

# NEWSLETTER – APRIL 2013

## Contents

### Animal Health p 2-3

Animal Health Law  
Fish conference  
Discontools & Pet Night  
Identification & Registration  
CALLISTO

### Animal Welfare p 4-5

Group housing of sows  
Transport of animals  
EU Animal Welfare Law  
EUWELNET  
EFSA

### Public Health p 6

Horsemeat fraud  
Honeybees

### Medicines p 7-8

Anthelmintic resistance  
Horse essential list  
OIE conference AMR  
ESVAC  
Single Market

### Education p 9

Coordinating veterinary training

### FVE & the profession p 9-12

Brochure: "Vets are vital"  
3-Questions for G. Ricardi  
Update Professional Recognition  
OIE conf statutory bodies  
FVE visit China & Brazil

## Confidence: traceability and quality assurance



Fraud. But also a lack of transparency transpired from the latest horse food scandal, which clearly showed that horses not intended for slaughter can easily enter the food chain due to the lack of a central database of horse passports throughout the EU. Fortunately, there were no consequences for public health, but it has jeopardized consumer confidence in the food security system.

FVE always stressed that identification without registration is of no value, and has therefore been a staunch advocate of a central registration system – for horses, but also for pets. Unfortunately, MEPs seem on the point to reject this proposal in the context movements of companion animals...

"Member States lack trust in each other's educational systems", so concluded the 2009 study on the Directive on the recognition of professional qualifications. As one of the first professions in Europe, the FVE and EAEVE set up a visitation system nearly 20 years ago, to ensure that all EU veterinary schools were in con-

formity with legislation. The objective: to facilitate movement but also to guarantee the quality of veterinary education, thereby helping to build trust and confidence among Member States and its citizens. Unfortunately, the latest draft of the Directive did not take this evaluation system on board, missing the perfect opportunity to give it a legal basis. Improving traceability and quality assessment of veterinary training are two issues strongly supported by FVE to protect society and improve consumer confidence. In accordance with the precautionary principle, they do not entail conflict of interests and are non discriminatory, proportionate and justified.

So why are these proposals being rejected? Is confidence perhaps not a priority for the EU? Some may argue that they impair free movement. Recognising free movement is an objective of the EU, limits are reached when confidence is destroyed: the EU will never prosper without the confidence and approval of its citizens.

Veterinarians simply strive to act responsibly by promoting and guaranteeing confidence. Because we care for animals – and people.

*C. Buhot, FVE President*

# ANIMAL HEALTH

## ANIMAL HEALTH LAW

### FVE welcomes veterinary farm visits

The community Animal Health Law (AHL)'s official proposal is expected to be presented by the Commission by end April. FVE welcomes the Commission's initiative to *"bring the large body of EU animal health legislation in one single and clearer regulatory framework"*, as well as *"the emphasis on One Health."*

However, the importance of Veterinary Services, described as 'a public good' in the Animal Health Strategy, should be more emphasised in the AHL, according to FVE.

FVE especially welcomes the addition of article 25, requesting farmers to receive regular veterinary visits. According to FVE, regular farm visits *"are the cornerstone of the 'prevention is better than cure' strategy."* These herd health visits should not only cover advice on biosecurity, but also include advice on the prevention of diseases that can have an impact on animal and public health and animal welfare. The AHL should clearly define the responsibilities and tasks of the veterinary profession. FVE suggests including the definition of the veterinarian, as adopted at its 2011 General Assembly.

For historical reasons, certain professionals other than veterinarians might undertake tasks in aquatic health. However, for the protection of public and animal health and welfare, these aquatic animal health professionals should be regulated and their performance subject to professional disciplinary controls.

The AHL package consists of animal health rules, covered by the AHL, and control rules, covered by the Official

Controls Regulation, as well as Rules on plants and propagating material.

The fifth proposal (covering the feed and food expenditure multi-annual budget for 2014-2020) will most likely only be released on a later date as it is not yet sure how the cut of the overall EU budget will affect this proposal. This proposal includes the funding for the disease eradication programs, the emergency fund, the funding of Better Training for Safer Food, and other expenditure in the field of food safety, has to be adopted before 1 January 2014 by co-decision as the current Regulation will end at the end of this year.

## AQUACULTURE

### FVE Conference on fish health and welfare

"Caring for health and welfare of fish – A critical success factor for aquaculture"<sup>1</sup> is the topic of a 2-day conference to be held in Brussels on 16 and 17 May, and organised by the FVE in association with the Irish Presidency and the European Commission. The conference aims to bring together the different stakeholders in the field of aquaculture. It will review the current situation in the EU and identify animal health and welfare issues that need to be addressed. It will also look into the role of the veterinary profession in assuring these matters. The sessions will cover aquaculture in Europe: current and emerging disease; ensuring best practices in aquaculture; and the role of the veterinarian in the aquatic business sector, followed by a panel discussion.



