

## Newsletter – October 2013

### Keeping our guards up

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On 19 October, Dutch veterinary inspectors diagnosed rabies in two 4-month-old puppies from the same litter. Both pups were imported from Bulgaria via Austria and Germany to the Netherlands. All in-contact persons are now being traced and vaccinated. Unfortunately this is not a stand-alone rabies event via imported puppies: France, Belgium and Spain have had similar cases recently. In Greece, rabies is a re-emerging threat due to exposure to the growing wildlife reservoir.

The rabies case in the Netherlands is a wake-up call. We must remain extremely vigilant when importing puppies from countries with rabies. We must also ensure that enforcement of companion animal movements remains a priority. Effective and reliable systems of identification and registration of dogs are crucial for successful animal health and welfare management, not only to reunite lost dogs with their owners, but also to prevent and control zoonotic diseases, to help prevent illegal puppy trading and to promote responsible ownership.

The European Union has put in great efforts to control rabies and has been successful in pushing back rabies to

the borders. However, rabies is still present in certain EU Member states: Croatia (131 cases in 2012 according to WAHID), Poland (249 cases) and Romania (383). The latter is particularly worrying in view of the growing stray dog problem in Romania.

Although the new EU Regulation on the non-commercial movement of pets requires animals to be identified, the Regulation does not mention the need for central registration of chipped animals, which is regrettable as identification without registration is useless. FVE has campaigned consistently for linking the identification of pets to registration in an approved database. This is essential to effectively control the risk of disease spread and prevent risks associated with illegal trade. The recent case of imported rabies in the Netherlands and re-emergence of the disease in Greece, underline the importance of good identification and registration of pets, proper vaccination and our need to stay vigilant.

We must not let down our guards and prevent rabies from sneaking in.

*Christophe Buhot, FVE President*

# Animal Health

## Animal Health Law

### Regular farm visits “cornerstone” of preventive strategy

On 6 May, the EU Commission published its official proposal for a new community Animal Health Law (AHL) – a package which includes a Regulation on animal health and legislation for Official Controls.

FVE welcomes the Commission’s initiative to bring the large body of EU animal health legislation into one single and clearer regulatory framework. The potential benefits of enhanced animal health and welfare are great; for animals, their owners, society, public health and the wider economy. FVE expressly welcomes the aims of the EU Animal Health Strategy namely placing greater emphasis on preventative measures and on the “One Health” aspect.

However, the Federation would also like to see certain modifications. It strongly opposes reference to so-called ‘Aquatic Animal Health Professionals’ in the Regulation, which are put at the same level as veterinarians in the field of aquaculture. “Veterinary medicine is a regulated profession”, recalls Christophe Buhot, FVE president, “and the diagnosis of disease in animals and prescription of veterinary medicines are veterinary acts”. Furthermore, unlike ‘aquatic animal health professionals’, veterinarians are licensed by – and accountable to – the legal authority to practice their art in an “independent, ethical and personally responsible capacity”.

The FVE also recommends introducing definitions for “Veterinarian” and “Official Veterinarian”, reflecting the roles they play.

Regarding the One Health approach of the Commission, which recognises ‘the intrinsic link between animal health, welfare, public health and environment’, FVE recommends that disease prevention should be seen as more than just biosecurity. Improved animal husbandry, nutrition and vac-

be consulted as stakeholder on secondary legislation.

FVE also welcomes the risk-based approach for the categorisation of diseases. However, it stresses that the list of diseases should also take into account companion animals, wild an-



cination programmes should also be taken into account, according to FVE.

FVE<sup>1</sup> welcomed the introduction of regular farm visits by veterinarians. “This is a cornerstone of the ‘prevention is better than cure’ strategy,” Dr Buhot stresses, “and the visits provide added value as they help to improve animal health, welfare and public health – and to guarantee the quality of the products.” Regular farm visits are a particularly important aid in disease prevention strategy, early disease recognition, emerging disease surveillance, as well as advice on biosecurity, animal welfare, environmental protection and the responsible use of medicines. However, the effectiveness of these visits largely depends on how they will be addressed by the delegated acts, which will deal with content and frequency of the visits. FVE therefore urged to

imals and the environment, and recommends the Commission to ‘ensure stakeholder consultation’ as this list is proposed as secondary legislation (delegated and implementing acts).

Antimicrobial resistance is also taken into account by the proposal. FVE supports that microorganisms with a resistance to antimicrobials should be given special attention in the listed diseases section. However, FVE would like more clarity on how this will be implemented in practice, as prevention and control of these pathogens is different from other listed diseases.

