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<b>Title of the project:</b>	BEST-F: Biosecurity Engagement for Sustainable Training of Farmworkers
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<b>Web page:</b>	<a href="https://igop.uab.cat/2026/04/20/sebastian-moya/">https://igop.uab.cat/2026/04/20/sebastian-moya/</a>
<b>Area:</b>	Biosecurity, farm workers, ruminants, mixed methods, training programme

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### What?

BEST-F aims to create a ground-breaking knowledge exchange programme focused on preventive (biosecurity) measures tailored to ruminant farm workers in Spain and the UK. The project addresses a critical gap, as farm workers spend the most time on farms, have the most contact with animals, and are directly involved in implementing preventive measures, yet they remain an “invisible stakeholder” consistently marginalised in both research and policy. The project will characterise these workers, identify their needs and those of farmers and veterinarians, and design a versatile, freely available training programme to improve biosecurity implementation on ruminant farms.

### Who?

BEST-F is led by Dr Sebastian Moya Duran (PI), supervised by Dr Josep Espluga Trenc at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (UAB) and Dr Marnie Brennan at the University of Nottingham (UNOTT).

Sebastian Moya Duran holds a PhD in Veterinary Medicine and Animal Health from UAB (Extraordinary Doctorate Award, 2021), with postdoctoral experience at INRAE (project ROADMAP, France), the University of Nottingham (project BIOSECURE, UK) and IREC (project EUPAHW, Spain). He has 17 indexed journal articles, three editorials and two book chapters, serves as Editor-in-Chief of Vet Record Open, and is a reserve member of EFSA Scientific Committees. He currently holds a Beatriu de Pinós fellowship at UAB/IGOP.

Josep Espluga Trenc is Senior Lecturer in Sociology at UAB and researcher at IGOP, specialising in public policy sociology, social risk perception and participatory research in rural contexts. He has been PI on the European projects HONEST (2015-2019) and ECF4CLIM (2021-2025), supervised 17 doctoral theses and hosted four postdoctoral researchers. His involvement in cross-border networks on animal welfare and bovine tuberculosis through the INNOTUB framework, makes him the key institutional link with Spanish public authorities and relevant ministries.

Marnie Brennan is Director of the Centre for Evidence-based Veterinary Medicine (CEVM) and Associate Professor of Epidemiology at the UNOTT. She has over 100 indexed publications and more than 15 years of research on behavioural and psychosocial factors in livestock biosecurity and animal welfare in the UK. Through

the CEVM she has established networks of farmers, veterinarians and agrarian organisations essential for fieldwork access in the UK. Her published work covers farmer attitudes, biosecurity determinants and the veterinarian-farmer relationship in livestock systems.

### **Why?**

Globalisation and climate change have increased the risk of infectious disease outbreaks in animal populations, with devastating consequences. Recent outbreaks caused 316 million poultry deaths from Avian Influenza and 1.2 million pig deaths from African Swine Fever. On livestock farms, biosecurity measures can reduce these risks, but implementation remains uneven, particularly on ruminant farms. Farm workers are the most exposed to animals and most directly responsible for daily biosecurity tasks, yet they remain systematically excluded from research and training initiatives. BEST-F addresses this gap by placing farm workers at the centre of a participatory knowledge exchange programme.

BEST-F will contribute to the professionalisation and visibility of ruminant farm workers, improve biosecurity standards, reduce infectious disease risk, and strengthen the One Health agenda connecting animal, human, and environmental health.

### **How?**

BEST-F is a postdoctoral fellowship project submitted to the Beatriu de Pinós 2024 call (AGAUR / Generalitat de Catalunya). It is hosted at IGOP-UAB (Spain) with a short-term research stay at the UNOTT (UK). The project spans 3 years and covers four Work Packages (WPs) addressing biosecurity training for ruminant farm workers across Spain and the UK.

BEST-F uses an innovative Participatory Action Research (PAR) approach integrating qualitative and interdisciplinary methods across Spain and the UK. From the outset, a working group, technical team and monitoring committee will be formed with ruminant farm stakeholders, local authorities and researchers. The project is structured in four WPs, covering corpus analysis of official biosecurity regulations (WP1), focus groups with farm workers (WP2), semi-structured interviews with farmers and veterinarians (WP3), and participatory workshops to design a training programme using the ADDIE model (WP4).

IGOP-UAB leads all four WPs in Spain, while UNOTT replicates WP2, WP3 and WP4 in the UK. The project integrates a gender and migration dimension across all WPs, seeking parity between women and men, and between migrant and non-migrant farm workers.

### **When?**

From 2026 to 2029 (3 years).