1 [http://www.fve.org/uploads/publications/docs/013%20obligatory%20i&r\\_march\\_rev.pdf](http://www.fve.org/uploads/publications/docs/013%20obligatory%20i&r_march_rev.pdf)

## DISCONTTOOLS

### Disease control: gap analysis completed

All 52 diseases under consideration in the DISCONTTOOLS project have now been successfully analysed and prioritised for research purposes<sup>2</sup>. DISCONTTOOLS, an FP7. FVE congratulates IFAH-Europe, coordinator of the project, on the successful outcome, which *"helps highlighting current gaps in animal disease diagnosis, prevention and control."*

Diseases were given 'scores' on the basis of a number of criteria (lack of diagnostics, vaccines or other control tools, impact on animal health, zoonotic potential, distribution, trade implications...). According to the score, the 'top-ten' diseases are: Nipah virus infection, Peste des Petits Ruminants, African Swine Fever, Rift Valley Fever, Bovine Tuberculosis, Foot and Mouth Disease, Trypanosomiasis, African Horse Sickness, Cryptosporidiosis and Salmonellosis.



*"Looking forward, we need to prioritise our research efforts and focus on key targets. The prioritisation model is complete and 52 diseases have been analysed so far but there is so much more that can be done. Results of the project should guide future funding for research as we look to the next major European funding cycle – Horizon 2020"*, said Declan O'Brien, DISCONTTOOLS Project Coordinator.

Interested in which treatments are available and where research is needed into new or improved diagnostics, vaccines and pharmaceuticals? Look it up in the publicly available comprehensive database of 52 epizootic, zoonotic and production diseases with multiple filter and search modes.

2 [www.disconttools.eu](http://www.disconttools.eu)



## EUROPEAN PET NIGHT 2013

### Celebrating pets that change lives

The 9th European Pet Night, initiated by the Animal Health Industry (IFAH), took place at the Bilbliothèque Solvay in Brussels on 20 February 2013. Again, FVE was among the co-organisers of the event. The evening was co-hosted by Horst Schnellhardt MEP and Maria Irigoyen MEP. This year's topic was "Celebrating Pets that Change Lives".

Guest speakers included Bart Weetjens, founder of APOPO<sup>3</sup>, who described how the association's HeroRATs help save lives and limbs by using their exceptional sense of smell to sniff out unexploded landmines and tuberculosis<sup>4</sup>.

European Pet Night 2013 also featured Claude Mélain, a volunteer from ACTIV DOG to highlight the therapeutic benefits of pets with the elderly. This was in line with a new campaign promoting the benefits of pets to elderly people, launched by the International Federation for Animal Health Europe (IFAH-Europe). The campaign will be run via a Facebook page<sup>5</sup>, which will be supported by more in-depth information on how to care for pets on IFAH-Europe's website, [www.ifaheurope.org](http://www.ifaheurope.org).

## ELECTRONIC IDENTIFICATION

### Dog chipping compulsory in the Netherlands and in UK

In the Netherlands, electronic identification (microchipping) and registration of dogs will become

compulsory on 1 April 2013. All pups need to be chipped and registered within the first seven weeks of life. Vets implanting microchips in dogs must also enter this in their own records. In the UK, all dogs will need to be chipped and registered in an authorised commercial microchip database by 16 April 2016. This gives owners three years to comply with new legislation.

Owners will also be required to ensure



contact details are kept up to date, and will have to register details of any new owner before they sell or give the dog away.

FVE president Christophe Buhot commented: "FVE welcomes this news FVE has campaigned consistently for compulsory identification of travelling companion animals and for linking this identification to registration in an approved database. This is essential to effectively control the risk of disease spread and prevent risks associated with illegal trade." Furthermore, it will encourage responsible pet ownership, help to detect cross border health risks, tackle puppy farming and help to reunite lost dogs with their owners.

In many European countries, including Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Estonia, Sweden and Switzerland, compulsory electronic identification and central registration of all dogs is already in place (see table<sup>6</sup>). Twenty-five EU Member States already have identification linked

with registration on a national database. A total of 50 national databases across the EU are already linked to Europetnet<sup>7</sup>, a European registration database. In some countries identification and registration is (or will soon be) compulsory nationally, in others only in certain regions. In countries such as Belgium where identification and registration has been compulsory for a number of years, figures show real benefits to animal welfare such as a

reduced number of dogs per rescue shelter.

## ZOONOSES FROM PETS

### Callisto report identifies pet benefits – and pathogens

In January, Callisto<sup>8</sup> published its first strategic annual report (2012), based on the outcomes of the first Callisto conference, which was held in Brussels on 24, 25 and 26 October.

