



FEDERATION OF VETERINARIANS OF EUROPE

Press Release

Brussels, 12 November 2008

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European Veterinary Week successfully launched

The European Veterinary Week was officially launched last Monday 10 November with a high level conference in Brussels, entitled "One Health: Healthy Animals = Healthy People".

Mrs Androula Vassillou, EU Commissioner for Public Health, Food Safety, Animal Health and Welfare highlighted the "integral role played by veterinarians in protecting us from threats posed to animals by diseases such as avian influenza, foot and mouth disease and bluetongue". However, she added, veterinarians alone cannot ensure that the objective of One Health is achieved. "For this, we need the active involvement and support of a number of other actors in the food chain, particularly farmers".

The event goals to stimulate dialogue on information diffusion and cooperation between the different stakeholders in the animal health field for the implementation of effective biosecurity measures at border and farm level were successfully achieved.

Bernard Van Goethem, Director for animal health and welfare at DG Health and consumers (European Commission) welcomed speakers. He was followed by Robert Madelin, Director-General for Health and Consumers, who gave a detailed explanation on the new Animal Health Strategy for the EU. Bernard Vallat, director general of the World Organisation for Animal health presented the positive impacts of animal health standards on human health and consumer well being and Walter Winding, President of FVE, stressed the need for good co-operation and partnership between authorities and stakeholders.

Elisabeth Jeggle, MEP, underlined the present and futures challenges for EU farmers and animal health, and Neil Parish, also MEP, chaired the panel discussion on on-farm Biosecurity.

Further speakers included representatives from the European Commission, the European Food Safety Authority and the European Center for Disease Control, as well as representatives from diverse European organisations and national Administrations. Over 400 participants from 45 countries including Japan, Argentina or New Zealand and representatives from the veterinary, medical and farming sectors and policy makers attended the high-level event.

In addition, the 'One health' web site www.one-health.eu, is developed in all EU official languages. A road show bus will tour major events and fairs in Europe to disseminate the campaign's messages. Thus, the EU Vet Week is the kick-off of various initiatives on biosecurity and animal health.

Notes for Editors:

1. The Federation of Veterinarians of Europe (FVE) is an umbrella organisation of 44 veterinary organisations from 38 European countries, representing a total of around 200 000 veterinarians.
2. For further information, consult the fve website <http://www.fve.org> or contact the FVE Secretariat on tel +32 2 533 70 20 or by e-mail to info@fve.org

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