FECAVA and the CALLISTO PROJECT

FVE (the Federation of veterinarians of Europe) has asked FECAVA to take a significant role in a major project concerning zoonosis.

Zoonotic pathogens continue to pose a significant health risk to humans. In the past few decades we have witnessed several events where pathogens crossed the barriers from their regular animal host to humans via contact or vectors or via food, causing large outbreaks in the human population. About 60% of infectious diseases in humans originate in animals and about 75% of emerging diseases are zoonotic. In addition, food animals are also at risk of emerging pathogens mainly originating from other animal species.

An increasing number and range of companion animals – defined as any domesticated or domestic-bred animals kept by humans for company, amusement or psychological support including dogs, cats, horses, birds, rabbits, ferrets, guinea pigs, reptiles and ornamental fish – are being kept in close interaction with human beings and food animals. Investigating and understanding the role of companion animals in the emergence of infectious diseases in humans and food animals and its implications for intervention strategies remains a relatively underrepresented area of attention in current research, public health and animal health policies. Moreover, the knowledge that is present is scattered amongst various specialists in different areas having different perspectives. This leads to the current situation where we lack a complete overview of the situation in terms of, for instance, incidence, main risk species and high risk areas and the developments herein.

Yet this information is necessary to develop evidence based, targeted actions to prevent reduce and eliminate the health risks for humans and food animals associated with keeping companion animals, in particular resulting from the pathogens that they harbour.

CALLISTO will contribute to this need by bringing together specialists from different fields of expertise, disciplines and sectors – ranging from veterinarians, virologists, bacteriologists, parasitologists, epidemiologists, ecologists and medical doctors to pet traders, farmers, animal welfare organisations, sociologists and health and food safety authorities – in a single network that will function as an interprofessional, interdisciplinary and multisectorial think tank.
The main objectives of the CALLISTO think tank are:

- To provide an overview of the role of companion animals as a source of infectious diseases for humans and food animals;
- To propose targeted actions that contribute to reducing the risk for infectious disease outbreaks in humans and food animals associated with keeping companion animals.

In pursuit of these main objectives CALLISTO will:

- Assemble a balanced multidisciplinary, multisectorial and interprofessional network of experts and representatives from the key stakeholder groups relevant to the main objectives of CALLISTO;
- Organise a series of meetings at different levels of integration, facilitating both interprofessional exchange of expert level knowledge and cross disciplinary and multisectorial integration of knowledge and perspectives;
- Produce and disseminate expert level opinion reports containing an overview of the current situation and proposed actions to reduce the health risks to humans and food animals associated with infectious diseases originating in companion animals.

In total, seven Working Groups will be involved in a 3 year during project. The role of FECAVA will be to chair Working Group 1 which concerns pets in the community. We will be responsible for spreading the message of the CALLISTO project to the public and more specifically to our clients all over Europe.

The responsibility and challenge in delivering this project is huge and we will need all our expertise in companion animal medicine to convince our clients and public opinion that living together with animals is a pleasure even though it can pose some risks and cause some problems. It will be our task to bring the correct information without frightening people.

The project will start January 2012

**FECAVA Council visits Russia for the first time**

The FECAVA Council, committee and working group meetings took place in Moscow from 14th – 16th April this year at the invitation of our Russian member, the Russian Small Animal Veterinary Association (RSAVA).

The Council was welcomed to Moscow by Dr. Serguey Sereda, the RSAVA President who expressed how important the support and collaboration of Europe is for Russia. He explained that RSAVA members presently faced immense difficulties due to recently enacted medicines legislation, which essentially meant that they could not legally use any anesthetics and analgesics. He asked for FECAVA’s help in effecting sensible changes to this situation.
Standing - Dr. Alexander Tkachov Jr. (FECAVA Director for RSAVA), Dr. Serguey Sereda (RSAVA President) and Dr. Johan van Tilburg (FECAVA President)

On Thursday 14th April, delegates were taken on a visit to Stalin’s bunker to the east of Moscow, from where Stalin directed operations against the German armies as they approached the city of Moscow. An informative guide gave the audience some idea of the momentous events that took place in the second half of 1941 during Operation Barbarossa.
The tour guide standing behind Stalin’s desk in front of a map showing the situation as the Germans approached the city.

