



FEDERATION OF VETERINARIANS OF EUROPE

Mr President,
Dear colleagues,

Thanks a lot for your very kind invitation and your very warm welcome, and for giving me the opportunity to say a few words about our profession in Europe and the collaboration between the AVMA and the FVE.

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Hygienists

EVERI
Veterinarians in
Education, Research
and Industry

The FVE, the Federation of Veterinarians of Europe, which was founded in 1975, represents 43 national veterinary organisations across 38 countries and 4 active sections. Each section represents a key group in our profession: practitioners, hygienists, veterinary state officers and veterinarians in Education, research and Industry. Together we speak for approximately 240,000 veterinarians.

Our mission is to unite the European veterinary profession for the benefit of animal health and welfare, and public health. Our main task is to promote our profession, its growth and its development, to defend its interests and to influence national, European and even global institutions. At the same time we recognise our responsibilities to the animals under our care, the keepers of animals and to society as a whole. Therefore much of our time and efforts are spent lobbying at various levels, and also acting as experts and scientific advisors in various fields, such as education, zoonotic diseases, animal welfare, and antimicrobial resistance, just to quote a few of them.

I guess that these topics sound quite familiar to you, and you can therefore realise that we face exactly the same issues on each side of the Atlantic: quality of undergraduate education, continuous education, medicines for minor uses and minor species, the impact of fleximisation, lack of veterinarians in remote areas as well as AMR, food safety and the level of income of vets.

Nowadays we live in a global world whether we like it or not. Globalisation is a fashionable word that we can often read or hear of, but which has not been created just for the fun of using it. This word expresses a reality which also applies to veterinarians and veterinary medicine. It is a fact that every single veterinarian, whatever his task or his position as a practitioner or as a hygienist or as an academic should be aware of. And this is the reason why, beyond the pleasure of meeting each other, the AVMA and the FVE have developed a very strong collaboration and have been working closely together at international levels for these past few years.

Whilst it is true that there are differences in our natural, political and cultural backgrounds, we nevertheless share common values which need to be highlighted and known to the public and the politicians. Our profession is quite small compared with others, such as doctors or lawyers, and we need to make extra effort in order to be understood, valued and recognised.

We very much appreciate mutual exchanges of experience and ideas with the AVMA which help us to set up strategies and work on common position papers. We actually hope to release joint position statements in the near future on AMR, Veterinary Education, and Animal Welfare. Politicians, stakeholders or decision makers are surprised and puzzled to find out that American and European vets share and agree on common ground, and this is our strength.

Last year TATFAR, the Trans Atlantic Task Force on Antimicrobial Resistance, was initiated at the highest level, between President Obama for the US and President Barroso for the EU. So there is no need to underline how important and how universal AMR is. And no need either to tell you how important it is to have frequent exchanges of information between the AVMA and the FVE, in order to maintain the initiative on this issue, not least to counter those who would hold the veterinary profession solely responsible for the problems and who would wish to impose solutions on us.

President

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We, European veterinarians, thank you, the AVMA in general, and Dr Larry Kornegay, Dr Ron DeHaven, and Dr Jim Nave in particular, for the quality and strength of our relations, which help us both, the FVE and the AVMA, not only to be present and proactive on the international scene, but also to speak as one profession with one voice.

It is a long term work, the fruits, of which will be picked up by the younger generations. But I am convinced that we will soon see some of the benefits of this work in common for the sake of animal health, public health and our profession.

And our work starts today with your convention for which I wish all the best and all the success it deserves, with all my thanks for the privilege of being with you for these few days.