

World Animal Vaccination Day

Preventing disease in animals is protecting European's citizens

Brussels, 20 April 2016 – Ahead of [European Immunisation Week](#) (24–30 April) IFAH-Europe is promoting the first ever [World Animal Vaccination Day](#), an initiative of global animal medicines association HealthforAnimals and the World Veterinary Association. Vaccination for animals is not only essential for improved animal health but also for the protection of Europe's citizens from zoonoses¹ and food-borne illnesses. Animal disease outbreaks also have consequences on Europe's agricultural economy. With today's globalised trade activity and changes in climate, incidences of animal diseases not previously reported in Europe are on the increase and it is essential that preventive action be taken. One of those preventive means is vaccination of animals.

The theme of the first World Animal Vaccination Day is cats. Veterinarians regularly report that cats are often the lesser-seen patient yet vaccinations for cat diseases are essential to prevent some life-threatening diseases. "Feline Leukaemia (FeLV) is the leading viral killer of cats, with 80-90% of infected cats dying within 3-4 years. Thanks to regular widespread vaccination however less than 1-2% of healthy cats have FeLV according to [International Cat Care](#)", said IFAH-Europe Secretary General Roxane Feller.

"When it comes to success stories where animal vaccines protect public health we only need to look at the case of salmonella. In the EU, salmonella is the most frequently reported cause of food-borne outbreaks and EFSA² estimates that the overall economic burden of human salmonellosis could be as high as EUR 3 billion a year. The use of vaccines in poultry to protect against salmonella, along with other management measures saw human cases reduced by almost 50% in the EU since 2004, with the prevalence of salmonella in poultry decreasing significantly at the same time."

"IFAH-Europe fully supports the European Commission's motto that prevention is better than cure and this new World Animal Vaccination Day is an excellent initiative helping to promote the importance of vaccination in animals", concluded Roxane Feller.

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NOTE TO EDITORS:

- [World Animal Vaccination Day](#) – 20 April 2016 - is an initiative of [HealthforAnimals](#) and the [World Veterinary Association](#).
- [European Immunisation Week](#) promotes the core message that immunisation of every child is vital to prevent diseases and protect life. Its aim is to increase vaccination coverage by raising awareness of the importance of immunisation among parents and caregivers, health care professionals, policy and decision-makers, and the media.
- See also IFAH-Europe's success stories on vaccines for [Bluetongue Virus](#), [FMD](#), [Feline Leukaemia](#), [Feline Distemper](#) and [Salmonella](#).
- [IFAH-Europe](#) is the representative body of manufacturers of veterinary medicines, vaccines and other animal health products in Europe. It represents innovators and generics alike, as well as large, medium-sized and small companies. IFAH-Europe promotes a single market in veterinary medicines across the EU ensuring the availability of medicines to protect the health and welfare of animals.
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¹ - Diseases that can pass between animals and people.

² – European Food Safety Authority