Although meetings occupied most of the time from Thursday through to the Council meeting on Saturday, some managed to find time to visit the city of Moscow and see some of the famous sites including Red Square and the Kremlin.

Dr. Miloš Urban (FECAVA Director for CSAVA), Ulrike Tewes (FECAVA Secretariat) and Dr. Wolfgang Dohne (FECAVA Director for BSAVA) in front of St. Basils Cathedral in Red Square

FECAVA is very grateful to RSAVA for making the visit possible and for the tremendous organisation and hospitality offered during the meeting.

An update on the European Board for Veterinary Professional Development

The European Board for Veterinary Professional Development (EBVPD) held its inaugural meeting in Brussels on April 6th. The first task was the establishment of statutes together with a mission statement and strategy. The statutes are now drafted and the new Board agreed to meet again on 21st September 2011.

The Board comprises FVE, UEVP, FECAVA (as a co-opted member), the European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Educational Establishments (EAEVE) and the European Board for Veterinary Specialisation (EBVS). It is envisaged that other groups (e.g. the statutory bodies) will be involved in the near future. Andrew Byrne (FECAVA/UEVP) was elected by the Board as Chairman.
The FECAVA Working Group on Post Graduate Education will now be chaired by Monique Megans and will act as the Acknowledged Companion Animal Veterinarian Program Subcommittee. This working group has commenced work on drafting a program which will be discussed with the EBVPD.

The European Commission acts to protect Member States from tapeworm

On 14th July 2011, the Commission adopted a regulation permitting, from 1st January 2012, a pre-movement treatment for dogs travelling to listed Member States claiming echinococcus-free status.

Finland, the United Kingdom, Ireland and Malta are the Member States currently on the list.

To be on the list, these Member States are obliged to introduce surveillance programmes and report the results to the Commission once a year. Positive findings need to be transmitted to the Commission and the other Member States immediately.

Before travel to one of the four Member States, a dog needs to receive a specific treatment administered by a vet. The details of the treatment should then be introduced by the vet in the pet’s passport and the owner can travel with his pet from 24 hours to five days (120 hours) after treatment.

The regulation harmonises treatment requirements and travel times following treatment for the listed Member States, thereby facilitating pet owners’ travel.

What is Echinococcus?

Echinococcus multilocularis is a tapeworm.

The typical transmission cycle of the parasite in Europe involves wild carnivores, such as foxes, as definitive hosts and several species of mammals, notably small rodents, as intermediate hosts. The rodents become infected by ingesting echinococcus eggs that are disseminated through foxes’ or dogs’ faeces.

Dogs can catch the worm by eating infected rodents. They may then serve as a source of infection for humans and a source of contamination of the environment. The human infection is called alveolar echinococcosis. It is a rare zoonotic disease and is considered as one of the most severe human parasitic diseases in non-tropical areas.

While Echinococcus multilocularis infection in animals occurs in the northern hemisphere, including the central and northern parts of Europe, it has never been recorded in certain areas of the European Union.

Background

According to the rules laid down in Regulation (EC) No 998/2003 (known as ‘the Pet Regulation’), pet dogs, cats and ferrets travelling with their owner for non-commercial
movements to another Member State must be accompanied by a passport, or when imported from a third country by a certificate, providing proof of a valid anti-rabies vaccination. The regulation also grants a transitional period (to expire on 31st December 2011) to Finland, Ireland, Malta, Sweden and the United Kingdom making the entry of pet animals into their territory subject to compliance with certain additional requirements in relation to rabies, echinococciosis or ticks.

Sweden is not on the list of Member States claiming echinococcus-free status because it reported its first echinococcus cases in wild carnivores in January 2011.

The Commission's action is based on the advice of the European Food Safety Authority. EFSA considered that the risk of the introduction of Echinococcus multilocularis into parasite-free areas through the movement of infected dogs is greater than negligible. That risk, EFSA concluded, could be mitigated if dogs from endemic areas were to be treated prior to entry into echinococcus-free areas.

Using its delegated powers conferred by Article 290 of the Treaty of Lisbon, the European Commission adopted the measures mentioned above. They will now be transmitted for scrutiny by the European Parliament and the Council – a procedure that will last about four months. If neither Institution opposes, the delegated regulation will be published in the Official Journal of the European Union and will enter into force on the twentieth day following that of its publication.

