

# farm animal genetic resources



edited by G Simm, B Villanueva, KD Sinclair and S Townsend

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# FARM ANIMAL GENETIC RESOURCES

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Edited by

G. Simm, B. Villanueva, K.D. Sinclair, S. Townsend



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# DEVELOPMENTS IN THE CONSERVATION OF FARM ANIMAL GENETIC RESOURCES

The papers in this book are based on presentations given at a conference held in Edinburgh in November 2002, which was co-organised by the British Society of Animal Science (BSAS), the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), the Rare Breeds Survival Trust (RBST) and the Sheep Trust.

A number of factors led us to believe that such a conference was timely:

1. The growing international effort, led by The Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO), to co-ordinate conservation of Farm Animal Genetic Resources. The conference coincided with the publication by Defra of the UK Country Report on Farm Animal Genetic Resources, as part of this international effort.
2. The Foot and Mouth Disease outbreak in the UK in 2001 and 2002 brought into sharp focus the real threat to rare and geographically isolated livestock breeds, and the need for greater co-ordination of conservation efforts.
3. The growth in scientific knowledge in areas relevant to conservation – especially in quantitative genetics, helping to improve the management of populations at risk, in molecular genetics, improving our capability to characterise and prioritise populations for conservation, and in reproductive biology, providing more effective techniques for conservation.

The chapters in this book have been organised into four sections: Policy issues, Quantitative and molecular genetic basis for conservation, Reproductive techniques to support conservation, and Conservation in action – a series of case studies illustrating some of the techniques covered earlier in the book.

We hope that the book will provide a useful update for those interested in conservation and sustainable utilisation of farm animal genetic resources. The chapters have been edited, but responsibility for the content remains with the authors.

*G. Simm, B. Villanueva, K.D. Sinclair, S. Townsend*  
Editors