



**Federation of
Veterinarians
of Europe**

Newsletter - July 2006

EDITO

Animal health and Human health are inseparably connected

In the past months many institutions and people have been extremely busy and have carried out much extra work fighting against the threat of an outbreak of Avian Influenza. And although one can now easily start long discussions about what would have been the outcome of other thinkable approaches, it is fair to say that the work done so far has certainly had positive effects on the protection of animal health and welfare and public health.

A good step forward is made in the development of the general thinking about emerging zoonotic diseases and the way to prevent them. It has become clearer than ever that, even in our urban societies, animal health and human health are inseparably connected. They cannot be seen as two different entities and further cooperation between the medical and the veterinary profession is needed.

Another important aspect of avian flu is its global dimension. Looking at all (legal and illegal) transports of live animals and animal products all over the world, and also at the migration of wild birds, it goes without saying that further international cooperation is crucial.

The same applies to the cooperation between public and private partners. Viruses can pop up almost anytime and everywhere and, since early detection and notification are still the most important factors in controlling disease outbreaks, the maintenance of good monitoring and surveillance systems is necessary. Animal owners and people with an eye on wildlife are often the first to notice that something abnormal is going on. Together with the veterinary services, they are the first to ring the bell and to initiate further actions. According to the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) and its member countries, veterinary services must be considered as a global public good, and it is clear that they need to be well organised and well equipped; not only when there is a direct threat but the whole year round.

Many of you have been very busy this past year and a lot of work has been done. I wish you all a very good and well-deserved summer holiday. And to those who will stay at their posts to keep the veterinary services alert, I would like to say: keep up the good work in the interest of animal health and welfare and public health.

Jan Vaarten
FVE Executive Director



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Animal health

Common Animal Health Policy

Interim report of external evaluation indicates shortcomings



Earlier this year, the FVE was consulted in view of an external evaluation of the EU Common Animal health Policy (CAHP). First, the Federation replied to an extensive questionnaire, a task done with the assistance of several of its members. The FVE executive was then interviewed by Bill Vandaele, member of the Food Chain Evaluation Consortium (FCEC), on behalf of DG Sanco. The FCEC has now published its interim report¹.

The report outlines the progress and first results of the work carried out by the evaluation team. Although 'significant progress' has been made in many areas of the CAHP in the last 10 years, a number of shortcomings have been identified. They include:

- *A continuing complex and bureaucratic process of the implementation of the EU policy, including a complicated body of legislative texts, lack of co-ordination in the various systems in place, communication gaps both at competent authority level and with external stakeholders, and over-reliance on comitology procedures.*
- *An disproportionate emphasis, at least in budgetary terms, on dealing with emergency actions and crisis situations rather than prevention activities.*
- *The apparent persistence of significant diseases in parts of the Community (including highly contagious diseases such as TB and brucellosis), despite long-standing eradication programmes and a significant budget committed to these programmes.*
- *An apparent lack of clear criteria for the prioritisation of budgetary expenditure on the various measures covered by the CAHP (research, border inspections, etc)*
- *Major outbreaks of exotic diseases that have continued to occur in the Community in the last 10 years. The lack of conclusive evidence on the origin of these diseases 'raises significant questions' about the likely contribution of illegal trade and tourism in their emergence.*
- *Persistent issues of suspected illegal trade and fraud, despite a reinforced policy of controls at the Community border posts.*

The evaluation is expected to be finalised this summer.

A conference of the CAHP strategy 2007-2013 will take place in Brussels on 7 November 2006².

World Organisation for Animal Health

Annual session of the OIE International Committee

The International Committee of the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) held its 74th Annual General Session in Paris from 21 to 26 May. Some 600 participants representing 167 Member Countries and intergovernmental organisations (FAO, WHO, World Bank, WTO...) took part in the event. The FVE was represented by Jan Vaarten and Nancy De Briyne.

¹ http://ec.europa.eu/comm/food/animal/diseases/strategy/cahp_interim_en.pdf

² http://ec.europa.eu/comm/food/animal/diseases/strategy/draft_agenda_en.pdf

Delegates praised the role played by the OIE in the global fight against avian influenza. They particularly saluted the agreement reached with the World Bank and key donors to support developing countries to invest in programmes aimed at bringing their Veterinary Services in line with OIE standards. During the session, the Committee furthermore voted to render compulsory the OIE notification of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) cases in wildlife.

