

Farm IQ Programme Quarterly Progress January to March 2011

The FarmIQ programme has been established with the purpose of building an integrated, demand-led value chain for red meat. This is the first quarterly report for FarmIQ. The programme includes six projects; Management and KPI's, Market Analysis, IT and Database, Genetics, Processing and Farm Productive Capacity

Overall the programme is progressing well except for the initial farmer facing projects. The lags in the farmer facing projects will not have a long term effect on the programme as there are sufficient farmer participants and stock numbers to drive the programme at the pilot level.

Marketing progress is ahead of the original plan. New consumer marketing capabilities have been built ahead of schedule and plans are underway to launch market prototypes for super premium consumer products into the UK and German markets. The use of prototyping is a move away from solely using the traditional market research approach originally proposed.

Development of the detailed functional specification for the database has commenced and is progressing well. After review it has become clear that additional analysis and reporting functionality is required for the pilot database for next season. This is to address farmer concerns that the value of information gained does not exceed the time and effort required for data entry. FarmIQ is also involved in the wider industry standards discussion..

Overall the genetics project is on track with an interim list of phenotypes for each species identified. Finalising the list depends on the outcome of reviews in meat yield and meat quality, determination of what in-line measurements will be available, slaughters and data collection of trials linking genetics to feed and carcass traits.

In processing, the Sheep and Lamb electronic identification readers are now in operation and a review is underway investigating a range of yield prediction technologies for beef and venison