

Vet-2011: the future of veterinary medicine

Happy birthday and my very best wishes for the next 250 years. With these words Mr. John Dalli, EU Commissioner for "health and consumers" formally opened the celebration of World Veterinary Year Vet-2011.

The opening ceremony took place at the historical site of Versailles, the former residence of the French Kings. It was here that 250 years ago Mr. Claude Bourgelat managed to convince King Louis XV to set up the first veterinary school: a landmark in the development of veterinary education and the veterinary profession. Claude Bourgelat also promoted comparative pathobiology, the foundation of our current One Health concept.

Many distinguished speakers, including WVA president Tjeerd Jorna, OIE director general Bernard Vallat, WHO general director Margaret Chan, and FAO director general Jacques Diouf took the floor and highlighted the importance of veterinary medicine for the health and welfare of animals and people. Also UNESCO and IUCN (the international Union for Conservation of Nature) emphasized the role they see for the veterinary profession.

Although very important, the support of these influential people alone will not be enough for the future of the veterinary medicine. Crucial will be how much we will be able to convey the message to the public at large and to have and keep their support. Vet-2011 offers a unique opportunity to communicate about the importance of ensuring the health and welfare of animals and people.

Interesting therefore is the launch of 6 video clips about the different aspects of the veterinary profession.

http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/health_consumer/information_sources/world_vet_year_2011_en.htm

Another funny video clip announces a photo competition organised by the European Commission together with the European Commission.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pbGVq-wTPQc>

At this moment Vet-2011 comprises 1040 corresponding members over 119 countries. In 42 countries all Vet-2011 initiatives are coordinated by a national Vet 2011 committee. Don't miss it. A very informative website provides all kind of information related to Vet 2011 <http://www.vet2011.org> Not surprisingly the number of visitors has of the Vet-2011 web site has gone up enormously over the last months.