



R&D Priorities: 2015 – 2020*

This document sets out the current priority areas for EBLEX R&D expenditure. This will change in response to industry need and the evolving portfolio of research.

R&D in the EBLEX strategy

Research and Development is a core part of delivering the EBLEX strategy as indicated by the objective of “new ideas and techniques developed for production.”

Research objectives

The objectives of the EBLEX R&D programme are to:

- improve genetic selection methods for significant market traits
- improve health and welfare through health planning, better biosecurity and improve understanding of animal disease and its control
- improve animal nutrition and growth through better management
- develop better risk management through integrated systems for beef and sheep production
- improve meat quality and safety to meet market requirements (including reducing food waste and improving shelf life)

Research priorities

R&D priorities were reviewed by the R&D Committee in September 2014 for the period of this strategy.

EBLEX aims to have a portfolio of research which is delivers knowledge to support the following priority outcomes for the beef and sheep industries:

Key outcomes for English beef industry:

- Increase weaned weight of suckled calves per ha
- Increase forage and feed use efficiency in growing & finishing beef cattle

Key outcomes for English sheep industry:

- Increase weaning weight of lambs per ha
- Increase forage and feed use efficiency in growing and finishing lambs

*Agreed by the R&D Committee on 17th September 2014

EBLEX's aim is to work in partnership with others to demonstrate the impact on increased profitability of improved practice against these outcomes.

Within the plan period, EBLEX will have received the results of a review of genetic improvement of beef cattle and sheep in the UK. This will be used to formulate a plan for future EBLEX activity on animal breeding genetics and genomics.

Other criteria for funding research

In addition, projects may be considered because they are deemed important for other reasons.

Primarily:

1. Horizon scanned issues - issues/topics that are not currently seen as priorities, but which EBLEX feel will be critical in future and which need R&D effort to prepare the industry.
2. Legislative and/or regulatory necessity - issues which are critical to the future operation of the beef and sheep industry.