

“‘Vaccination to live’ concept would improve animal welfare, food security and help combat food crises”, says IFAH-Europe at 4th EU Vet Week Conference on crisis management in the food chain

Brussels, 20 May 2011 - The European Commission Directorate-General for Health & Consumer Policy (DG SANCO) organised its 4th EU Vet Week conference. This year was dedicated to crisis management in the food chain and aimed at raising awareness on EU preparedness to manage a food safety crisis and the role of veterinarians. IFAH-Europe Managing Director Declan O'Brien was one of the speakers and called for the concept of "vaccination to live" to be applied by all.

The European Commission stressed that the measure of success for the EU should not be the number of crises it suffers in the food chain, but its ability to act quickly, decisively and effectively in the face of such crises. The conference analysed case studies on the EU's capacity to cope with past events such as the avian influenza crisis in 2004-2006 and the dioxins in Irish pork crisis in 2008.

“Beyond sharing experience and expertise, we want to ensure we have robust systems in place to reassure and give confidence to the European consumer and send a message to our trading partners that this is something we within the EU take seriously”, said EU Commissioner for health and consumer policy John Dalli.

“We can do it better in the future”, said IFAH-Europe Managing Director Declan O'Brien. “But every stakeholder along the food chain has a responsibility to ensure we enforce the concept of ‘Vaccination to live’ – I cannot over stress the fact that produce from vaccinated animals is perfectly safe. The animal health industry is committed to providing safe and effective products to protect animal welfare, food security and fight food crises and calls for the EU to ensure legislation facilitates a rapid response to the arrival of new diseases. Mass slaughter of animals must be avoided whenever possible by using vaccines as and when appropriate.

The 4th EU Veterinary Week conference this year was part of the World Veterinary Year (www.vet2011.org), a worldwide selection of events under the motto "Vets in your daily life". EU Vet Week, co-organised by DG SANCO, the Federation of Veterinarians Europe (FVE) and COPA-COGECA (the European federation representing farmers and cooperatives) is one of the highlights of the calendar of veterinary events in the EU.

- Ends -

NOTE TO EDITORS:

IFAH-Europe is the representative body of manufacturers of veterinary medicines, vaccines and other animal health products in Europe. It promotes a single market in veterinary medicines across the EU ensuring the availability of medicines to protect the health and welfare of animals. For further information on IFAH-Europe, please visit www.ifaheurope.org

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