The conference provided an increased insight in the current situation in Europe with regard to the role of companion animals in disease transmission of diseases.

Main achievements of the first cycle include:

- Identification of a broad list of major pathogens, which that

3 [www.apopo.org](http://www.apopo.org)

4 For presentations, go to [www.ifaheurope.org/](http://www.ifaheurope.org/)

5 [www.facebook.com/WeCare.petsEurope](https://www.facebook.com/WeCare.petsEurope)

6 [http://www.fve.org/uploads/publications/docs/013%20obligatory%20i&r\\_march\\_rev.pdf](http://www.fve.org/uploads/publications/docs/013%20obligatory%20i&r_march_rev.pdf)

7 [www.europetnet.com](http://www.europetnet.com)

8 Companion animal multisectorial interprofessional and interdisciplinary strategic think tank on zoonoses <http://www.callistoproject.eu/joomla/>

will form the basis of further assessment in the second cycle.

- An overview of the policy actions in place across Europe aimed at the prevention of diseases transmitted from companion animals to humans or food animals.
- An overview of the benefits of companion animals for human health and welfare.

During the second year, Callisto will focus on risk assessment. The epidemiology and the pathogen groups will narrow down the list of pathogens to the 15 most important ones. The other groups will focus on the risks of human animal interactions, the risk of (lack of) certain policy actions and the risks of infectious diseases associated with keeping companion animals.

## CAROCAT

### Responsible cat ownership

CAROCat, a website for responsible cat ownership has been set up<sup>9</sup>. CAROCat is “a concrete attempt to provide, generate and disseminate reliable knowledge about cats in Europe, focusing on feline overpopulation and, in consequence, on all resulting animal welfare problems.” The initiators are the international animal welfare organization VIER PFOTEN, the Istituto “G.Caporale” in Teramo (Italy). The European Commission and the FVE are active partners of CAROCat; together they



<sup>9</sup> [www.carocat.eu](http://www.carocat.eu)

## ANIMAL WELFARE

### GROUP HOUSING OF SOWS

#### Increased pressure to meet welfare Directive

Group housing of sows was the topic of the 28 January stakeholder meeting organised by DG Sanco. Aim of the meeting was to present perspectives, experiences and suggestions to ensure the implementation of group housing of sows, compulsory as from 1 January 2013, according to Directive 2008/120/EC.



The political decision to switch from individual sow stalls to group housing was taken in 2001. Member States have had twelve years to ensure a smooth transition to the new system and to implement the Directive.

Overall, the compliance is better than with the earlier laying hens Directive, with 19 countries stating being fully or over 90% compliant. On 21 February, the European Commission, via a letter of formal notice, called on nine Member states (Belgium, Cyprus, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Poland and Portugal) to take action to address deficiencies in the implementation of the EU Directive which requires that sows are kept in groups during part of pregnancy.

## TRANSPORT

### Fitness for transport of pigs

The drafting of guidelines for the fitness for transport of pigs was the aim of the first multi-stakeholder meeting organised on 26 February by the European livestock and meat trading union (UECBV).

The meeting was attended by about 20 stakeholder representatives, including the FVE, UECVB, Eurogroup, Animals Angels, Copa-Cogeca, and Pig producers. Most stakeholders had also been involved with the development of guidelines for the fitness of transport of cattle.

At the meeting, participants reviewed the state of play on the cattle guidelines,

which received positive feedback and is now available in six languages and soon in 11 more.

A stakeholders' group for the pig transport guidelines was created by nine stakeholders, including FVE. The group aims to finalise the guidelines by early 2014.

A similar initiative is also underway for horses, organised by the Federation of European Equine Veterinary Associations (FEEVA) jointly with World Horse Welfare.

### Enforcement of welfare during transport conference

“Bringing Best Practice to Light” is the title of the conference on the enforcement of animal welfare during

transport<sup>10</sup>, to be held on 29 May in Dublin, and organised by the European Commission in co-operation with the Irish Presidency with the support of the European Livestock and Meat Trading Union (UECBV).

Held in the historical surroundings of Dublin Castle, the conference will bring together a broad range of delegates, from national and international organizations, representatives from competent authorities and NGOs along with participants from private industry such as transporters, producers and veterinarians. The programme and registration form can be found online<sup>11</sup>.

## EU WELFARE STRATEGY

### Preparing the impact assessment for a new Animal Welfare Law

The EU Animal Welfare Strategy was on the agenda meeting organised by the European Commission on 22 February. The meeting was attended by some 90 representatives of Member States and stakeholders, including FVE.

