

Presentation of British sheep genetics in Paraguay

The British Ambassador to Paraguay, Ramin Navai, hosted a reception on Wednesday 23 June for the presentation of British Hampshire Down and Texel sheep breeds. The event will celebrate the progress of the joint work in the area and will feature a sheep of each breed on display. The reception followed all necessary measures in compliance with local provisions for the prevention of COVID-19.

Work across sectors

This presentation is the result of work that began in mid-2020, when a British company requested assistance in importing genetic material to Paraguay. The British Embassy in Asunción opened a technical dialogue between veterinary experts of the Paraguay National Animal Health and Quality Service (SENACSA) and their British counterpart, the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra), to obtain the corresponding permission.

After months of intense work, SENACSA granted the British exporters permission to send sheep embryos to the country. Imports are possible thanks to a partnership between the private sector, the British Embassy and SENACSA. Local producers will import the embryos for local production, aiming to supply the region.

From Paraguay to the world

Paraguay already has local producers breeding British breeds of sheep, such as Hampshire Down and Texel, the latter being a British-Dutch hybrid. This new joint achievement aims to turn the country into a world-class centre to produce sheep genetics. Speaking to local media, the president of the Paraguayan Association of Sheep Breeders (APCO), Mr. Nicolás Peña said:

Sheep farming is a thriving sector with great potential. (...) Now we will take a big step, because the country needs to handle industrial volumes to position itself as a consumer power.

On the other hand, Ambassador Ramin Navai commented:

We will continue to work with the associations, with SENACSA and with Defra.

We are committed to continue building on the advancements made so far, aiming to boost sheep farming in Paraguay by incorporating British genetics.

UK's ovine leadership

The United Kingdom is in the top 10 sheep breeding countries of the world and the largest in Europe in terms of quantity and exports. It has about 90 different breeds of sheep.

United Kingdom offers export certification for:

- sheep semen and embryos to the 27 members of the European Union
- semen to Brazil, Canada and the United States
- semen and embryos to Chile, Guyana, Mexico, New Zealand and other countries

[Sheep leaflet](#) (PDF, 1.03MB, 8 pages)