### Clear definitions required

Regarding the Regulation on Official controls, FVE recommends<sup>2</sup> a clearer definition of its scope, which should include the control of all products of animal origin. Other terms also need clarification. Furthermore, since the new Regula-

1 [http://www.fve.org/uploads/publications/docs/040\\_\\_ahl\\_fvecomments\\_final.pdf](http://www.fve.org/uploads/publications/docs/040__ahl_fvecomments_final.pdf)

2 [http://www.fve.org/uploads/publications/docs/041\\_ocs\\_fve\\_comments\\_final.pdf](http://www.fve.org/uploads/publications/docs/041_ocs_fve_comments_final.pdf)

tion will repeal the existing one on official controls and Reg. 854/2004 laying down specific rules for the organisation of official controls on

products of animal origin intended for human consumption, the key tasks of Official veterinarians will be put at risk. It is therefore vital to define a timeline and a procedure to re-adopt the existing annexes.

In view of the large number of implementing and delegated acts of the proposed regulations on Animal Health and Official Controls, FVE strongly recommends stakeholder consultation, which it finds 'essential'. Finally, in order to prepare a smooth implementation FVE recommends investing in a transposition plan ensuring the commitment of all stakeholders.

The proposal is now being considered by the Council and the European Parliament. Rapporteurs are Marit Paulsen for the AHL<sup>3</sup> (Agri Committee)<sup>4</sup> and

Mario Pirillo for the Official controls<sup>5</sup> (Envi Committee)<sup>6</sup>.

## DG Sanco

### FVE met with Commissioner Borg

On 27 June, a delegation of FVE (Picture below, from the left Robert Huey, Christophe Buhot, Tonio Borg, Rafael Laguens, Jan Vaarten and Nancy De Briyne) met with Commissioner Tonio Borg.

They discussed the role of the veterinary profession in animal health, animal welfare, public health and food safety (as well as fraud), antimicrobial resistance and effective veterinary services.



3 [http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/health\\_consumer/pressroom/docs/proposal\\_ah\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/health_consumer/pressroom/docs/proposal_ah_en.pdf)

4 <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/oel/popups/ficheprocedure.do?reference=2013/0136%28COD%29&l=en>

5 [http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/health\\_consumer/pressroom/docs/proposal-regulation-ep-council\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/health_consumer/pressroom/docs/proposal-regulation-ep-council_en.pdf)

6 <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/oel/popups/ficheprocedure.do?reference=2013/0140%28COD%29&l=en>

Save the date:  
7 April 2014

### One Health event organized jointly by European vets, doctors and dentists

The FVE will organise a One Health conference, together with the Greek presidency, the Standing Committee of Medical Doctors (CPME, the representative body of European doctors) and the Council of European Dentists (CED). Topic of the conference, to be held on 7 April 2014 is "*Prevention is better than cure*", and will focus on zoonotic diseases and the economics of prevention vs. cure.

## Canine leishmaniasis

### Up to 20 cases seen per vet each year in Greece

Canine leishmaniasis is a common diagnosis among dogs attending veterinary clinics in endemic parts of the EU, according to a survey on canine leishmaniasis in Mediterranean countries<sup>7</sup>. The national prevalence of canine leishmaniasis (CanL) in Mediterranean countries ranges from an estimated 0.71% in France to 7.8% in Greece over a 12-month period (2012-2013).

Repellents applied to the dog were the most common preventative measures used and allopurinol was the most common treatment, although meglumine antimoniate and miltefosine were used relatively frequently in some countries. Vaccination and prophylactic medication

7 Questionnaire-based survey on the epidemiology and control of canine leishmaniasis in dogs attending veterinary practices in the European Union, by Madeleine Mattin, David Brodbelt, Solano Gallego, Sofie Dhollander, Ana Afonso



(domperidone) were less frequently used, the survey found.

Vets generally thought that the current economic crisis was likely to have a moderate to high impact on the use of prophylactic control measures and the diagnosis and the treatment of dogs affected by CanL.

This work is currently being prepared for submission to the European Food Safety Authority as part of a report on the impact, modelling and control of canine leishmaniosis in the EU. The authors thank the FVE and its member associations that helped distribute the online survey questionnaire.

## Stray dogs

### FVE: 'neutering instead of euthanasia'

Following a fatal bite incident involving a pack of stray dogs in Romania, Romanian authorities adopted a law to allow local authorities to euthanize stray dogs that have been kept in a shelter for more than 14 days.

Commissioner Tony Borg commented: *'Whilst respecting the Romanian Parliament's decision and acknowledging that this issue falls outside the scope of EU legislation, I would like to recall Romania's international obligations as a member of the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE).'*

The FVE fully agrees with the OIE recommendations that euthanasia should be considered as last resort, and only in combination with other measures to control stray dog populations, such as neutering. *'Euthanasia of a dog should always be a last-resort decision, and should never be undertaken lightly,'* stresses FVE president Christophe Buhot. *'Furthermore, it is not an effective long-term solution of reducing the stray dog population.'* In Romania, there are

estimated 60,000 stray animals living in the streets of Bucarest, and as much living in the rest of the country. FVE is a project partner of CaroDog<sup>8</sup> for responsible dog ownership, which has dedicated a special focus on the Romanian stray dog problem.