Aim of the meeting was to help the European Commission establish an impact assessment that will support the future legislative framework for animal welfare: the new Animal Welfare Strategy.

The meeting focused on four main topics: Animal welfare indicators (implementation and enforcement); providing information to consumers (labelling); an EU network of reference centres (see article below); and improving the competence of personnel dealing with animals.

If the impact assessment is accepted, the EC will draft a proposal for a new

Animal Welfare Law in 2014.

## EUWELNET

### Pilot EU network of animal welfare reference centres

EUWelNet<sup>12</sup> is an EU project to set up a pilot project on the feasibility of a coordinated network of European reference centres on animal welfare. The aim of these centres would be to coordinate knowledge transfer to promote the implementation of the animal welfare legislation in the EU. The one-year project, ending on 30 December 2013, is coordinated by Harry Blokhuis (SLU, Sweden) and includes 26 partner institutions from 16 European countries. The first stakeholder meeting was held on 7-8 March in Brussels.

EUWELNET's main objectives are to establish a network of technical, scientific and educational experts in the field; identify bottlenecks in implementing EU legislation on animal welfare and to find solutions.

In the pilot, EUWelNet will work out some concrete examples where there are clear bottlenecks in implementation, namely on tail docking in pigs (development of an online course), group housing of pigs (fact sheets) and on slaughter methods and (scientific evidence, operating procedures). FVE is member of the advisory board.

## EFSA

### Monitoring animal welfare at slaughter

Identifying indicators and procedures to monitor animal welfare at slaughterhouses was discussed on 30 January, at a meeting of the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA).

According to new EU legislation on animal welfare at slaughterhouses<sup>13</sup>, business operators must carry out regular checks to ensure that animals do not present any signs of consciousness after stunning and before death. In line with this, the European Commission requested EFSA to produce a scientific opinion concerning such monitoring procedures.

EFSA's Panel on Animal Health and Welfare Panel (AHAW) will identify science-based animal welfare indicators and sampling protocols to assess the effectiveness of stunning and slaughtering processes. Input from the meeting will help the preparation of four scientific opinions, to be published by end of 2013, on monitoring the welfare at slaughter of cattle, pigs, chickens and turkeys, sheep and goats. EFSA will also review the scientific literature and seek the contribution of experts and stakeholders through an online public consultation in summer 2013.

## LAWYERS FOR ANIMALS

### Web-based platform on EU Animal Welfare Law

LawyersForAnimalProtection.eu, is a new website made<sup>14</sup> by the welfare organisation VIER PFOTEN (FOUR PAWS). The website offers access to EU legislation but also to non-legislative enforcement related information such as EU Parliament written questions or official enforcement reports.



10 [http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/health\\_consumer/information\\_sources/ahw\\_events\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/health_consumer/information_sources/ahw_events_en.htm)

11 <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fmi/scic/AW-DUBLIN2013/start.php>

12 EUWelNet: <http://www.euwelnet.eu/>

13 Council Regulation No 1099/2009 on the protection of animals at the time of killing, to be applied from 1 January 2013

14 <http://lawyersforanimalprotection.eu>



# PUBLIC HEALTH

## HORSEMEAT FRAUD

### FVE calls for European register for horse passports

FVE calls for the establishment of a European register for horse passports. This would reduce the risk of horses that have been excluded from being slaughtered for human consumption (because of the treatment they received) of ending up in the food chain, according to the federation. In its 14 February press release, FVE notes that there is no reliable guarantee that the horse passport, in which the exclusion has to be recorded, stays with the animal for the whole of its life. A central EU register for horse passports, “*would prevent the issuing of a duplicate passport for the same animal*”, FVE suggests.

FVE also finds it “*unacceptable*” that phenylbutazone, a substance forbidden for horses destined for the food chain, has been found in horsemeat for human consumption. “*It demonstrates that mechanisms to prevent the introduction of meat contaminated with forbidden substances in the food chain must be strengthened.*” It also called for a thorough investigation on how the substance could end up in the meat.

Consumers had been “*grossly misled*” in the fraudulent presentation of horsemeat as beef, according to FVE. It denounces this “*massive fraud*” and calls for more effective controls on food from animal production and to every step along the food chain.

