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**EP Resolution: Veterinarian's right to dispense at stake**

Brussels, 6 April 2011 - The news that Members of the European Parliament will be voting whether or not veterinarians in Europe should retain the right to dispense veterinary medicines in general and antimicrobials in particular was met with grave concern by the Federation of Veterinarians of Europe (FVE).

While the FVE welcomes the EP initiative for a Resolution on Antimicrobial resistance<sup>1</sup>, it firmly rejects proposed amendment 50, which asks Member States “to restrict veterinarians from, in non-acute cases, selling veterinary medicines directly to farmers and animal owners”<sup>2</sup>.

Walter Winding, FVE president, stated: “Prohibition of selling veterinary medicines is not the solution to avoid antimicrobial resistance.”. In fact, “experience has shown that in Member states where veterinarians are not allowed to sell veterinary medicines, this did not lead to a lower frequency of antimicrobial resistance”. Furthermore, the Berenschot report, which examined the effects of decoupling veterinary prescription and dispensing<sup>3</sup>, concluded that restricting the sales of antimicrobials by veterinarians would not be effective, and even recommended strengthening the position of the veterinary practitioner as ‘gatekeeper’ for antimicrobial use in animals.

President Winding commented: “Veterinarians receive extensive training in the field of medicines, and are in daily contact with farmers and animal owners. They are at the forefront when it comes to promoting responsible use of antimicrobials and raising awareness about antimicrobial resistance.”

If adopted, the amendment would put at risk many large-animal practices in the EU, with little proven benefit in terms of safety of medicines or reducing antimicrobial resistance in particular. It would also severely jeopardise the partnership between veterinarians and farmers regarding the farm herd health plans, thus putting the health and welfare of animals at risk.

“A greater reliance on education, training and improved monitoring, as proposed in the Resolution, stands a far better chance of achieving the desired result than changing the medicines distribution channels to pharmacists, wholesalers or the internet trade.”

The European Parliament's Committee of Agriculture and Rural Development is expected to vote on this Resolution and its proposed amendments on 12 April.

<sup>1</sup>

[http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2009\\_2014/documents/agri/re/859/859185/859185en.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2009_2014/documents/agri/re/859/859185/859185en.pdf)

<sup>2</sup>

[http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2009\\_2014/documents/agri/am/862/862005/862005en.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2009_2014/documents/agri/am/862/862005/862005en.pdf)

<sup>3</sup>

<http://www.cbg-meb.nl/CBG/en/veterinary-medicines/actueel/20100309-Berenschot-report-on-antibiotics-use/default.htm>

President

Walter Winding

Vice-Presidents

Christophe Buhot  
Ljiljana Markuš  
Rainer Schneichel  
Stephen Ware

## NOTES TO EDITORS:

1. The FVE has been at the forefront of the campaign for containing resistance for many years:

- FVE position on the maintenance of antimicrobials' efficacy ([http://www.fve.org/news/position\\_papers/medicines/fve\\_10\\_056\\_maintenance\\_anticrobials%27\\_efficacy.pdf](http://www.fve.org/news/position_papers/medicines/fve_10_056_maintenance_anticrobials%27_efficacy.pdf))
- FVE is a founding member of the European Platform for the Responsible Use of Medicines in Animals ([www.epruma.eu](http://www.epruma.eu))
- FVE held a conference on antimicrobial resistance in 2008; another conference is planned for November 2011

2. 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.

3. 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](mailto:info@fve.org)