Other agenda points included:

- The application of a new Collaborating Centre, the Centre for Disease Control (CDC) in Atlanta
- The new World Animal Health Information System (WAHIS), which is to strengthen OIE's actions in terms of transparency on the state of animal diseases worldwide;
- Adoption of new and updated international standards for a better safeguard of public health in the world trade of animals and their products as well as guidelines for improved surveillance of animal diseases and zoonoses.
- Improvements to chapters on animal welfare and food safety in the production phase;
- Identification and animal traceability;
- Update of the chapter on BSE in the Terrestrial Animal Health Code. Adopted texts highlighted global surveillance methods allowing the OIE to propose Member Countries a new procedure for an official recognition of their status on the disease;
- Publication of the list of Veterinary Critically Important Antimicrobials (VCIA) as defined by OIE.

The International Committee furthermore elected Dr Barry O'Neil as OIE President for a three-year mandate.



Thanks to its members, FVE contributed to drafting the list of VCIA

Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies

MEPs vote to amend EU rules on BSE

Last May, the European Parliament voted to amend the Regulation on transmissible spongiform encephalopathies (TSEs), paving the way for First Reading Agreement on this dossier. The amendments will provide the Commission with the legal base to move forward with proposals to change TSE rules in specific areas, as outlined in the TSE Roadmap published in July 2005. These proposed changes would reflect the positive downward trend in BSE incidences in the EU and new developments in science and technology, while still ensuring food safety and consumer protection. For example, the Commission may propose the introduction of a tolerance level to allow a small presence of fishmeal in ruminant feed or the reduction in the number of mandatory tests for BSE, coupled with better targeting of surveillance under certain well-defined conditions.

Other provisions will be brought in line with the stricter, current transitional measures. For example, for mechanically separated meat (MSM), no ruminant bones in countries with a controlled or undetermined BSE risk will be allowed to be used for the production of MSM, rather than just a ban on the vertebral column.

In May 2005, an international agreement was reached on a new, simplified categorisation system for the BSE risk of countries, which could be then used in trade. This OIE system is based on 3 categories (1- negligible risk, 2- controlled risk, 3-undetermined risk), rather than the previous 5 geographical BSE risk (GBR) categories. The proposed amendments to the TSE Regulation incorporate this new categorisation system into EU legislation, so that it can be used by the EU for trading purposes in the future.

The Commission plans to put forward the first proposals to change certain BSE-related rules before the end of 2006.

Avian Influenza

No Council agreement on EU anti-viral stockpile



DG SANCO Commissioner,
Markos Kyprianou

Markos Kyprianou, European Commissioner for Health and Consumer Protection, has expressed his regret that EU Health Ministers failed to agree to proceed with the creation of a European strategic stockpile of anti-virals against influenza.

The possibility of a stockpile had been discussed as part of the overall EU pandemic preparedness measures. It would have served as a pool of anti-virals which could have been re-distributed according to need should pandemic influenza occur in Europe.

Following months of discussion with Member State health experts on the issue, the Commission has put forward a concept paper which sets out the basic purpose and principles of the stockpile.

The aim is not to substitute national stockpiles, which must continue to be compiled by every Member State, but to have it as an additional and complementary resource.

Veterinary guidelines for H5N1 suspicion in cats

H5N1 guidelines compiled by the Avian Influenza Task Force have been issued by the newly formed European Advisory Board on Cat Diseases (ABCD)³. The Guidelines were collated for veterinary practitioners to help them deal with possible cases of H5N1 in cats.

The guidelines provide evidence-based information on infection routes and clinical signs of avian influenza infection in cats. They also offer guidance on the diagnosis and management of cats suspected of infection with H5N1 virus and on protective measures that should be taken when infection is suspected. The H5N1 Avian Influenza Guidelines are a result of the ABCD meeting held in Barcelona last March and are available on www.abcd-vets.org.

The European Advisory Board on Cat Diseases is composed of seventeen independent veterinary members from ten European countries with an expertise in immunology, vaccinology and/or clinical feline medicine. The ABCD recently met in Haarlem (NL), on 8-9 June where it adopted guidelines on Feline Panleukopenia and discussed guidelines for Feline Herpes Virus infection.

