

Compilation of a database of research information on legume based grazing systems; a part of the Leggraze research project

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Keywords: legumes, grazing, database, website

Introduction The establishment of a publicly accessible web-resident database of published and current European research on agronomy, animal production and environmental impact of legume based grazing systems is reported. This database facilitates the sharing of information among the partners of the “Low input animal production based on forage legumes for grazing systems” (Leggraze), a research project funded by the UE (QL K5 CT-2001-02328). It also forms an important tool for transferring the results of the project to the wider research community and to end users in the agricultural sector and to policy makers at national and community level.

Materials and methods The database uses the database server MySQL. It allows, starting from a form, the search for a document according to several criteria (authors, year of publication, language and or keywords (from 1 to 8). The database is hosted on the server of the University of Perpignan (France). The address is: <http://www.univ-perp.fr/leggraze/bibliography.htm>.

Articles are sourced from over 40 journals and conference proceedings. The update of the database is carried out by the indexing of each new issue of The European Journal of Agronomy, Grass and forage Science, Small Ruminant Research and Animal Research.

Results The database contains 310 articles written by 501 authors from 20 countries, provided by the partners of the project. The number of key words is 149. The articles can be gathered around 19 topics (Table 1).

Table 1 Main topics of the articles included in the database

Mixed swards	102
Forage quality	67
Persistence of plants	57
Animal production	57
Harvest management	47
Tannins	45
Fertilisation	41
Pasture production	37
Plant morphology	29
Environmental influence	26
Establishment of sward	26
Annual legumes	25
N ₂ -fixation/Leaching	19
Soil fertility	18
Grass/Legume interaction	16
Dietary preference	16
Grazing behaviour	16
Phytopathology	8
Genetic resources	7
Monography	7

Conclusion This web-resident database visited more than 2000 times is an important way of diffusion of the results of the Leggraze project. We hope that it will be maintained and updated after the end of this research project to provide for the research community a useful tool for the study of grazed legume pastures.