

European conference stresses the benefits of animal health and innovation to society

IFAH-Europe's innovation conference highlighted the need for a common strategy and structural dialogue between partners to prevent and treat animal diseases at global level

Brussels, Belgium, 30 June 2006:

The IFAH-Europe conference 'The Animal Health Industry – An essential partner for Global Health', held in Brussels on 28 June 2006, gathered high level representatives from European and international organisations as well as more than 130 representatives from a wide range of stakeholders including industry, regulators, non-governmental organizations, academia and media. The participants discussed the importance of innovation in animal health and its impact on global health. They stressed the benefits that animal health products bring to society – in both developed and developing countries - and the need for a common strategy and effective cooperation between institutions and stakeholders to allow quick exchange of information and coordination in crisis situations.

With the emergence of Avian Influenza in 2005, only one of many animal epidemics that endanger human health, animal health has risen to the top of the political agenda both in Europe and internationally. The conference looked at ways to create new structures of cooperation at the European and global level and boost innovation in animal health, which will drive a global health agenda for the coming decade.

European Commissioner for Health and Consumer Protection Markos Kyprianou presented the elements of the future Community Animal Health Strategy. "When the European Technology Platform for Global Animal Health was presented in December 2004, we took the opportunity of launching, at the same time, an evaluation of the current Community Animal Health Policy (CAHP)" he said. *"We intend to enhance our approach in the animal health field in order to provide additional direction, strategy and synergy."*

Pedro Lichtinger, President of IFAH International and President of Pfizer Animal Health, pointed out that animal health innovation requires a predictable and science-based regulatory environment designed specifically for the animal health sector. He added that healthy animals are a pre-condition for safe food and referred to the important contribution that veterinary medicines and vaccines make to food safety.

Brian Clark, Chairman of IFAH-Europe talked about the importance of dialogue platforms. *“I would argue that all stakeholders and institutions active in animal health should have one major aim for the coming years: to raise awareness on the importance of animal health with political decisions-makers at the national, regional and international levels and to create effective structures of cooperation between institutions and stakeholders that allow quick exchange of information and coordination in the event of a crisis.”*, he said.

Mr Clark mentioned the European Technology Platform for Global Animal Health (ETPGAH) as an important pool of expertise comprising a wide range of organisations including industry, academia, animal welfare groups and international bodies, amongst other. *“The ETPGAH is focused on ‘how we can solve problems’ and it has found answers that are supported by all the stakeholders involved”*, he noted in reference to the Strategic Research Agenda (SRA) for animal health, which the Platform launched in May 2006.

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Notes to Editors:

IFAH-Europe (International Federation for Animal Health Europe) is the federation representing manufacturers of veterinary medicines, vaccines and other animal health products in Europe and comprises 14 Member Companies and 17 National Associations throughout Europe.

For further information on IFAH-Europe, please visit <http://www.ifaheurope.org/>

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