Cross compliance

CVOs call for legal framework and improved communication

A mini-seminar on cross-compliance was held during an informal meeting of Chief Veterinary Officers (CVOs) in Vienna, Austria on May 19.

Cross compliance (CC) is an important extension of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). It is a strategic improvement of both the CAP and the Community Animal Health Policy. New control measures may enhance general acceptance of the CAP after decoupling farm subsidies from production.

Today, CC rules are enforced in different ways in different Member States, in particular regarding animal health, while the competent authorities may vary from country to country. In Vienna, CVOs identified the need for a 'solid legal framework' for the verification and reinforcement of compliance. In that respect the Community should propose a clear set of common indicators, they added.

Participants furthermore called for an 'appropriate balance of duties and responsibilities' between the paying agencies and the veterinary services involved. Unobstructed flow of information between appropriate agencies was essential, they noted.

³ For further information, see www.abcd-vets.org or contact kdelange@abcd-vets.org

Furthermore, it was stressed that incentives for farmers should not only be negative. Participants also concluded that the training of the inspectors needed to be enhanced. This is an issue that has also been identified as a priority by FVE and its EASVO section, representing Europe's state veterinary officers.

Finally, the CVOs announced that they are counting on feedback, both from the agencies responsible for reimbursements and from the Commission, regarding the audits of the CC systems in various Member States.

Animal welfare

FVE members

Johan Beck-Friis receives Welfare Award

A well-known face at FVE meetings, Johan Beck-Friis, head of communications of the Swedish Veterinary Association, received the animal welfare award from the Djurskyddet Sverige, the Swedish Animal Welfare League.

Motivation for the prize was: "Johan Beck-Friis has an ambition to always push for better animal welfare. Nobody can question his commitment and even if he sometimes gets questioned, he does not renounce what he thinks is important to change from an animal welfare point of view. He does not hesitate to critically examine weaknesses in Swedish and international animal husbandry and handling.



FVE delegate, J. Beck Friis

He has contributed to the FVE where he has taken an active stance in matters such as long distance animal transport and prohibition of non enriched cage systems for laying hens. Johan Beck-Friis has without doubt been of great benefit for animal welfare in Sweden an internationally, and is therefore a worthy recipient of the 2006 Animal Welfare award."

Laying Hens

Report examines welfare implications of different housing systems

On 5 May, the Commission published the final report of the 'LayWel' project⁴, which examines the welfare implications of changes in production systems for laying hens. General objective of the LayWel project was to produce a series of reports on the welfare of laying hens in various systems, with special focus on enriched cages, and to disseminate the information.

Welfare of laying hens is still a matter of concern. The EU-Directive 1999/74/EC sets the outlines for the various systems that are allowed for housing laying hens.

At the time the Directive was adopted, most information on enriched cages, more rightly called furnished cages, came from studies in laboratories or small scale units. New information on alternative housing systems, such as aviaries and free range systems has become available. The report considers seven different aspects of laying hen welfare: welfare definitions; housing systems; health; behaviour; physiology and stress indicators; productivity and egg quality; and integrated welfare assessment, combining all different aspects.

It was found that, with the exception of conventional cages, all systems have the potential to provide satisfactory welfare for laying hens. However, the potential is not always realised in practice, in particular in case of poor management, climate or cage design.

⁴ http://ec.europa.eu/comm/food/animal/welfare/farm/laywel_final_report_en.pdf
See also <http://www.laywel.eu>



Photo by Joost Vianen

All cage systems used provide a more hygienic environment, minimising parasitic disease. However, there is a high risk of poor welfare in all systems with larger group sizes (above 10-15 birds) due to pecking and cannibalism. The report indicated that greater emphasis needs to be put on genetic selection of birds with reduced feather pecking tendencies for use in alternative housing systems. The report also notes that conventional cages do not allow hens to fulfil their behavioural needs and the severe spatial restriction also leads to 'disuse osteoporosis'.

The Commission will now make proposals for the review of the laying hens directive, and the Council will have to act on them by qualified majority within 12 months of their submission.

