

OVNIS: for an Innovative Ovine Healthy Meat

Producing safe minced ovine meat that meets consumer expectations while creating added value for lamb and ewe carcasses



CONTEXT

Since the 2000s, ovine meat consumption in France has experienced a significant decline (-50% between 2000 and 2022). This trend is a concern for the ovine sector in the Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes region, the third-largest ovine-producing region in the country. The sector fears a loss of visibility and a reduced presence of its products on store shelves. To reverse this trend, the industry has decided to promote ovine meat consumption by developing innovative products based on minced meat or minced meat preparations.

A first project, the PIVO project (2020-2023), assessed the technical feasibility of producing minced ovine meat. The results were encouraging, demonstrating the absence of major technological barriers, compliance with composition criteria, reasonable shelf-lives and satisfactory nutritional and sensory qualities. Additionally, a demand from various marketing channels, particularly to attract a younger audience, was identified. However, a major obstacle was highlighted: the contamination of meat mixtures by pathogenic bacteria, particularly Shiga toxin-producing *Escherichia coli* (STEC), leading to the exclusion of the mixtures from distribution channels. Given this situation, regional ovine sector operators have expressed the need for specific support to overcome this bottleneck.

TIMELINE

Project start:
January 2025

Project end:
December 2027



OBJECTIVES

The OVNIS project aims to provide regional ovine operators with the necessary technical elements to ensure the safe production of minced meat. It seeks to guarantee health-safe products that meet consumer taste expectations while ensuring the sector's economic profitability.

To achieve this, the project will focus on:

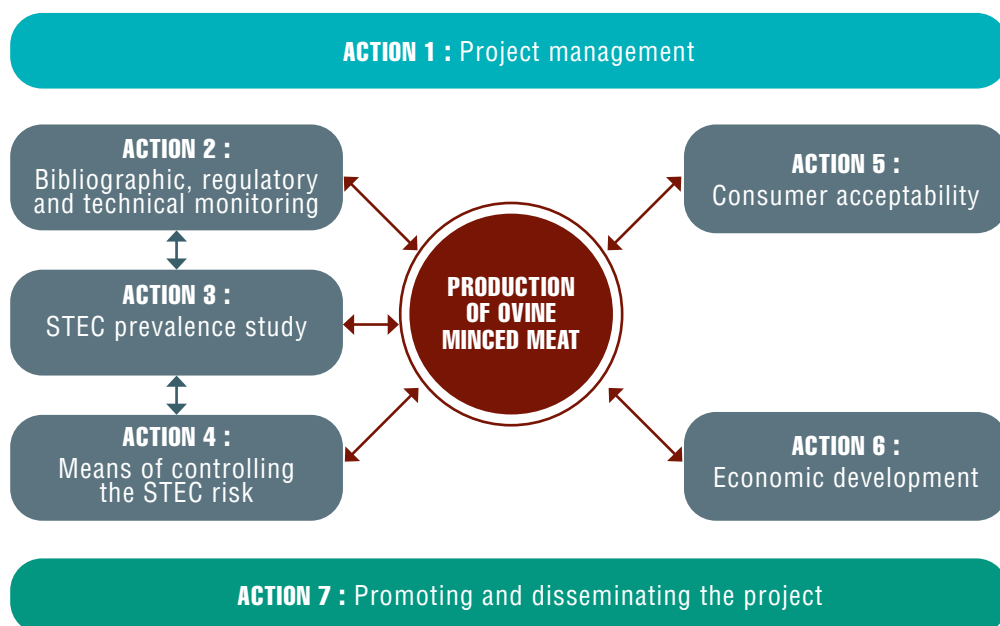
- Conducting a general assessment of the microbiological quality of ovine meat and the regulations surrounding minced ovine meat in France and Europe.
- Evaluating the measures implemented abroad for the safe production of minced ovine meat and their replicability in France.
- Determining the prevalence of STEC in the regional ovine sector.

- Proposing concrete and applicable solutions for companies to ensure hygienic control and STEC risk management.
- Assessing the sensory and economic acceptability of minced ovine meat by consumers.
- Calculating the economic value-added of an ovine carcass through minced meat production.

PARTNERS

This project is funded by the PEPIT program of the Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes region. It is led by the Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes Chamber of Agriculture in partnership with the Livestock Institute (Idele), Tradival, and INRAE with the UMR Microbiology, Digestive Environment, and Health (MEDiS).

THE PROJECT IS STRUCTURED AROUND 7 ACTIONS:



CONTACTS

Marine PENON (Chambre d'Agriculture Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes) : marine.penon@aura.chambagri.fr
Pierre LEDORMAND (Institut de l'Élevage) : pierre.ledormand@idele.fr - Jérôme NORMAND (Institut de l'Élevage) : jerome.normand@idele.fr