

The Spanish Society for the Study of Pastures: 45 years promoting better pasture knowledge and management

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Introduction The Spanish Society for the Study of Pastures (SEEP) (<http://www.seepastos.es>) was founded in 1960 through the initiative of Prof. G. González with the intention of combining efforts and initiatives on pasture studies from many points of view. The Society has the objective of promoting the knowledge and improvement of Spanish pastures, regarding every issue related with pastoral science: typology; ecology and functions of pastoral ecosystems; plant production; feeding value; animal production; economics; sociology and agricultural policy, etc. The term 'Pasture' is considered in a broad sense to include every plant part, individual or community capable of being used for livestock or wildlife feeding. Since the inception, the Society has enrolled as members university graduates, engineers, farmers, institutes and companies interested in the soil-vegetation-livestock complex.

Members The current number of members is 284. At present the Society includes members in all Spanish autonomous communities who, in accordance with the Society's initial aims, develop research and technical activity on multiple aspects and at many centres: Universities (Faculties of Biology, Veterinary Science, Pharmacy, Agronomy..., Forestry, Environment, and Agricultural Schools, etc), Scientific Research Council Institutes (CSIC), National Institute of Agricultural Research, Agriculture Research centres from autonomous communities, Agriculture Ministry, etc.

Activity Society activity is mainly developed through the publication of the research journal *Pastos*. It also organises an annual scientific meeting at a different location each year, trying to visit and cover all the diversity of pastoral and productive systems of Spain. Proceedings are published for each annual scientific meeting. The Society also promotes and organises some other scientific and technical or informative activities that are related to pastures, such as the recent Pasture Nomenclature (Dictionary). The most important such current activity is the research project Typology, Cartography and Characterisation of Spanish Pastures

The Spanish Pastures Project This project is described in <http://www.carm.es/cagr/cida/pastos/index.html>. After 40 years of Society activity, the Society Vice-President, Prof. C. Ferrer, highlighted the fact that there was much more knowledge about Spanish pastures than was actually being used or was even accessible to potential users. Therefore, through his initiative, a project to transfer research results was funded by the Spanish National Institute for Agricultural Research (INIA) and almost every Autonomous Community. The aim of that Project was to summarise, standardise and systematise all the outstanding information and research results on Spanish pastures dispersed in more than 2000 scientific publications. This project joins together more than 200 Spanish researchers, working in 19 regional working groups -one per autonomous community with two in the two larger communities - and with six different subjects (each one with its own coordinator): Cartography, Natural Pastures, Agricultural Pastures, Feeding Value, Animal Production and Socioeconomics. The project is coordinated by Prof. C. Ferrer and Prof. A. San Miguel.

Basic dictionary on Spanish pastures At the 2001 research meeting, the S.E.E.P. general assembly approved a first version of a basic dictionary on Spanish pastures (Ferrer *et al.*, 2002) that standardises the main Spanish terms related with pastures. However, a more general glossary or dictionary of pasture terms will be prepared in the near future. A dictionary of latin and common English names of herbaceous and shrubby Iberian plants has also been published by Ferrer & Broca (2002).

Collaboration with the Centre for Animal Food Information (CIA) The Society maintains a collaboration project with the Centre for Animal Food Information (CIA) (Córdoba University) (<http://www.uco.es/organiza/servicios/apoyo/nirs/cial.htm>), with the objective of compiling and standardising all the outstanding information related to the characteristics of products for animal feeding.

References

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