Agriculture Council

Farm ministers discuss animal welfare conference and broiler welfare

At the Council meeting of 19 June, EU Farm ministers held a public debate on the Action Plan on the basis of the conclusions emerged from the Austrian Conference held on 30 March in Brussels on Animal Welfare. The conclusions insist in particular on setting up a European network of scientific institutes and laboratories responsible for questions relating to animal welfare. They also stress the need for an impact assessment as well as objective and measurable indicators on animal welfare. It was also envisaged to investigate possible options for a labelling scheme on animal welfare at EU level. Finally the conclusions support mutual recognition of animal welfare worldwide on the basis of multilateral standards. The Committee on International Trade as well as the Environment Committee and the Agriculture Committee [leading] of the European Parliament are also busy debating the Action Plan. The adoption in Committee should take place in September. The Council took also note of the report on a draft Directive laying down minimum rules of chickens kept for meat production ("broilers"). The compromise text drawn up by the Austrian Presidency consists of extending the scope of the proposal to cover organic and free range chickens and includes the setting of a maximum stocking density until 2010. However, the European Commission opposed this concept. The Finnish Presidency will be discussing this issue further with the aim of achieving a political agreement in the Council.

Regarding the ban on cat and dog fur, Commissioner Kyprianou announced that the proposal should be published in time for an agreement that should be reached during the German Presidency in the first semester of 2007.

Welfare of laboratory animals

Commission launches public and expert consultation

On 16 June, the European Commission launched a 9-week long internet consultation of citizens and experts to hear their views on how to increase the welfare of animals used in experiments. The existing legislation needs to be updated to further improve the welfare of experimental animals and to ensure a level playing field for those carrying out animal experiments.

The consultation consists of two questionnaires: one is addressed to the wider public and is available in all 20 official EU languages. The second is addressed to experts and is in English only, but allows very detailed comments⁵

⁵ For further information on the consultation and both questionnaires:
http://ec.europa.eu/environment/chemicals/lab_animals/ia_info_en.htm

The replies to this consultation will help the Commission in its considerations regarding the revision of the Directive on the protection of animals used for experimental and other scientific purposes (86/609/EEC). Currently the Commission is planning to make a proposal in early 2007. It will then be up to the European Parliament and the Council to discuss, amend and adopt it (co-decision procedure).

This consultation will be open until 18 August.



Your input is also important!

Appendix A unanimously adopted at European convention

The draft revised Appendix A of the European Convention for the Protection of Vertebrate Animals used for Experimental and other Scientific Purposes was unanimously adopted by the Parties to the Convention, which held their meeting on 15 June in Strasbourg.

Appendix A contains both general guidelines on accommodation, housing and care relevant to all laboratory animals, as well as species specific sections for dogs, cats, ferrets, rodents and rabbits, farm animals and mini-pigs, non-human primates, birds, fish, amphibians and reptiles. Species-specific sections were prepared with the assistance of Expert Groups, which also submitted background information, based on scientific evidence and practical experiences. This background information is also separately available. The Federation of European Laboratory Animals Science Associations (FELASA) will present the concept of this Euroguide during the meeting of the European Society of Laboratory Animal Veterinarians (10-12 September) and the FELASA meeting (11-14th June 2007).

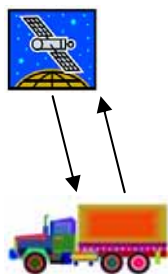
The entering into force of Appendix A is subject to the country concerned.

Animal transport

Satellite navigation systems for trucks under scrutiny

An international workshop on navigation systems needed for future long-distance animal transport was organised jointly by DG Sanco and the Joint Research Centre (JRC), on 12-13 June in Milan⁶. Some 100 participants attended the conference, including representatives from competent authorities, transport industry, animal welfare organisations and other non governmental organisations, including the FVE, represented by Nancy De Briyne.

From January 2007, all new vehicles used for long distance animal transport within the EU are required to have a satellite navigation system (SNS) on board. This will apply to all vehicles used for long journeys from January 2009.



The aim of the workshop was to discuss further technical specifications regarding the required SNS (the data to be recorded, the hardware components and communication protocol to be used, the frequency for recording and transmitting, data access, etc.). Certain aspects of the new Regulation are still unclear, including the definition of the start of a journey (when the first animal is loaded onto the vehicle or when the vehicle start moving) of a newly built vehicle (tractor or trailer, new or used for the first time to transport animals). Other presentations included the SNS system, possible projects and applications to be linked to the SNS, satellite network, technical specifications, integration with existing systems (TRACES, electronic animal identification) and practical problems.

