonous breeds and insist on imported sheep breeds of higher yields, which nonetheless incur significantly more costs.






PAPESHE incorporates these considerations in an **integrated conservation program** under a highly **participatory and interdisciplinary approach**. The project involves animal production, genetic improvement, social and economic features in order to achieve a sustainable level of animal genetic diversity in the cross border area. It also acknowledges information and education gaps of stakeholders and envisages to facilitate **network-based education and social learning**.

The overall approach of the project invests on the formation of the necessary infrastructure for genetic improvement activities, which will be readily available to the end users, but is highly supplemented by interdisciplinary features and very close collaboration with institutional partners and stakeholder groups in order to ensure tangible and sustainable results.




The benefits of PAPESHE will be numerous, affecting actors in the whole value chain of sheep production in the cross border area.

- **Farmers** will have direct access to animals with beneficial characteristics and, at the same time, will receive the necessary training to understand these benefits.
 - **Stakeholders in the value chain** (dairy producers, retailers, other manufacturers etc) will benefit from increased and efficient primary production and better communication and networking with other actors in the cross border area.
 - Benefits will accrue also for **scientists and policy makers**, because the innovative features of PAPESHE will be easily transferable to interested parts.
 - **Consumers** will benefit from the improvement of the hygiene of milk and dairy products but also from the protection of biodiversity in the area.
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PAPESHE project meetings

Kick - off meeting in Thessaloniki (20/9/2018) - Mediterranean Palace Hotel

The purpose of the kick-off meeting was to

- Coordinate activities
 - Decide on a common communication plan
 - Decide on a specific plan of action
 - Strengthen common activities
 - Exchange opinions and experiences
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The BARBECUE team



Meeting venue and activities



Mid-term meeting in Bitola (27/3/2019)



PAPESHE is implemented in the framework of competitive bilateral INTERREG IPA Cross Border Cooperation Programme CCI 2014 TC 16 I5CB 009. The project is co-funded by the European Union and by National Funds of the participating countries



More information about the project

Papeshe.vet.auth.gr

Join our community!

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