

Chinese, New Zealander researchers look for year-round breeding genes in sheep

In 2013, the Chinese government announced its intention to achieve self-sufficiency in red meat production by 2020. This announcement was accompanied with increased research funding of NZ\$340 million.

Massey University in New Zealand has been developing relationships with Chinese universities and research institutions since the 1980s and is well-placed to develop research collaborations aimed at assisting farmers to achieve the government's vision.

In 2007, Massey and Shihezi University undertook the first joint sheep research project looking for genes that control year-round breeding in sheep.

Various researchers have suggested that New Zealand's lamb trade would be improved by having lambs born year-round. However, this is limited by our current sheep breeds, which generally do not breed between October and December.

The project was funded by the Chinese Ministry of Science and Technology, and Shihezi University staff and postgraduate students utilised sheep on battalion farms.

Read full, original article: [Mutual gains from China sheep project](#)