12 February 2014

### European Pet Night

The next European Pet Night will take place on Wednesday 12th February 2014 at the BELvue museum in Brussels. It is the occasion for EU decision-makers, animal welfare NGOs, animal health industry representatives, veterinarians, pet owners, and even a few dogs, to meet and pay tribute to the many ways in which animals assist us.

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.carodog.eu/?p=5&s=4&a=&item=4939>

## Animal Welfare

### Companion animals

#### 28 October: EU Pet welfare conference

*'The welfare of dogs and cats in the EU - Building a Europe that cares for companion animals'* is the theme of a full-day event to be held on 28 October in Brussels. The event is organised by the European Commission and the Lithuanian Presidency, with the sup-



port of the Federation of Veterinarians of Europe (FVE), Eurogroup for animals and Vier Pfoten.

This first European Conference on the welfare of dogs and cats will be an important opportunity to reflect on and discuss the practical considerations and approaches in tackling the key issues of commercial breeding and companion animal trade as a threat to pet welfare, public health and consumer protection.

The conference will also see the launch of a study on the welfare of dogs and cats involved in commercial

practices. Based on the outcomes of the study and the conference's proceedings, the Commission will consider if further action is necessary in order to increase transparency and adequacy of information to consumers on animal welfare of companion animals (i.e. a traceability system).

There is presently no EU legislation on the welfare of pets. The Commission will consider introducing an elemental EU legislative framework with animal welfare principles for all traded animals, including where appropriate companion animals.

## Wild animals in captivity

### FVE calls for a 'positive list' of exotic pets...

Following the conference 'Wild Animals in Captivity – Animal Welfare, Law and Enforcement' in June, and in collaboration with the Born Free foundation, the FVE has prepared a survey on Exotic animals in veterinary practice, to assess the degree of exposure to exotic companion animals by veterinary practitioners. Over 2800 replies have been received so far, and are currently being analysed.

What does transpire is that European vets see a growing number of exotic and wild animals kept by private individuals, a finding confirmed by the Callisto project. This trend raises concerns about animal health and welfare as well as public health and the environment. FVE is of the opinion that some species are unsuitable for being kept by the general public. The Federation fully supports the principle of drafting a so-called 'positive list', which specifies the species that can be kept by private individuals. Such lists already exist in Belgium and the Netherlands. Draft position paper will be presented at the upcoming General Assembly in November.

## ..and for a ban on wild animals in travelling circuses

Regarding travelling circuses, FVE considers asking all EU and national competent authorities to prohibit the use of wild animals such as elephants, lions and tigers in travelling circuses across the EU. "*Captive wild animals have much the same genetic makeup as counterparts in the wild and retain their natural instinctive behaviour and needs,*" Christophe Buhot FVE president, recalls. "*The needs of non-domesticated, wild animals cannot be met within a travelling circus; especially in terms of housing and being able to express normal behaviour.*" Furthermore, "*there is little or no educational, conservational, research or economic benefit derived from the use of wild animals in travelling circuses*" that might justify their use. Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Cyprus and Greece, have already prohibited the use of all wild animals in circuses, while the UK and the Netherlands others are currently examining a prohibition.

## Global Animal Welfare Seminar

### The vet's role: challenges and opportunities

Society expects veterinarians to look after animal welfare, and this leads to both challenges and opportunities for veterinarians. This was the conclusion of the two-day Global Veterinary Seminar on Animal Welfare<sup>9</sup>, held at the occasion of the World Veterinary Congress in Prague in September. Adroaldo J. Zanella, Professor of Animal Welfare from the Universidade de São Paulo (Brazil) summed up the Seminar's conclusions:

- Education, training and capacity

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.wvc2013.com/cms/soubory/program/animal-welfare-1.pdf>

building in animal welfare science should be promoted globally in a cultural sensitive way.

- Collaborative interdisciplinary opportunities should be fostered to promote a generation of new knowledge and rapid dissemination of the information.

- Initiatives should be encouraged to promote veterinary engagement and visibility in animal welfare issues.

- Animal welfare resources, expertise and information available globally in order to promote sound policies and legislation to improve animal and human welfare; "*one welfare*".

- Practical, robust and valid animal welfare indicators are needed to meet the demands for the tasks that veterinarians are expected to carry out.

Professor Zanella also underlined the importance to keep "alive" the debate and exchange between the organizations that contributed to this event, including the AVMA, EFSA, European Commission, FAO, FVE, OIE, WSPA and WVA<sup>10</sup>. Participants asked the WVA to continue and to develop further such a global discussions platform on Animal Welfare. Presentations and abstracts of the Global Animal Welfare Seminar can be found on the website of the WVA<sup>11</sup>.

## Veterinary education

### FVE and AVMA present model curricula for animal welfare

'Development of the FVE and AVMA model curricula for animal welfare science, ethics and law' was the topic of a lecture presented jointly by Nancy De

<sup>10</sup> American Veterinary Medical Association, European Food Safety Authority, Food and Agriculture Organisation, Federation of Veterinarians of Europe, World Organisation for Animal Health, World Society for the Protection of Animals, World Veterinary Association

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.worldvet.org/library.php?view=overview&cat=7>



Briyne, FVE deputy executive director and Gail Golab, of the animal welfare division of the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA).

