

INTRODUCTION

ALCASDE is an European project with the aim of developing and promoting alternatives to the surgical castration of pigs and the dehorning of cattle.

The European Union has progressively developed a harmonized legislation with the aim of keeping a high status of animal health and welfare. In this context, **the overall objective of the project is to develop and promote alternatives to the surgical castration of pigs and to develop and promote alternatives to the dehorning of cattle.**

The aim of the contract is to provide research results that will support EU policy to promote demand and acceptance by consumers of pig meat from entire males or produced with alternatives to the surgical castration and also to encourage cattle production systems that do not require the dehorning of cattle.

PARTNERS

1. The Consortium comprises 20 participant organizations and it is coordinated by the Institut de Recerca i Tecnologia Agroalimentàries (IRTA) in Spain.

IRTA, Spain	ALP, Switzerland
INRA, France	NOFIMA, Norway
EAAP, Italy	UNIPD, Italy
ANIMALIA, Norway	UKA, Germany
LEI, The Netherlands	ASG, The Netherlands
UWE, United Kingdom	VUW, Austria
ITEB, France	DMRI, Denmark
IFIP, France	IPB-UKR, Ukraine
CREDA, Spain	UASVM, Romania
CRPA, Italy	



Geographical distribution of the participant organizations in the ALCASDE project.

Promotion and Dissemination

•To form a stakeholder platform to represent the end users of the information	•To create E-learning materials for education and training
•To create a website to promote and disseminate the outputs from the project	•To create industry and public awareness through an International Stakeholder Seminar

Sub-Project 1. Alternatives to castration

AIMS	SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES
1.1 Alternatives to surgical castration.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •To investigate husbandry and management conditions enabling reduced incidence of boar taint and improved animal welfare and health status. • To investigate the distribution of key genes regulating boar taint related compounds in various entire male pig breeds and populations. •To investigate carcass and meat quality characteristics other than boar taint.
1.2 Methods to detect boar taint at the slaughter line.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •To develop rapid detection systems for on-line sorting of boar tainted carcasses to be used in abattoirs. •To develop a programme establishing a European harmonised method to detect boar taint at the slaughter line under commercial conditions. •To develop a program for commercialization of new developed on-line detection systems.
1.3 Demand and acceptance of consumers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Harmonization of consumer research. •Analysis demand and acceptance of consumers. •To identify consumer differentiations among countries and regional differences in Europe
1.4 Integration of knowledge by economic modelling.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •To estimate the financial costs and benefits in the entire pig meat chain for raising entire male pigs in different EU Member States



Sub-Project 2. Alternatives to dehorning

AIMS	SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES
2.1 State of the art of dehorning in the EU member states.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •To estimate how many cattle are dehorned or not, and how dehorning is practiced across the European Union. •To analyze farmers' attitudes towards dehorning practices vs horned animals.
2.2 Assessment of benefits and drawbacks of dehorning and alternatives to dehorning in dairy and beef cattle.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •To summarize possible effects of dehorning on the development of the animals. •To assess the pros and cons of current alternatives to dehorning: keeping fully horned animals and producing polled animals.
2.3 Short and long term strategies for future development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •To find solutions to overcome actual problems or limits to alternatives to dehorning. •To check acceptability of alternatives to dehorning by stakeholders. •To formulate final recommendations on alternatives to dehorning.

Acknowledgements

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Directorate D Animal Health and Welfare