Using the same powers, the Commission also adopted another delegated regulation amending the technical requirements for the anti-rabies vaccination set out in Regulation (EC) No 998/2003. The new rule clarifies that the date of vaccination must not precede the date of microchipping or tattooing indicated in the passport or the accompanying health certificate (in case of movement from a third country).

**Elections for the FECAVA Board**

Elections for the new FECAVA Board will take place during the Council Meeting in Istanbul on 10th September 2011.

The nominations received by the Honorary Secretary under the terms of the FECAVA Constitution are:

- **President** Simon Orr
- **Vice President** Monique Megens
- **Honorary Secretary** Wolfgang Dohne
- **Honorary Treasurer** Jerzy Gawor

The Senior Vice President, Johan van Tilburg will attend Board meetings as an advisor.
FECAVA Hygiene Poster receives endorsement at the FVE Meeting in Palermo

Nancy De Briyne, Deputy Executive Director of FVE, gave the FVE Assembly meeting in Palermo an update on the development of the Community Animal Health Law. She closed her presentation explaining that a previous EU Veterinary Week had been on the subject of Biosecurity. She then presented the FECAVA Hygiene poster and invited everybody to take a copy.

Join us at the new FECAVA website – it’s yours too!

FECAVA is launching a new website, meeting the new media expectations of the 21st century. The website aims to deliver veterinary news, experiences and science in an engaging and interactive way. More and more interactive functionalities will be added over time and the first version will offer a blog, free congress podcasts and RSS (Rich Site Summary) news to the companion animal vet in Europe.

Blog

A blog or weblog is a website or part of a website where new content is frequently updated with new entries. Normally blogs handle a certain topic. The FECAVA website will have a blog that handles everything of relevance to the European companion animal veterinary practice. The blog will be a platform where vets can share experiences and discuss topics. You too can add comments to the articles.

FECAVA Congress Lectures

No time to join us in Istanbul? Many of the lectures of the 2011 FECAVA Eurocongress in Istanbul will be recorded on audio and/or video. These lectures will be accessible through the website. As a promotion for the new website, this will initially be free of charge.

Events

A dedicated page will be offered detailing all companion animal events (e.g. congresses, seminars, courses) relevant to the veterinary profession. Initially, the focus will be on international events but, over time, national events will be added.
EJCAP

From 2012 onwards, after 21 years, the European Journal of Companion Animal Practice (EJCAP) will no longer be available as a printed journal. EJCAP will maintain its scientific level but will at same time be an interactive and engaging online journal using interactive elements and rich media such as video, animation and photos. Although EJCAP online is hosted on a third party platform, it can only be accessed through the FECAVA website for members only.

Before the FECAVA Congress in Istanbul on 7th – 10th September, you will be able to join us by going to www.fecava.org (right now, you will only see our old website so don’t jump the gun!). Give your comment on a blog, watch a lecture from the 2011 FECAVA Eurocongress, keep up-to-date in “Veterinary Europe“ and let’s make it the platform for the European companion animal vet!

Monique Megens

FECAVA Honorary Secretary

The FECAVA Board joined the FVE and UEVP delegates in Palermo

The FECAVA Board had a meeting on 9th-10th June in Palermo, which gave it a chance to network with the FVE and UEVP Boards and delegates attending their assembly meetings.
All the meetings, including the FECAVA Board meeting, took place in the rather grand Palazzo dei Normanni or Royal Palace of Palermo. However, not all attendees seemed very interested in what was being discussed!

The UEVP General Assembly meeting took place the day before the FVE meeting and the items of relevance to FECAVA were discussed in both meetings and are summarised below.

An election was held for the UEVP Board and the following results were declared:

- Re-elected as President: Zsolt Pinter (Hungary)
- Re-elected as General Secretary: Andrew Robinson (UK)
- Re-elected as Treasurer: Anne Ceppi (Switzerland)
- Re-elected as Vice-Presidents: Andrew Byrne (Republic of Ireland), Thierry Chambon (France), Rens van Dobbenburgh (The Netherlands)

The FVE Assembly was opened and delegates were welcomed to Palermo, by FVE President Dr Walter Winding and Fedrazione Nazionale Ordini Veterinari Italiani President, Dr Gaetano Penocchio.
FVE Executive Director, Jan Vaarten updated the Assembly on recent FVE activities and priorities, which had included:

a. The One Health initiative.
b. Strengthening links with the medical profession.
c. The Medicines and the Medicated Feed Directives.
d. Responsible use of antimicrobials, in particular the FVE response to the amendment to the European Parliament Antimicrobial Resistance Resolution and participation in EU AMR Day.
e. Animal Welfare issues including the BEVA / FEEVA work on transporting horses, the declaration on pig castration and the work on responsible animal ownership.