In addition, many concerns were raised about the cost of the system. The JRC was requested to carry out an impact assessment, to be completed next autumn.

The difficulties seem to make it nearly impossible to implement the SNS in new vehicles from January 2007. Technical specifications still need to be adopted and industry will then need time to adapt the existing systems to the new requirements.

⁶ For more information including all presentations: <http://www.jrc.cec.eu.int/project/tl/>

Opinion of the European Food Safety Authority

Risks of poor calf welfare in intensive farming systems

On 24 May, the Animal health and welfare panel of experts at the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) adopted an opinion on calf welfare⁷. EFSA had been mandated to look in particular at the health and welfare aspects of intensive farming systems, and their impact on the well-being of calves from pathological, zootechnical, physiological and behavioural viewpoints.

The major risks identified for one or several husbandry systems include inadequate colostrum intake, inadequate ventilation, and the exposure to pathogens. Regarding castration and dehorning (including disbudding) without anaesthetic drugs, there is a variation in relation to national legislation, which is why the risk of poor welfare in relation to castration and dehorning has a wide range between countries.

Medicines

Identification of horses

Commission proposes consolidating Regulation

A new Regulation for horse identification has been proposed by the Commission. Its objective is to consolidate the various legal texts on the identification of equidae into one Regulation.

According to the proposed Regulation, a veterinarian should implant a microchip in the horse at the time it is first identified - but it should take place before the end of the year in which the animal was born or six months after birth, whichever the latest is. Details of the microchip should be recorded in the passport, to be signed by the veterinarian.

Before applying the microchip, the veterinarian has to verify that no previous electronic identification has been set. If evidence that a previous microchip has been inserted and removed is found, the original passport shall be replaced by a duplicate that is also issued if the passport is lost. In it, the horse will automatically be classified as 'not intended for food production'. However, the Commission has drafted a derogation of this principle if the owner can demonstrate that the horse's status as a food-producing animal has not been affected. The FVE is opposed to this derogation and has asked the Commission for removal. Before administering medicines, the veterinarian should



Photo by *eStHER*

check the horse status (destined for the food chain or not). If the declaration in the passport has not been signed, the animal is considered as intended for the human food chain. Unfortunately, there is no clear provision in the Regulations regarding the action to take when a veterinarian needs to treat a horse with a veterinary drug from the positive list when the passport is not available. The Regulation is due to come into force on 1 January 2007.

IFAH-Europe Conference

Conference on Innovation in Veterinary medicines

"The animal health industry – an essential partner for global health" was the theme of a conference held on 28 June in Brussels⁸. Organised by IFAH-Europe, the European branch of the federation of

⁷ For further information, see: http://www.efsa.eu.int/science/ahaw/ahaw_opinions/1516_en.html

⁸ For further information, see <http://www.fedesa.be/events/IFAH-Europe%20innovation%20conference%20FINAL%20programme%20EXT%2013.6.2006.pdf>

veterinary pharmaceutical companies, the conference had speakers from the Commission, European Parliament, the World Organisation for Animal health (OIE), the Food and Agriculture Organisation, the European Food Safety Authority and various companies and NGOs, including the FVE.

Under the title “The Veterinarian’s toolbox 2015”, Jan Vaarten, FVE Executive Director, held a speech on the challenges facing the veterinary profession, in particular regarding the availability of veterinary medicines, both for food and companion animals as well as for particular diseases with a large public interest.

Pharmacovigilance

Electronic declaration for practitioners available this summer

At the FVE General Assembly in Malaga, guest speaker Fia Westerholm of the European Medicines Evaluation Agency (EMA) underlined the importance of veterinary pharmacovigilance. “Unfortunately, the declaration of undesirable side effects is not compulsory everywhere in Europe, and can lead to an under-estimation of a problem. An isolated incident may seem anecdotal, but if several similar events occur, that changes everything.”

She also presented the electronic declaration form, identical for all countries, which will be available this summer. The form is currently undergoing a pilot study in several veterinary practices in Europe. A user’s guide for the declaration of suspect adverse effects will also be available⁹.