FVE stresses that proper resourcing of Official Controls by Member States is “*crucial in order to ensure public health is protected and ensure that animal health and animal welfare legislation is adequately enforced*”. It was particularly important that effective veterinary services are maintained during times of national financial crisis,

FVE added. “*This is precisely the time that unscrupulous operators are likely to attempt to carry out unsafe and fraudulent activities.*”

FVE therefore calls on legislators to increase honeybee medicines availability, to further harmonise regulation of honeybee disease control programs, and to ban any non-medical



## HONEYBEES

### FVE “strongly discourages” antibiotic use in hives

The honeybee population (*Apis mellifera*) plays an important role in both pollination and the production of honey and by-products. “*Prevention and control of bee diseases require veterinary medicines and good beekeeper management,*” according to Nicolas Vidal-Nacquet, Chair of the FVE honeybee working group, which has identified a number of challenges regarding the use of veterinary drugs:

- limited availability in certain European countries, especially against the mite *Varroa destructor*;
- the use of unlicensed or illegal treatments or substances;
- illegal and uncontrolled use of antibiotics with the risk of antibiotic resistance;
- residues found in honey, wax and other products of the hive.

substance used in hives for disease control.

FVE also asks that more licensed veterinary medicines for bees are available only on veterinary prescription.

Finally, the use of antibiotics in the bees sector is “*strongly discouraged, in particular for the control and treatment of American and European foulbrood*”, as the bacterium causing American foulbrood can survive as spores. “*Antibiotics are unable to eliminate spores and antibiotic therapy will weaken the colony and contribute to antimicrobial resistance.*”

# MEDICINES

## ANTHELMINTIC RESISTANCE

### FVE calls for anthelmintics to be “prescription-only”

FVE calls upon EU legislators to make anthelmintics for food-producing animals “available only upon veterinary prescription, so that their use is conditional to appropriate advice.”

Anthelmintic resistance is a growing problem, especially in sheep, goats, cattle and horses, and in certain regions. FVE fears that overuse and misuse, facilitated by easy access and inexpensive generic products could contribute to anthelmintic resistance. In certain Member States, anthelmintics do not require a veterinary prescription and are consequently easily accessible.

Even though anthelmintic resistance is difficult to measure, the situation is becoming alarming.

When revising the veterinary medicines directive (2001/82/EC), European legislators should aim to control access to anthelmintics in order to safeguard the efficacy of these products in the future, says FVE.

Veterinarians have a role in promoting and monitoring of resistance and responsible use of anthelmintic products, FVE recalls. Together with farmers, they need to elaborate worm control programs based on targeted strategic treatments in the context of animal health plans.

FVE also recommends to promote alternatives to anthelmintic products and to promote research into more reliable, easier and practical anthelmintic resistance detection systems.

# EQUIDAE

## FVE welcomes horse list

FVE has welcomed the long-awaited list of substances essential for the treatment of equidae, published in the annex of Regulation No 122/2013 of 12 February 2013.

The annex list contains “substances essential for the treatment of equidae and substances bringing added clinical benefit to other treatment options available”. The list includes a total of 88 substances for a wide range of indications, which may now be used for the treatment of horses and other equidae intended for human consumption. The administration of these products needs to be registered in the horse passport and the withdrawal period for all products is 6 months.

The FVE is currently producing a leaflet explaining which products can be used in horses.

## ANTIMICROBIAL RESISTANCE

### First global conference on the responsible use of antimicrobials

FVE attended the first global conference on the responsible use of antimicrobial agents for animals, organised by the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE), and held in Paris on 13-15 March 2013<sup>15</sup>. The conference, organised in close collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), was attended by around 400 participants from over 100 countries.

FVE also presented two posters, one presenting the FVE leaflets on

Antimicrobial resistance and the other on the main outcomes of the first part of the HMA/FVE survey on factors influencing prescription behaviour of veterinarians and sensitivity testing.



At the conference, Gwyn Jones, EPRUMA Chairman reported on existing initiatives to implement the Responsible Use of veterinary medicines and emphasised the need for a harmonised multi-sectorial approach to tackle antimicrobial resistance (AMR) such as via the EPRUMA platforms.

According to OIE Director General Bernard Vallat, “the content of veterinary education and the effectiveness of Veterinary Statutory Bodies, the ethics and supervision of the veterinary profession and the capacity of the competent control authorities are crucial elements” for the veterinary profession. They constitute “a key component” in the concept of good governance advocated by the OIE. “The prescription and delivery of antimicrobials for farm animals must in all countries be performed by well-trained veterinarians” who should be legally supervised to “ensure that professional integrity and ethics are constantly maintained”.

At the end of the conference, the participants called upon the OIE to continue to develop and update OIE standards, the OIE list of Antimicrobial Agents of Veterinary Importance. The OIE announced it would present an updated list for adoption at the forthcoming OIE general assembly in May.

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.oie.int/en/conferences-events/all-oie-world-conferences/presentationsrecommendations>



Given the need for increased surveillance of antimicrobial resistance and monitoring of quantities of antimicrobial agents used, participants called upon the OIE and its member countries to collect harmonised quantitative data on the use in farm animals, and to establish a global database. Presentations and recommendations: see OIE website.