He also noted that FVE has undertaken considerable work in relation to veterinary education and research, including having responded to the consultation on the revision of the Recognition of Professional Qualification Directive, worked on the European Board of Veterinary Professional Development and been a part of the CALLISTO project on the transmission of zoonotic diseases from companion animals.

The President, Walter Winding, introduced the paper ‘Report on reflections on the structure of FVE’ noting that the FVE was looking at the relationship between the FVE and its sections and branches, to establish whether working practices and collaboration could be improved. The FVE was also considering its relationship with other European organisations such as FECAVA. The paper was not proposing a change of structure, but was a reflection on how the current structure worked and could be developed.

Simon Orr, the FECAVA Vice-President, noted that FECAVA has a good working relationship with FVE and ask that it be allowed to feed into any discussions that would take place in the future.

An election was held for the position of FVE President and four positions of Vice-President and the following results were declared:

Elected as President – Christophe Buhot (France)
Elected as Vice- Presidents
   Robert Huey (UK)
   Karin Ostensson (Sweden)
   Rafael Laguens (Spain)
   Hans Joachim Gotz (Germany)
Christophe Buhot stated that it was an honour to be elected as President and informed the Assembly that during his term of office he wished to:

- Ensure that the FVE remained independent and proactive.
- Strengthen the diversity of knowledge and culture within FVE.
- Improve communications within FVE.
- Ensure the profession was recognised and the veterinary surgeon was acknowledged as the most qualified person to address animal health.

The BASAV Small Animal Veterinary Conference in Varna

The Bulgarian Association of Small Animal Veterinarians (BASAV) organized the Varna Small Animal Veterinary Conference 2011 at the Melia Grand Hermitage Hotel, Golden Sands Resort in Varna on 2nd - 5th June 2011. There were 241 delegates mainly from Bulgaria but also from Romania, Serbia, Greece, Slovenia, the Republic of Macedonia, Russia and even one delegate from Australia.

Speakers were well known experts in veterinary medicine: Dr. Elke Rudloff, USA - Emergency Medicine; Prof. Howard Seim, USA - Soft Tissue Surgery; Prof. David Senior, USA - Urology; Prof. Ron Ofri, Israel - Ophthalmology and Dr. Otto Fisher, Austria - Dermatology.

The main program was accompanied by a pre-congress day which included neurology lectures given by Dr. Petr Srenk from the Czech Republic and commercial presentations from companies.

The main sponsors of the Conference were Intervet/Schering–Plough Animal Health, Pfizer Animal Health and Eukanuba. Other exhibitors included Royal Canin, Purina, Biomed, Bayer Animal Health, Solingen and 5 local companies selling veterinary equipment and products.

On Saturday 4th June and for the first time, BASAV organized a FECAVA Day parallel to the main program. The idea was to have a practical workshop in ultrasonography and echocardiography. The two lecturers for the practical seminars on the FECAVA day were from Russia: Dr. Alexander Tkachov Jr. - Ultrasound and Dr. Andrej Kamolov - Cardiology.
The lectures were given in Russian, which was a problem for delegates who were not familiar with the language. Also, a hotel venue was probably not the best choice for such a workshop as many delegates were not able to have hands-on experience. I hope that this can be improved by developing guidelines for future FECAVA Day programs and for practical sessions which should be used by local member associations in order to deliver a high quality CE program.

As the FECAVA representative and CE coordinator for Eastern Europe I was honoured to give a presentation about FECAVA in general and also its current work.

It is clear that many delegates were familiar with FECAVA’s role in the companion animal field. Certainly, there is a lot of room for improvement and for more proactive work with small animal veterinarians and FECAVA member Associations within the Balkan region.

The BASAV organising committee should be congratulated for producing a very good scientific and social program and for setting a very popular registration fee which included attendance at all social events. A big thank you goes to all delegates who came to Varna to make it one of the best CE events in the region for 2011.