FVE matters

FVE General Assembly in Malaga

Delegates discuss education, pharmacovigilance and suicides

The quality of veterinary education was the theme with many variations at the general assembly of the Federation of Veterinarians of Europe, held in Benalmadena near Malaga, Spain, on 19 and 20 May. The assembly discussed the evaluation of veterinary teaching establishments and the two-level (Bachelor’s/Master’s) teaching programmes favoured by the Bologna agreement, but also touched on the selection system of undergraduates.


“The majority of our young colleagues are highly intelligent, focused and committed. But teaching programmes can be very demanding and socially isolating: a difficult transition”. Speaking on occupational stress and work-related mental health issues, Dr Jerry Lucke (UK), president of the Veterinary Benevolent Fund, related how statistics had shown that the rate of suicide among the veterinary profession was significantly higher than in the general population. This was not just a British situation, as the show of hands demonstrated when Dr Lucke asked the assembly who had personally known a colleague who had committed suicide. He described the support systems now in place in the UK and suggested



GA speaker Jerry Lucke

that FVE could help set up a template for programmes such as vets helping vets. The Assembly also discussed the Bologna declaration and the evaluation of veterinary schools (see elsewhere in this FVE Newsletter). Guest speaker Jordi Serratos of the European Food Safety Authority gave an overview of the activities of the EFSA, while Fia Westerholm (EMA) explained the role and functioning of pharmacovigilance reporting.

⁹ www.eudravigilance.emea.eu.int/veterinary



Results of a 28-country survey of the role of statutory bodies, presented by Catherine Roy and Christian Rondeau (France), showed a great variation in role, responsibilities and functioning of the different organisations. This led the general assembly to vote in favour of the creation of a European working party to help set up a network to facilitate the exchange of information.

Delegates from France and the Netherlands, the two European countries that had the permission to vaccinate poultry against avian influenza, gave an update on the experience. In France, vaccination was mainly carried out on outdoor ducks (500 000 birds in a total of 130 farms) and geese (1500) kept for foie gras production. Surveillance and blood testing had found no presence of the H5N1 virus, according to Thierry Chambon (France). The direct costs (0.86 €/bird) were borne by the French government.

In the Netherlands, vaccination had only concerned three commercial outdoor farms — as well as some 10 000 ‘hobby’ poultry kept by non professionals. “This implied some not inconsiderable work”, reported to Arjan den Hertog, past president of the Dutch farm animal veterinary association. All birds that needed to be vaccinated had to be identified (by a ring), their owners registered, while 5% of each ‘flock’ needed to be blood tested twice – often by veterinarians without any particular experience with poultry. Special training sessions had been set up for colleagues on the handling, vaccination and blood testing of the birds.

The FVE general assembly was attended by 165 delegates from 28 countries, including representatives of the World Veterinary Association (WVA) and the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA), with which the FVE is seeking a closer collaboration.

The next FVE general assembly will be held on 17-18 November in Brussels, while the next Spring GA will be held in Krakow (Poland), on 15 and 16 June 2007.

Education

Evaluation of veterinary schools

Profession in favour of a two-tier accreditation system

The basic principles of the revised standard operating procedures (SOP) for the future evaluation of veterinary schools were adopted at the FVE general assembly in Malaga. The goal of the evaluation is ‘a comparable high standard of veterinary training throughout Europe’, recalled John Williams (UK), FVE vice president, at the meeting.

The new system will consist of two stages. Stage one is to measure the school’s conformity to the minimum legal requirements of the EU Directive on veterinary training. Once approved, the school can apply for stage two. This second, optional stage will be based on quality criteria of academic standards and learning opportunities and the presence of a quality assurance system.

Of the 95 veterinary schools that are currently member of the European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education (EAEVE), only 37 have received so far a positive report following an evaluation visit. “If evaluation is not carried out or leads to a poor appraisal, there are no consequences, professor Marcel Wanner (Switzerland), president of the EAEVE said, in support of the revised SOP. “Graduates can work all over the European Union. We need a good system, with sanctions and political back-up”.

Bologna declaration

Veterinary studies should take a minimum of five years, FVE stresses

At the Malaga FVE general assembly, the Bologna declaration was discussed. This agreement is set to pave the way for the introduction of a Bachelor/Master system for all university studies. However, at the GA, several delegates called for the FVE to request an exemption for the veterinary profession, in particular as the Bologna declaration was not legally binding.