## ESVAC

### FVE welcomes move from monitoring 'sales data' to 'use data'

The 4th stakeholder meeting of the European Surveillance of Veterinary Antimicrobial Consumption (ESVAC) was held in London on 18 March. About 60 participants attended the meeting, including stakeholders, representatives of Member states and of collaborating institutions (ECDC, WHO, OIE). The ESVAC team summarised the main findings of the ESVAC report (published October 2012), with 2010 antibiotic sales data from 19 European countries. The next ESVAC report, expected by October 2013, will contain the 2011 sales data from 26 European Countries.

ESVAC announced its plans to move from antimicrobial sales data to more indicative use data per species, and has just completed a consultation on the technicalities of collecting such data. A time frame to move from sales data to use data has not been yet decided.

At the meeting, the two FVE leaflets on the responsible use of antimicrobials were presented. FVE reported that one of the recommendations to veterinary practitioners was that these should be prepared to report their prescription data to the national competent authorities. This advice *"paves the way for ESVAC to move from antimicrobial sales data to use data"*, it was noted.

FVE supports ESVAC's announced move from sales data to use data, but stresses that the new method should

be *"as simple as possible"*, in order to be practical, not too time-consuming, robust and maintainable. At the meeting FVE observed that not all veterinary practices and farms were equipped with computers. *"Look at data you need to collect rather than those that are nice to collect, in particular at the start"*, N. De Briyne said, referring to species sub-classifications. *"Practices are different in every country and subgroups of animals may be raised together, so maybe it is better to start with data per species."* She also suggested that data collection *"should soon be extended and include other species, such as horses, small ruminants, fish and companion animals."* An efficient feedback system was also recommended, she said, to *"encourage vets and farmers"* to collaborate.

## VET MEDICINES DIRECTIVE

### FVE advocates single market for veterinary drugs

An FVE delegation met with Mario Nagtzaam and colleagues of the DG Sanco Pharmaceuticals unit on 12 February, to discuss the upcoming revised veterinary medicines directive<sup>16</sup>, for which a Commission proposal is expected this year.



Several topics were discussed, including antimicrobial resistance (AMR). FVE

reiterated its view that the best way to prevent AMR is to keep promoting *"prevention is better than cure"*, via herd health plans or regular health visits. Measures to ensure responsible use of antimicrobials should always be science-based. AMR could also be protected by limiting generics for newer antimicrobials, as lower price might boost consumption.

FVE also stressed the need for a single market of medicines. *"Pharmaceuticals are perhaps Europe's most heavily regulated products"*, stressed Christophe Buhot, FVE president. *To ensure the widest possible range of veterinary medicines is available throughout the EU, we need a true, unrestricted single European market."* This would also facilitate changing the order of steps in the prescription cascade, as advocated by the FVE. Currently, products authorized in the same country but for another species or indication take priority over products authorized in another member country for the same species and indication. *"From an animal health and welfare viewpoint, products authorized for the relevant animal species and indications must have priority"*, stated Christophe Buhot.

It is likely that the sales of veterinary drugs via the internet will increase. European veterinarians are greatly concerned about the risks that this may bring and plan to propose a safe framework ensuring legitimate sales while limiting fraud.

Other topics discussed at the meeting were anthelmintic resistance, medicated feed and veterinary prescriptions.

Purpose of the revision, as outlined by the Commission, is to *"increase the availability of veterinary medicinal products, to reduce the administrative burden on enterprises, to improve the functioning of the internal market for veterinary medicinal products and to assess the possibilities to have an improved response to antimicrobial resistance related to the use of veterinary medicines"*<sup>17</sup>.

<sup>16</sup> Directive 2001/82/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 6 November 2001 on the Community code relating to veterinary medicinal products

<sup>17</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/health/veterinary-use/rev\\_frame\\_index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/health/veterinary-use/rev_frame_index_en.htm)



# EDUCATION

## ECCVT

### Coordinating veterinary training

The list of so-called day-1 competencies was discussed at the October meeting of the European Coordination Committee for Veterinary Training (ECCVT), a joint initiative of the European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education (EAEVE), the European Board for Veterinary Specialization (EBVS) and the FVE.

The three organisations decided to map the current situation regarding bee health and aquaculture in the veterinary undergraduate curriculum in Europe. Other challenges for the curriculum include antimicrobial resistance and animal welfare. Furthermore, updates were provided on the VetCEE project (quality assurance of CPD), the REEV-Med network of southern Mediterranean veterinary schools (which wish to set up an evaluation system similar to that in the EU) and on the classification scheme of the European Skills/Competences, Qualifications and Occupations.

The ECCVT has also decided to issue a twice-yearly newsletter<sup>18</sup> on its activities to raise awareness among stakeholders.