Speaking at the global animal welfare conference at the occasion of the World Veterinary Congress in Prague, they illustrated society's need for veterinary expertise in the field of animal welfare. This was an opportunity for the profession, they said, although there were still gaps that needed addressing. Both organisations had started working on a model curriculum for veterinary undergraduates, and described their approach<sup>12</sup>.

## EU Workshop in the Netherlands

### Animal welfare assessment – of horses, too!

*"Animal welfare is no hype, it's here to stay"* stressed Christianne Bruschke,



Chief Veterinary Officer of the Netherlands, speaking at opening the 6th practical animal welfare workshop, held in Zeist (the Netherlands) on 12 and 13 September.

The workshop was organised by the European Commission and FVE, together with the Dutch Veterinary Association (KNMvD) and the Dutch and Belgian Ministries. The two-day workshop, which included both theoretical sessions as practical sessions at the farms and at the Safaripark allowed veterinarians to discuss together critical issues on animal welfare and experience animal welfare assessment schemes in practice. For the first time, the workshop also included a special session on critical issues and welfare assessment systems for horses, which covered the transport, grazing and sporting activities of horses.

The next animal welfare assessment workshop is planned in Warsaw (Poland), on 10-11 April 2014. Previous workshops took place in Budapest (Hungary), Barcelona (Spain), Riga (Latvia), Sinaia (Romania) and Lazise (Italy)<sup>13</sup>.

## Public health

### Meat inspection

### FVE welcomes proposal, but 'concerned' about leaving out FCI

The proposed Regulation on meat inspection<sup>14</sup> is currently at the centre of much debate, with a Commission proposal – of which an amended version has already been announced – that was first rejected and later adopted by MEPs but only in expectation of the newer version of the Regulation. To avoid misunderstanding about its position, FVE announces it *'supports the technical aspects of the proposed modernisation of meat inspection'* and *"welcomes the Commission's initiative to review meat inspection procedures and to align these with the current knowledge and scientific insights in risk management."*

On the other hand, FVE is *'very concerned'* that these proposals are presented in a stand-alone manner, disconnected from the envisioned enhancement of the role of the food chain information. *'Food chain information is the cornerstone of modern official controls on food of animal origin,'* stresses Christophe Buhot, FVE president. Food chain information (FCI), obtained from livestock farmers through regular health visits and (ante and post mortem) inspections at slaughter are *'inseparable parts of one coherent food safety, animal health and welfare assurance system.'* In its 2 October position paper<sup>15</sup>, the FVE reiterates that complete and reliable FCI on the health and welfare status of the animals is *'essen*

12 <http://www.worldvet.org/uploads/docs/gailgolabnancydbwvc2013.pdf>

13 <http://animalwelfare.onetec.eu/index.html>

14 Proposed Commission Regulation amending Regulations (EC) 853/2004, (EC) 854/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council, and Regulation (EC) 2074/2005

15 <http://www.fve.org/news/index.php?id=105#105>



*tial for risk-based, targeted inspections at slaughter and will contribute to improving farming practices.'*

For this reason, the FVE has '*strong reservations*' regarding the current proposal, which proposes changes in the meat inspection process without considering the quality of the FCI, '*thus losing sight of the integrity of the overall assurance system.*'

By separating modernisation of meat inspection from the ongoing revision of the Official controls, '*the opportunity to strengthen food safety, and animal health and welfare assurance throughout the food chain and to increase consumer confidence will be lost,*' the Federation warns.

## Working group

### FVE WG on food safety & quality

The composition of the working group on Food quality and safety has been renewed. Current members are Frank O' Sullivan (Ireland, chair), Thierry Chambon (France), Maurizio Ferri (Italy), Henning Knudsen (Denmark), Michel Laszlo (Switzerland), Tudor Laurentiu (Romania) and Alvaro Mateos Amann (Spain).

## Callisto update

### Second cycle conference

Last week the second cycle Callisto conference took place. After the first cycle that gave an overview of the current situation with regard to companion animal zoonotic diseases, the focus of this conference was on Risk identification. Participants were divided over smaller working groups with experts from a multisectorial, interprofessional and interdisciplinary background. Each group tackled some pre-defined questions. The outcome of the work done during this cycle will be published on [www.callistoproject.eu](http://www.callistoproject.eu) at the end of the year.

