EHN ACTIVITIES

FEEVA GA 2013
EHN activities

- Leaflets with facts about The Horse industry and Horse activities
- Meetings with MEP horse group at the European parliament. Next: Ultimo June 2013 on equine welfare
- Participation in Equine conferences where political "view" is needed. E.g Sport Conference Dublin 2013
- EQUUS conference 2014 at WEG in normandy
- Board meetings
- General assembly 17. Oct. In Brussels
Meeting with MEP’s Jan. 24th 2013

- Horses & Research
- Leaflet presented
- Morning meeting with Vicky Ford, U.K. Conservative, member of parliament committee on research
- Lunch meeting with MEP’s
  - Three showed up, four absent
    - Julie Girling, U.K.
    - Kent Johansson, Sweden
    - Sean Kelly, Ireland (Chair, Sport Committee)
Horses & Research

The future for HORSES & RESEARCH

The equine sector is at the intersection of major societal challenges and can address climate change, sustainable agriculture, rural development and health and well-being. All themes and key areas are high on the agenda of the European research programme H2020, as well as its Regional Development programmes for after 2014.

Thus far, research on animal breeding and health has been addressed mainly through food security objectives. This takes a different turn if the equine sector is to be included in the sustainable rural landscape with diversified and non-food activities and well-being services, an increase in animal welfare, and promotion of a low carbon economy.

The H2020 programme states: “Genetic improvement of animals and their productivity traits will call for appropriate conventional and modern breeding approaches and for a better use of genetic resources. Animal health will be protected and integrated disease control measures will be further developed. Strategies for the eradication of animal diseases including scrapie will be tackled along with research on antimicrobial resistance. Studying the effects of practices on animal welfare will help meet scientific consensus.”

The equine sector should also look for support in the proposed Regulation for future European Regional Development Funds. In 2014, the EU will promote research and innovation and small companies at local level with a territorial cooperation goal. In Horses Research, productive investments as well as investments in infrastructures and equipment are needed particularly in rural areas where 25% of the funding should be spent.

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The horse industry is today an important stakeholder in the European economy and has growing significance. The industry contributes a 100 billion Euros a year economic impact and 450,000 full time jobs equivalent.

The use of the horse for pleasure and work is an important part of European history, culture and future development both in rural and urban areas. The welfare and health status of the horse is therefore a major concern for the EU economy.
Horses & Research

Equine health challenges

The equine industry is uniquely dependent on international trade. The high volume of international movements of horses and equine biological products for competition, breeding and sale creates a high risk of disease spread at local, national and international levels, threatening the economic viability of the industry as well as equine welfare. In contrast to the farming and small animal sectors, frequent movement is an essential feature of the equine industry and although the risks are partially mitigated through biosecurity programmes based on inspection and vaccinations, the intrinsic structure of the equine industry creates significant health challenges.

Surveillance of "emerging" imported/untested infectious disease threats is conducted by all Member States, however endemic disease surveillance is generally not conducted. A common European system for equine endemic disease surveillance does not currently exist, which creates a significant gap in protection.

The welfare of the horse is heavily dependent on the adequate availability of licensed medicines. The horse is regarded as a minor species, and the economic value of the equine pharmaceutical sector is small compared to both farm and small animal sectors. However, significant threats remain, particularly in relation to medicines licensing. Although there are four different routes to obtaining a license, the majority of medicines are licensed through national, rather than through centralized, mutual recognition or decentralized procedures. The result is a lack of common European registration of medicines, with most being allowed to be licensed in individual countries. "Off-label" use of medicines in horses is therefore common, and is a problem affecting horse owners, every time the veterinarian is called.

Equine research

Although the horse is technically a food producing species in Europe, the status of the horse has moved towards a sport/leisure companion in the majority of Member States. In contrast to research projects focused on food production and public health, equine research projects have increasingly been judged of secondary importance and not considered, because their impact is largely sector-specific.

 Whilst equine research may be conducted as part of multi-species research in agricultural universities and institutions, dedicated equine research with meaningful group sizes is sparse and limited all over the region. Grants for species-specific equine research have become increasingly difficult to source, although there are a few examples of ring-bred equine funding from sources such as the Swedish-Norwegian Foundation for Equine Research or the Horsemanship Training Levy Fund in the UK, in a selection of equine welfare charities. Such sources of funding are, however, few in number and present in only a small number of Member States.

Consistent funding is required for equine industry-specific research allowing four key strategic areas to maximize the benefits of the equine industry in the European Community:

1. Rural economic development
   - Research to improve the quality, marketability, health and welfare of horses to maintain their contribution to the rural economy

2. Value to society
   - Social science and economic/business development research to maintain the cultural and recreational impacts of the horse industry and generate societal goals

3. Sustainability of the equine sector
   - Research on disease control through disease surveillance and prevention of antimicrobial resistance

4. Equine food security and resilience
   - Equine feed chain surveillance research, medication control; also related issues of transport welfare


EHN presentations

- Josh Slater, Professor Royal Veterinary College, president of FEEVA: Horses and research possibilities
- Jan Varten, director FVE: Horses and medicine availability
- Pierre Lekeux, Professor University of Liege, President of Hippolia: The Equine Sector and opportunities in Horizon 2020
Josh Slater

- Significant trade and movement of horses
- Lack of endemic disease surveillance
- Lack of possibilities for research fundings
  - The horse is often forgotten!
- Four "Point of benefits from the industry"
- The horse could fit into Horizon 2020
Jan Varten

- Medicines are licenced in single countries
- Welfare of the horses is threatened
- European licencing is needed
- Responsible use of medicines for animals
  - Antimicrobials
  - Anthelmintics
Europe has
- High class institutions
- High class and dedicated scientists
- Good and sufficient infrastructure

The horse industry wants research and innovation

The horse industry in Europe needs EU funding to attract regional and private co-funding
Conclusions, Vicky Ford

- The politicians are aware of
  - The problems of legality and insurance when a veterinarian work abroad
  - The problems of reinforcing the rules when horses travel abroad and back again for competition and breeding, especially the 90 day rule.
  - Whenever new legislation is made, it may affect the horse industry unintentional
Conclusions

- Horizon 2020 is a possibility to allocate research grants for horses
- Highlight needed on:
  - Small businesses
  - Rural development
  - Regional benefits
  - Co-financing
- Examples of specific projects is needed
Horizon 2020

Experts for Horizon 2020 Advisory Groups: Call for expressions of interest

The European Commission is widening its search for experts from all fields to participate in shaping the agenda of Horizon 2020, the European Union's future funding programme for research and innovation. The experts of the advisory groups will provide high quality and timely advice for the preparation of the Horizon 2020 calls for project proposals.

The Commission services plan to set up a certain number of Advisory Groups covering the Societal Challenges and other specific objectives of Horizon 2020. To reach the broadest range of individuals and actors with profiles suited to contribute to the European Union's vision and objectives for Horizon 2020, including striving for a large proportion of newcomers, and to gain consistent and consolidated advice of high quality, the Commission is calling for expressions of interest with the aim of creating lists of high level experts that will participate in each of these groups.