At its meeting of 20 March 2013, the future steps of the VetCEE project and its pilot programme were discussed. Furthermore, EBVS delegates presented its efforts of ensuring integrity of the Colleges' examination procedure. For this purpose, it will hold a workshop for veterinary specialty examiners during the EBVS general assembly on 14 April in Brussels.

Finally, ECCVT members exchanged ideas on how to promote the work of the European Committee on Veterinary Education (ECOVE, the joint education committee of the EAEVE and the FVE)

and to recruit high-quality professionals for the future visitation panels. This issue will be further discussed in the next ECCVT meeting, next autumn.

## FVE & THE PROFESSION COMMUNICATION

### New FVE brochure: "Vets are vital"

*"You may think you know what veterinarians do. Look after our cats and dogs when they're ill. Keep farm animals healthy. Help wild animals. All true. But did you know that veterinarians play a vital role in looking after people's health too? Not to mention in protecting the environment and the economy?"*

So starts a new brochure "Veterinarians: vital for animals, vital for people", produced by the FVE which concentrates on the One Health message and highlights the role of the veterinarian in animal health, food safety, the economy, disease prevention and control and the environment. Aimed at raising awareness among the general public and political decision-makers, it also spotlights veterinary involvement in research and in disaster areas and war zones. In conclusion: "From making sure the food we eat is safe to stopping animal disease spreading to people and costing the farming industry millions, we couldn't survive without veterinarians."

The brochure is available in English and is currently being translated in French, German and Spanish. It can be downloaded from the FVE website<sup>19</sup>.



18 <http://www.fve.org/education/eccvt.php>

19 [www.fve.org/uploads/publications/docs/bro\\_fve\\_vital\\_final.pdf](http://www.fve.org/uploads/publications/docs/bro_fve_vital_final.pdf)

## GIORGIO RICARDI

### 1. How did you become an equine vet and FEEVA president?

I've always wanted to be a vet, which is rather typical in our profession, since I used to ride when a teenager. I qualified from Torino Veterinary Faculty in 1989 and after my national service and a few months in general practice I went to England where I received most of my postgraduate training, including an Internship in Equine Surgery at the Animal Health Trust in Newmarket. Since 2000, I became involved in the Italian Association of Equine Practitioners (SIVE), of which I was President in 2011-2012. I attended the FEEVA general assembly in Copenhagen 2011, and since I

and an adequate number of young vets joining the equine veterinary sector.

We are currently facing economic hardships, which deeply affect the equine industry, giving hard times for new graduates. At the same time we need to keep pace with new knowledge and new technology. The opportunities for equine vets are also very important: ensuring a high-quality education for all equine vets, fostering the societal value of the horse, promoting the human-horse bond and safeguarding economy associated with the rural environment. Regarding the so-called gender issue, I see this as more of an opportunity than a challenge, having the chance to witness on a daily basis the commitment of young female colleagues.



am a great proponent of a closer cooperation and integration of equine vets within the EU, I volunteered to participate in FEEVA activities. I was elected in the board at the general assembly in Vienna 2012 and became President at the following board meeting.

### 2. What are the challenges & opportunities for equine veterinarians in the future?

It is vital that we work on the education of new veterinarians so that they are ready to face the basic challenges of the profession. It is of utmost importance that vet schools provide an adequate knowledge at practical and theoretical level. EAEVE has already done a lot, but more needs to be done to guarantee the standard of the profession

### 3. What would you like to achieve during your mandate as FEEVA President?

More efforts should be done so that the EU becomes a stronger political entity. My own and the current board's commitment is to work to achieve this goal for the equine veterinary profession. I wish FEEVA to become a more perceivable entity to the colleagues and members of the affiliated associations, so that they become aware of the benefit of a supranational federation, which can help to face everyday issues. At a practical level, FEEVA has set up several working groups addressing common issues that should be looked at from a wider perspective, including working groups on disease surveillance, pre-purchase examination, responsible use of antimicrobials and certification of competence. These working groups will provide useful guidelines in addressing specific issues of the profession.



## PROFESSIONAL RECOGNITION

### FVE urges to focus on day-1 skills and flexibility

European Parliament's lead committee (IMCO) for the proposed Directive on Recognition of Professional Qualifications<sup>20</sup>, adopted its report. In total, IMCO proposed some 160 amendments<sup>21</sup> to the Commission's proposal.

Some amendments concerns the training requirements for veterinary surgeons, for which the IMCO rapporteur proposes a detailed list of knowledge skills – which seems to focus on the tasks of official veterinarians, such as *“skills required to take part in an epidemiological investigation”* or in *“programmes for the prevention and control of zoonotic, contagious, emerging and re-emerging diseases”*.