## Medicines


### Online pharmacies

#### FVE calls for a ban on the internet sales of antibiotics

A growing number of online pharmacies are emerging, often providing medicines without prescription, for both human and animal patients, thereby facilitating misuse and fraud. '*It is very worrying that no-one has a good overview of what exactly goes over the internet, because a large amount of these medicines seem to go around all official procedures and controls,*' notes Christophe Buhot, FVE president<sup>16</sup>. '*The starting point for every delivery of veterinary medicines is the prescription by the veterinarian under whose care the animals are. These prescriptions combined with a reliable and transparent distribution system are crucial for the safe and responsible use of veterinary*

<sup>16</sup> [http://www.fve.org/uploads/publications/docs/13\\_004\\_internet\\_sales\\_jv\\_2\\_.pdf](http://www.fve.org/uploads/publications/docs/13_004_internet_sales_jv_2_.pdf)





*medicines – antimicrobials in particular,’ he recalls. FVE therefore recommends to control Internet pharmacies (to be run by veterinarians and/or pharmacists; to be registered and certified; to be subject to legal control mechanisms) and to control veterinary prescriptions (development of a centralised digital prescription system) .*

Easy access to antibiotics via the Internet is of particular concern in view of the risk of antimicrobial resistance. *‘It is inconsistent to talk about restraining veterinarians from selling of antimicrobials, while leaving the window open for anyone to easily access the medication they want on-line, even without veterinary examination, diagnosis, veterinary prescription or any other form of control or traceability,’* Dr Buhot stresses. *‘Internet time’ goes faster than ‘legislative time’, he warns, ‘so by the time we react efficiently, it may already be too late.’*

Furthermore, the legal requirements concerning dispensing, classification of prescription-only medicines and control of prescriptions are not harmonized throughout the EU. This situation leaves space for irresponsible and uncontrollable use of antimicrobials via Internet channels throughout Europe, leading to an increased risk of development of antimicrobial resistance. FVE therefore calls for a ban of the sales of antibiotics on Internet.

## European survey

### Antibiotics: factors influencing veterinary prescription behaviour

FVE has published the results of a survey on the decision-making process of veterinarians in Europe prescribing

antibiotics<sup>17</sup>, produced in collaboration with the Heads of Medicines Agencies. There were 3,004 responses from 25 European countries; overall, 1.5% of active veterinary practitioners in Europe participated in the survey. The survey identified overall that the most important sources used to inform antibiotic prescribing were published literature, training and the veterinarian’s own experience.

Sensitivity tests, personal experience, the risk for antibiotic resistance developing and ease of administration were recorded as factors that most strongly influenced prescribing behaviour. The least important factors were considered to be owner demand, culture, profit margin and advertising.

The survey showed that antibiotic sensitivity testing is usually performed where a treatment failure has occurred. Significant differences were observed in the frequency of sensitivity testing at the level of types of practitioners and country. The responses indicate a need to improve sensitivity tests and services, with the availability of rapid and cheaper testing being key factors.

Publication of part 2 of the survey, on the most commonly prescribed antibiotics per species and per indication, is expected by end 2013. Special attention is paid to the use of critically important antibiotics.

## EU antibiotic strategy

### EPRUMA asks Commissioner Borg to focus on ‘responsible use’

On 16 September, a delegation of the European platform of the Responsible

Use of Medicines in Animals (EPRUMA)<sup>18</sup> including FVE, met with Tonio Borg, the European Commissioner for Health and Consumer Policy. The EPRUMA delegation asked the Commissioner to make the responsible use of veterinary medicines a key component of the EU’s antibiotic strategy.

*‘Veterinarians, farmers and the entire food chain are committed to the responsible use of veterinary medicines,’* stressed EPRUMA chairman Gwyn Jones. This includes raising awareness and promoting training initiatives on the use of best-practice guidelines to make a difference on the ground. Gwyn Jones stressed the need for the Commission to support EPRUMA’s activities and to ensure that the ‘responsible use’ concept is promoted in the entire European Union.

*‘Prevention and appropriate vaccination are at the core of our activities. Despite our efforts, animals can still become ill, and appropriate therapy and veterinary medicines should be available. Maintaining the efficacy of antibiotics whilst preventing and minimising undesired effects is in the interest of society as a whole.’* Commissioner Borg supported the view that antibiotic policy should be based on science.

## Cascade

### New leaflet includes list of ‘essential substances’ for horses

The FVE has produced a new leaflet<sup>19</sup> to guide veterinarians if there is no authorised product available for the species and indication they need to treat. The first part presents the so-

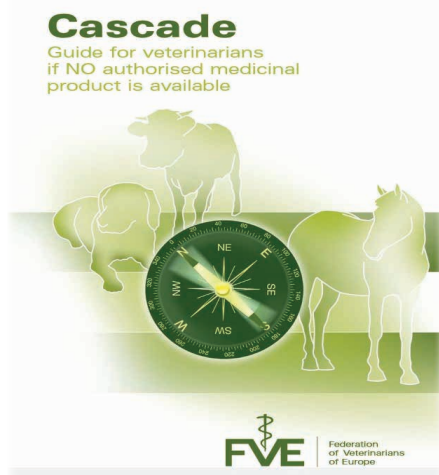
<sup>17</sup> <http://veterinaryrecord.bmj.com/content/early/2013/09/25/vr.101454.full>

<sup>18</sup> <http://www.epruma.eu/>

<sup>19</sup> <http://www.fve.org/news/index.php?id=108#108>



called 'cascade' (decision tree) for food-producing and companion animals, the second part that for horses. If the answer to the question 'is this a food-producing horse?' if 'no', the cascade for companion animals can be used. If the answer is



'yes' – and if no substance can be found according to the cascade for food-producing animals – then a product may be used from the list of essential substances for horses. In that case, treatment should be recorded in the horse passport and a withdrawal period of 6 months applies. The complete list of essential substances can be seen in the leaflet.

