



# THE LACAUNE MEAT



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The Lacaune meat breed is mainly located in the south-west of the Massif Central.

The ewes are used to produce milk-fed lambs.  
In France, there are currently about 250,000 ewes.



Geographical location of the Lacaune meat flocks

## Organization

### Breed society

UPRA Lacaune coordinates the selection activities, approves breeding animals and sets phenotype targets and criteria, oversees and manages the flock book and is also responsible for performance control and genetic evaluation.

### Selection Companies

The Ovi-Test cooperative for the « Ovi-Test » selection program  
Lacaune Gene Innovation Distribution for the « GID Lacaune » selection program



- provide genetic support to selector breeders,
- manage genetic programs (mating program),
- manage genetic programs tools (individual control stations, insemination centers),
- manage distribution (breeding animals and semen).

All of the rams used in the selection bases are homozygous and resistant to scrapie (ARR/ARR). Almost all of the female population carry at least one resistance allele.

Both selection programs have proven to be extremely effective in terms of genetic progress to meet the various needs of our breeders, taking into account their production systems and the needs of the industry.

Thanks to the current collective selection program management and the use of new tools (major gene management), we can predict increased effectiveness in such areas as adaptation to the environment, economic efficiency, disease resistance, products quality improvement and more...

### CORE SELECTION GROUP

13,000 ewes

2 programs  
OVI-TEST  
GID Lacaune

### MEAT BREED USERS

- 250,000 Lacaune Meat ewes
- 800 Lacaune Meat rams
- 4 500 beef breed rams

### DISTRIBUTION

« DAIRY » USERS  
AI and Terminal Rams

- 244 rams
- 6 300 ewes
- 100 400 AI

## Two selection programs :

### Ovi-Test

Started in 1976, this selection plan focuses on **maternal characteristics** : prolificacy, dairy value and out-of-season production, and also works on meat-production characteristics.

Since 2007, the program has been managing the major hyper-prolificacy gene « Lac 3 », in order to obtain optimum prolificacy around 200% in farms. The long-term objective, thanks to the mating management system, is to produce no hyper-prolific animals and create a selection base with 50% heterozygote ewes carrying « Lac 3 » and 50% not carrying it.

The program performs annual descendant tests on 30 rams for maternal characteristics and 25 rams for meat-producing characteristics. It ensures widespread distribution of genetic progress by disseminating breeding animals (about 5,000 ewe-lambs per year) and by insemination (50,000 doses).



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### GID Lacaune

Created in 1980, this program focuses on **meat-producing characteristics** : conformation, fattening, meat yield, and also maternal characteristics.

Since 2003, the selection program has been introducing a major gene (MH) into part of its population in order to improve conformation.

This genetic type has been achieved by mating Lacaune females with Belgian Texel rams which carry the gene. The successive matings with rams with the MH gene had been made to produce animals with the gene which are at least 15/16ths or 31/32nds Lacaune. Then these animals have all pure-bred characteristics (especially in terms of maternal qualities and hardiness), and also with highly favourable conformation characteristics. The gene is currently being propagated throughout the GID Lacaune population.

Every year, the program evaluates by progeny testing about 20 rams for meat-producing characteristics and 20 for maternal characteristics. The genetic developments are distributed by disseminating breeding animals (about 2,000 ewe-lambs per year) and by artificial insemination (50,000 doses).



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