Of particular concern to the profession was that the declaration suggests that the Bachelor's degree be '*relevant to the labour market*'. Delegates agreed that, in the case of veterinary studies, this first-level degree (obtained after 3 years) should be considered a purely academic degree without professional value on its own.

FVE President Tjeerd Jorna, assured that the Board would remind policy makers that 'veterinary surgeons should be trained in full accordance with EU directives', which stipulate a minimum of five years, and said the Board would consider the feasibility of rejecting the Bologna proposal.

Meetings

FVE meets OIE

On Wednesday 14 June, a delegation of FVE and UEVP met with the Director General of the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE), Dr B. Vallat, in the OIE-head quarters in Paris. Items that were discussed in this meeting were inter alia the further development of veterinary services as a global public good, the role of veterinary statutory bodies, veterinary education, animal welfare and the list of veterinary critically important antimicrobials that was published by OIE. FVE president, Dr Tj. Jorna, took the opportunity to present the FVE strategy 2006 – 2010.



Bernard Vallat and Tjeerd Jorna

He and the OIE Director General expressed the wish to strengthen the relation between the organisations and to intensify the co-operation in matters of mutual interest.

FVE & TAIEX Welfare conference, 1-2/09/2006, Belgrade

The focus of the conference will given to animal protection areas where the European Community has legal competence and it is mainly at participants from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Kosovo, Romania, Serbia, Montenegro, and Turkey, however is also open for other interested parties who wish to attend. All Chief Veterinary Officers of the countries mentioned above will also be invited. For more information please contact the FVE office at info@fve.org

British Veterinary Association Congress 29-30/09/2006, London

The BVA will hold its annual congress on 29-30 September in the Cavendish Conference Centre in London, on the theme "Vets, animal health and the human factor: veterinary medicine in 2015". For the preliminary programme, see: <http://www.bva.co.uk/congress/programme>

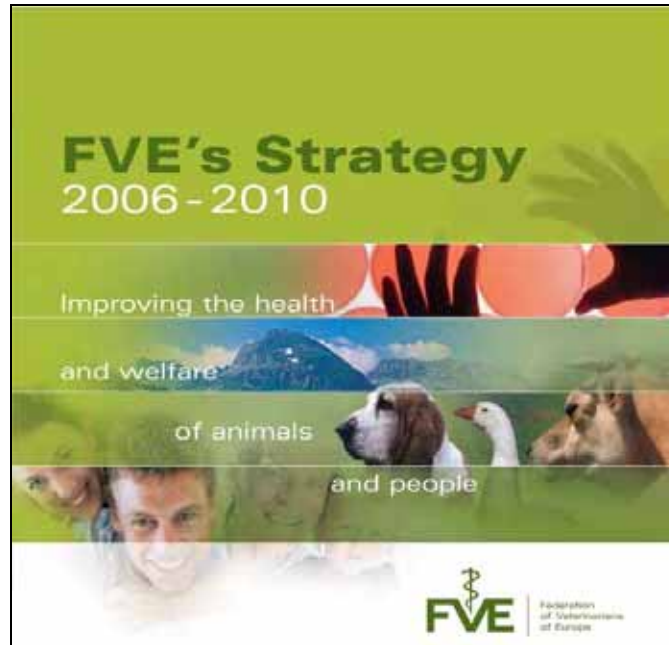
International Society for Animal Hygiene 17-21/06/2007, Tartu

The International Society for Animal Hygiene will organise its XIIIth international congress on animal hygiene in Tartu, Estonia from 17 to 21 June 2007. Motto of the congress is "Animal health, animal welfare and biosecurity". For further information, see: <http://www.eau.ee/isah2007>

Pan Commonwealth Veterinary Meeting 4-7/11/2007, Barbados

The 4th Pan Commonwealth Veterinary Conference will be held from 4 to 8 November 2007 in St Michael on Barbados (West Indies).

Main theme of the meeting: "Animal health and welfare, constant challenges for veterinarians". See: <http://commonwealthvetassoc.org/Home/BarBados.htm>



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Federation of Veterinarians of Europe - AISBL
rue Defacqz, 1 B – 1000 Brussels
Tel: +32.2.533.70.20 - Fax: +32.2.537.28.28
E-mail: info@fve.org - Internet: www.fve.org