Denis Novak
SASAP President
FECAVA CE coordinator for EE
Vet 2011 – La Poste issues a Commemorative Stamp
To celebrate the 250th anniversary of the world’s first veterinary school the French post office, La Poste, has issued a commemorative stamp.

On August 4th 1761, a decree issued by Louis XV’s Council of State granted Claude Bourgelat authorisation to open a veterinary school near Lyon. This was followed by Maison d’Alfort in 1764. From that time, students from all over Europe came to study and then in turn open veterinary schools in their respective countries, most of which still exist today.

Isabelle Dietrich wins the ABCD & Merial Young Scientist Award 2011

The ABCD and Merial Young Scientist Award 2011 was presented to Isabelle Dietrich MRes, a PhD student at the Centre for Virus Research of the University of Glasgow (UK), on 25 June in Vienna, on the occasion of the congress of the International Society of Feline Medicine.
Isabelle Dietrich (28) received the award for her work on a potential gene therapy for cats infected with the feline immunodeficiency virus (FIV), based on restriction of the virus with a synthetic feline TRIM5-CypA fusion protein. “In our study, we confirmed that such a protein was highly efficient at preventing FIV infection in vitro”. A TRIM-Cyp-based gene therapy approach for FIV-infected cats “would offer an effective antiviral defense strategy with a very low potential for toxicity and the emergence of resistant viral variants, and would contribute significantly to animal welfare”, she explained.

The award was presented by Professor Marian C. Horzinek, Founding Chairman of the European Advisory Board on Cat Diseases (ABCD), who congratulated the laureate. “Isabelle Dietrich has contributed to the knowledge of feline infectious diseases by a series of studies of high quality and originality. Her research into the intracellular defense mechanism offers a novel insight into the potential control of an often devastating disease”. Isabelle had been selected “with flying colours” from a pool of “very good candidates”, he added.

Isabelle’s work was also “of major importance” in the field of human viral diseases like AIDS, recalled Jean-Christophe Thibault, Merial’s Technical Director for Biologicals (Europe, Middle East and Africa), “As a leading animal health company, Merial is very proud to be associated to this prestigious European award, in association with a recognised expert group such as the ABCD.” He also thanked the organisers of the ISFM congress, which was “the most appropriate venue for presenting this award”, created to “highlight key research in the field of feline medicine”.

The ABCD and Merial Young Scientist Award, created in 2008, is funded by Merial and is presented to a young scientist in veterinary or biomedical sciences, who has made an original contribution in the field of feline infectious diseases and/or immunology. Applicants should have published their findings in a journal listed in PubMed or Web of Science or have had them accepted by another recognised assessing body.

Candidates should be based in Europe, have completed a veterinary or biomedical curriculum, and be under 35 years of age at the time of application. Applications in the fields of both basic and applied sciences are welcome.

For further information, please contact Karin de Lange, ABCD secretary, karin.delange@abcd-vets.org
Just over a month left for the 17th FECAVA Eurocongress to take place in astonishing Istanbul. The congress preparations are underway and almost finished. We are kindly urging our fellow delegates to finalize their registrations and specially accommodation arrangements online through the congress website: www.fecava2011.org since we are running low on availability of rooms! It is not only veterinarians flowing to Istanbul for the 17th FECAVA Eurocongress, but veterinary nurses and technicians too. In line with increasing specialisation of veterinary nurses and technicians, FECAVA Eurocongress is now including sessions on neurology and dentistry.

Join us to follow the most exquisite scientific program of the last decade and also enjoying the wonderous sights of Istanbul.

Business or Leisure Or BOTH?
The 17th FECAVA Eurocongress is scientifically unmatched - featuring world renowned speakers and comprehensive coverage of Modern Veterinary Practices. This congress, however, also offers you a unique opportunity to combine business with leisure. During your stay in Istanbul, you can take one of the many city tours that are available. Or, you can customize a tour for yourself with the help of our onsite tour guides and then stroll through Istanbul on your own!
Take a few more days off work and join one of our pre or post congress tours to experience more of Turkey in the summer! Early September is a fabulous time to travel through this fascinating country. Or, you can book a room in an "all inclusive resort" in the south of Turkey and enjoy a late summer holiday with your family.

Please do not hesitate to contact us for all your needs and we will gladly get back to you with ideas and arrangements!