## Working group

### FVE WG on medicines

The composition of the FVE working group on Medicines has been renewed. Current members are: Rens Van Dobbenburgh (chair, the Netherlands), Hans-Joachim Götz (Germany), Peter Jones (UK), Arturo Anadon (Spain), Thierry Chambon (France), Einar Rudi (Norway), Piotr Kwieciński (Poland), Ljiljana Markus-Cizelj (Croatia). FECAVA and FEEVA each have an observer seat.

## Responsible use

### Commission translates FVE leaflets

The FVE leaflets<sup>20</sup> for the responsible use of antibiotics have been translated by the European Commission into all official EU languages. Currently, there are leaflets for veterinary practitioners, pet owners and the general public. Leaflets for horse professionals, farmers, vets and medical practitioners/dentists are currently in preparation.

The publications aim to increase the awareness of antimicrobial resistance and to give guidance for the responsible use of antimicrobials.

published<sup>21</sup>. It contains the 2011 antibiotic sales data of 25 European countries (missing EU Member states: Greece, Romania and Croatia). The 25 countries cover approximately 95% of the food-producing animal population in the EU/EEA area.

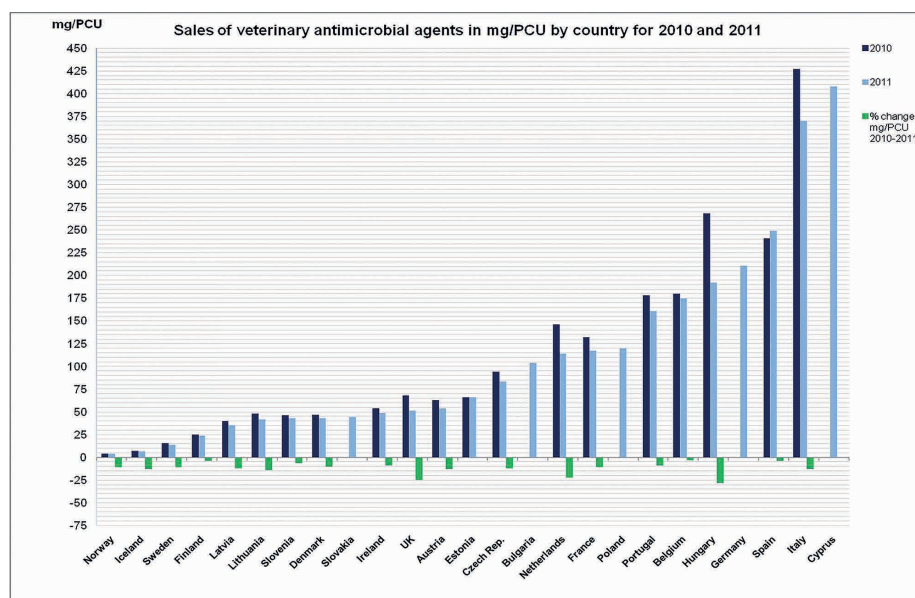
In order to normalise the sales data for the animal population that could be subjected to antibiotic treatment, a population correction unit (PCU) was introduced as a proxy for the size of the animal population.

Overall in the 25 countries, approximately 92% of antibiotic sales concerned herd treatment: 36% premixes, 48% oral powders and 8% oral solutions. The remaining 8% concerned injectables and local uses (mainly intramammary and intrauterine uses, 1%).

Of the 20 countries that provided data for the second year running, 19 showed a decreased in sales, ranging from 0.4% to 28%. However, a 100-fold difference in sales was observed between the countries with

## 3rd ESVAC report

### Antibiotic sales figures show decline – and no correlation with decoupling



The third report of the European surveillance of veterinary antimicrobial consumption (ESVAC) has just been

the highest and lowest sales, which ranged from 3.7 to 408 mg/PCU. A look at the table of sales places Cyprus at the top with 408 mg/PCU,

<sup>20</sup> <http://www.fve.org/veterinary/medicines.php#18>

<sup>21</sup> [http://www.ema.europa.eu/docs/en\\_GB/document\\_library/Report/2013/10/WC500152311.pdf](http://www.ema.europa.eu/docs/en_GB/document_library/Report/2013/10/WC500152311.pdf)

# 3 Questions for.....

## Kari Norheim

Kari Norheim is a Norwegian veterinarian, head of the regional laboratory of the Norwegian National Veterinary Institute in Bergen. She is currently chair of the FVE Working Group in Aquaculture made by James Casey (Ireland), Andrea Fabris (Italy), Baska Ferenc (Hungary), Armand Lautraite (France), Buket Ozkan (Turkey) and Alain Schonbrodt (Belgium).