*“Rather than trying to obtain an exhaustive list of today's needs in the Directive, it should describe training requirements that cover the fundamental competencies for every veterinarian, irrespective of specific careers or positions,”* stresses Jan Vaarten, FVE Executive director. *“For this purpose, the FVE and EAEVE<sup>22</sup> have jointly developed a list of Minimum Competencies required of the Veterinary graduate on Day 1, the so-called day-1 skills.”*

He added that *“there is no doubt that requirements for the training of veterinarians will need regular updates. But rather than including too much detail in the Directive, more flexibility could be achieved by secondary legislation. This would allow making*

*future adaptations without a complicated and time-consuming revision of the Directive.”*

Other amendments proposed by include:

- Language assessment: competent authorities could assess the language skills of healthcare professionals;
- Partial access: professions such as the veterinary profession would be exempt from the principle of partial access;
- Continuous professional development: Member States are to introduce mandatory continuing education for healthcare professionals (including veterinarians);
- Specialisation: Veterinary specialisations recognised at European level should in future also be covered by the automatic recognition system.

Currently, the Council of the EU is finalizing its common position on the proposal. The next step will be that Commission, Parliament and Council will come together to see if they can get agreement on a package of amendments acceptable to the Council and the European Parliament. The final reading in the European Parliament is planned for 22 May. The Irish Presidency would like to adopt a revised Directive by the end of its mandate.

## OIE

### Veterinary Statutory Bodies: “crucial” for effective Veterinary Services

The registration of veterinary professionals, the set-up of standards of veterinary education and the supervision of good professional conduct are the three main functions of veterinary statutory bodies, according to the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE). They are the “crucial components” in the concept of good governance of Veterinary Services advocated by the OIE. *“A well-educated veterinary workforce is necessary in order to provide science-based risk assessments, understanding of and compliance with OIE standards and guidelines, credible disease-reporting and effective delivery of services to producers and consumers,”* stresses OIE.

Unfortunately, in many developing countries, veterinary statutory bodies are non-existent, while the veterinary workforce is aging and undereducated. To extend the capacity and expertise of these countries, the OIE has recently developed twinning programmes, both for veterinary statutory bodies and for veterinary education.

It is hoped that this will lead to a better balance in the global distribution of well-educated veterinarians and a reinforcement of veterinary statutory bodies in ensuring the professional integrity and ethics of veterinary services, including the prescription and delivery of antimicrobials.

The 3rd OIE Global conference on veterinary education titled “Ensuring excellence and ethics of the veterinary profession”<sup>1</sup>, is to be held in Foz do Iguazu (Brazil) on 4–6 December 2013 and will highlight the role of Veterinary Statutory Bodies.

<sup>1</sup> [http://www.oie.int/fileadmin/Home/eng/Conferences\\_Events/docs/pdf/VetEdAnnouncement.pdf](http://www.oie.int/fileadmin/Home/eng/Conferences_Events/docs/pdf/VetEdAnnouncement.pdf)

<sup>20</sup> Proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Directive 2005/36/EC on the recognition of professional qualifications and Regulation on administrative cooperation through the Internal Market Information System

<sup>21</sup> <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+REPORT+A7-2013-0038+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN&language=EN#title>

<sup>22</sup> European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education



**OIE Global Conference on Veterinary Education  
and the Role of the Veterinary Statutory Body**  
4 to 6 December 2013 - Foz do Iguazu (Brazil)

## GLOBAL CONTACTS

### FVE meets with Brazilian and Chinese representatives

Brazil - On 4 January, FVE vice president Rafael Laguens met with Benedito Fortes de Arruda, president of the Brazilian Federal Council of Veterinary Medicine (CFMV) in Brasilia.

The CFMV is the Veterinary Statutory Body of Brazil, which has 85,000 veterinarians, and 190 (!) veterinary schools of very different levels of quality. The two colleagues exchanged information about their respective organisations and discussed possible ways of collaboration.

Together with the OIE, CFMV is organising the next global meeting on veterinary education (see article above).

On the occasion of his visit to China in December 2012, Rafael Laguens met with Professor Jia Youling, the former Chinese CVO, founder and current president of the Chinese Veterinary Medical Association.

Although the exact number is not known, it is estimated that there are between 300,000 and 1 million veterinarians and animal health inspectors in China. The CVMA was formally established in October 2009. Currently, the association has the multiple roles of statutory body, professional union and CPD provider.

In China, Rafael Laguens also met with Louis Liu (picture below, from the left), vice president of the Chinese Small Animal Veterinary Association and president of the Beijing Small Animal Veterinary Association and Dr. Karen Ma (on the right of the picture). Dr Liu is also organiser of the 2014 congress of the Federation of Asian Small Animal Veterinary Associations (FASAVA), which will be held in Beijing.



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