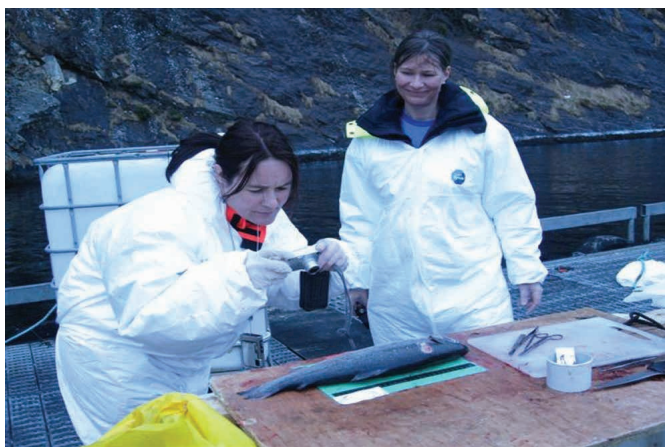
### 1. How did you become involved in the aquaculture sector?

Becoming a fish doctor was not one of my dreams when I was young! But my focus changed over the years, adapted to the present situation. After graduating from the Freie Universität in Berlin in 1992, my first job was in general practice which included a fish health service and being an official inspector in public health. In this job, many of my daily tasks were related to the intersection between veterinary and human medicine – One Health!

From the early 1990s, fish farming industry in Norway started growing rapidly, with a sudden increase in the need for veterinary competence. After some years working in aquaculture as a part of general practice, I started working as a full-time fish pathologist. I feel very lucky being able to focus on two of my absolute favourite areas, aquaculture and One Health. As veterinarians we have a natural role in the field of One Health. With climate changes, intensified travelling and movements across borders, veterinarians need to be aware of emerging disease including the zoonotic potential. This also applies to aquaculture.

### 2. What are the key responsibilities of a veterinarian in the aquaculture sector?

*"The question is not 'Can they reason?', nor 'Can they talk?' but 'Can they suffer?'"* (James Bentham, 1789). It doesn't take a veterinarian to tell a fish is not a piece of wood or 'a thing' but it might take a veterinarian to make sure these animals are treated correctly and species-adjusted in the right environment. The aquacul-



ture sector is now the fastest growing food producing sector in the world and will continue to grow and intensify. Representing one of the largest producers of proteins for the world in the future, the aquaculture industry should aim for sustainable production. A few years have passed since Bentham's words but they represent one of the key roles of a veterinarian in aquaculture today, who must be the 'attorney' of aquatic animals. A rapid growth in the fish farming industry with a wide variety of species represents challenges regarding health and welfare of each individual fish. Like any other species, fish are animals that need a specialised veterinary care. With knowledge and competence regarding health and welfare in the aquaculture sector, veterinarians can be involved at many levels. One of most important ideas is *"prevention is better than cure"*. This should involve veterinarians in disease control, health pro-

grammes, regulations to control use of drugs, vaccination programmes, epidemiological advice, training of students and staff, laboratory diagnosis, research etc. More than ever, veterinarians play a key role in society by taking care of the health and welfare of animals, and safeguarding public health.

### 3. What is your involvement at EU level for the support of the health of fish and aquatic organisms?

I am very grateful for the opportunity to discuss crucial areas in the aquaculture sector through the FVE Working Group in Aquaculture. The very rapid growth and expansion in the aquaculture industry represent challenges. To take care of the individual fish in this intensive industry, veterinary competence is required. Veterinarians have the education and the professional qualifications, which ensure that they have acquired the knowledge, skills and competencies necessary to diagnose diseases and treat animals. At present, there are highly competent veterinarians in the aquaculture sector – but too few. We need to train more and ensure the undergraduate curriculum keeps up with the development and needs in the aquaculture sector. We also need to develop more tools for disease prevention and control, monitor the use of medicines and fight antimicrobial resistance, and improve disease diagnosis and treatment. To reach these goals we will need to intensify research. It will also take some changes in the legislation and regulations. In the FVE Working Group for Aquaculture, we try to contribute to a positive development in the aquaculture sector; aiming at solutions that have the potential of making a difference.



followed by Italy (370 mg/PCU), Spain (249 mg/PCU) and Germany (211 mg/PCU). It is noteworthy that there is no apparent correlation between amount of antibiotics sold and whether or not there is decoupling of prescription and dispensing by veterinarians: Italy and Spain, with decoupling system, rank among the top three most selling countries.

The largest proportions of sales (mg/PCU) concerned tetracyclines (37%), penicillins (23%), sulfonamides (11%) and polymyxins (7%). For the critically important antimicrobials, namely 3rd- and 4th-generation cephalosporins, fluoroquinolones and macrolides, the sales for food-producing animals, including horses, accounted for 0.2%, 1.6% and 8%, respectively, of the total sales in the 25 countries in 2011.

## Companion animals

### FECAVA Symposium on antimicrobial resistance

How can we reduce the amount of antibiotics used? If we decide to prescribe antibiotics, how do we pick the most suitable one? Are guidelines useful? These and other topics were discussed at the FECAVA Symposium on Antimicrobial resistance during the Dublin EuroCongress.

The symposium, chaired by Alexandra Vilén, featured Christina Greko (who lectured on the Swedish experience of antibiotic reduction in companion animals), Luca Guardabassi (critical steps of choosing an antibiotic), David Lloyd (development and implementation of guidelines for antimicrobial use) and Jill Moss (founder of the Bella Moss foundation).

Presentations of the symposium will be published in the Winter issue of the European Journal of Companion Animal Practice ([www.fecava.org/ejcap](http://www.fecava.org/ejcap)).

## Education

### ECCVT

#### Survey to be launched on lab animal medicine, bee and fish health

The European Coordination Committee on Veterinary Training (ECCVT) made up of representatives of the European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education (EAEVE), the European Board of Veterinary Specialisation (EBVS) and the FVE, met on 24 September. Participants discussed a new framework to improve the European System of Evaluation of Veterinary Training. For this, tools will be developed by the EAEVE in collaboration with FVE and the EBVS, to help the assessors deliver optimum results during the visitation process of the faculties.

Laszlo Fodor, EAEVE president, gave an update on the latest developments with respect to the EAEVE's efforts to become an Associate Member of the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA). Following the evaluation of EAEVE by ENQA in June, the first draft report has been received, asking for certain clarifications. A final response is expected by late autumn. An important agenda item was the Veterinary continuous education in Europe (VetCEE) project.

The VETCEE pilot programme on companion animals, which aims to test the functional and financial sustainability of the project, is now running its final phase. The education and training of the veterinarians working in lab animal medicine<sup>22</sup> will be discussed at the next meeting.

22 <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2010:276:0033:0079:en:PDF>

## FVE & professional matters

### PQR Directive

#### Voted by EP, next step: delegated acts

Veterinarians moving to another country will find it easier to get their qualifications recognised, thanks to the European parliament vote, early October, on the modernisation of professional qualifications directive. Regarding the further planning of delegated acts – for the establishment of common training frameworks, allowing an update of the requirements of knowledge and skills – the annex concerning the study programme for veterinary surgeons (V.4. COM) is currently in preparation. Publication of the Directive is expected by the second half of 2014.

The FVE Statutory Bodies Working Group<sup>23</sup> met on 10 October and discussed the proposed PQR directive but also the professional card, the jurisdiction regulating veterinarians and paraprofessionals, VetCEE, the principles for certification, the FVE By-law on FVE membership and cross-border drug prescription.

23 Lynne Hill (Chair, UK), Roberta Benini (Italy), Valerie Beatty (Ireland), Karin Freytag (Germany), Marc Veilly (France), Zolt Pinter (Hungary), Vlatko Iliiski (FYROM)

## Miscellaneous

### FECAVA

#### A new board elected in Dublin

Over 650 companion animal veterinarians and veterinary nurses from 43 countries met in Dublin, Ireland early October for the 19th FECAVA EuroCongress, to assist in over 100 continuous education sessions by over 40 leading international and Irish speakers.

In Dublin, FECAVA Council elected a new board (2013-2015): Monique Megens (Netherlands, president), Simon Orr (UK, senior vice president), Jerzy Gawor (Poland, president elect), Wolfgang Dohne (UK, Secretary) and incoming board member



Denis Novak (Serbia, treasurer). Johan Van Tilburg (Belgium) left the board and is now past president.

### WVA

#### World congress celebrates 150th anniversary

The 31st World Veterinary Congress (WVC, picture below) took place in Prague (Czech Republic) from 17 to 20 September. This year, the WVC was marked by World Veterinary Association's 150 years Anniversary celebrations. Over 1350 delegates from 75 countries attended the WVC 2013. The scientific programme included 11 parallel sessions covering every veterinary discipline.

A two-day Global Veterinary Seminar on Animal Welfare brought together specialists from different world regions to discuss the different aspects of Animal Welfare.

During the WVC 2013, the WVA held its own Presidents' Assembly. On the occasion of the WVA 150th

Anniversary celebration, the WVA e Constitution and By-Laws. After in-depth presentations and discussions on the proposal, it was adopted with 100% of the votes in favour.

During the WVC 2013, the WVA held also its own Presidents' Assembly. On the occasion of the WVA 150th Anniversary celebration, the WVA resented the John Gamgee Award to James Harlan Steele (USA), Milton

Thiago de Mello (Brazil) and to Bernard Vallat (France) in recognition of their outstanding and exemplary services to the veterinary science and to the veterinary profession. The WVC 2013 was concluded by a presentation from the Turkish Veterinary Medical Associations, the organizers of the 32nd WVC to take place in September 2015 in Istanbul, Turkey.

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