



First of all, as we are still in January, I would like to wish you all a very happy and successful 2022, full of projects for our organization and above all, safe and healthy for every one of you.

In 2022, the revision of the Animal Welfare Regulations at European level will be very important for our profession. The ongoing decisions of the European Parliament regarding on-farm animal welfare is key for a successful outcome.

With VAT Directive under revision, our profession may have the opportunity to become more accessible to clients as it could give the opportunity to apply lower rates for Veterinary Medicine Products and services to live equines. The decision on whether to apply the lower rate is at the discretion of each Member State.

Also this year, we will keep a close watch on the initiatives concerning the digitisation of veterinary controls (and of the food chain) after the publication of the report on the subject during the Slovenian Presidency of the Council.

Piotr KWIECIŃSKI, UEVP President

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PRIORITY ISSUES

Latest EU institutional news

Latest developments on the CAP reform

Following the adoption by the European Parliament of the three compromise texts of the CAP reform (regulation on national strategic plans, referred to as "[NSP](#)", the [horizontal](#) regulation, and the regulation on the common organisation of the markets, known as "[CMO](#)") on **23rd November 2021**, the Council of the European Union officially approved the new regulations on **2nd December 2021**, the date on which the texts were published in the Official Journal of the European Union.

In parallel, a series of secondary legislative acts (delegated and implementing acts) have now to be voted in order to allow the implementation of the regulations, before the entry into force of the CAP reform on **1st January 2023**. Discussions in the Council's expert groups, with the European Parliament and the European Commission, began in early December and will continue throughout 2022. **Several delegated and implementing acts have recently been adopted**, including two implementing acts published in the Official Journal of the European Union on 22nd December 2021, which aim to [establish the content of the strategic plans](#) and to [set the indicators in Annex I](#) (Impact, Result, Achievement) of the NSP Regulation.

The next decisions on secondary CAP legislation are expected to be taken from **January 2022**.

The deadline for submission of NSP plans to the European Commission is **1st January 2022**. Following the assessments of the NSPs, the European Commission plans to send comment letters to each Member State from March 2022. It should also be noted that some states have indicated that they will not be able to complete their NSPs on time "for internal political reasons". This could include the Czech Republic, Germany, Romania and Bulgaria.

Update on EMA activities

Decisions of the Committee for Medicinal Products for Veterinary Use (CVMP)

The Committee for Medicinal Products for Veterinary Use (CVMP) held a [meeting](#) from 7th to 9th December 2021.

The Committee adopted two positive opinions for a type II variation application for **Bravecto** regarding the addition of a new therapeutic indication for the reduction of the risk of infection by *Babesia canis canis* via transmission by *Dermacentor reticulatus* for up to 12 weeks in dogs and for **Improvac** concerning the change of the indication by adding the suppression of oestrus in female pigs

The Committee also adopted several positive opinions for type II variation applications concerning quality-related changes for **Bravecto**, **Cytopoint**, **Meloxidyl** and **Zeleris** (subject to a work-sharing procedure), **Mhyosphere PCV ID** and **Neocolipor**. In addition, the committee adopted positive opinions for type IB variation applications concerning quality changes for **Forceris** (subject to a work-sharing procedure), **Simparica**, **Felisecto Plus**, **Simparica Trio**, **MiPet Easecto** and **Stronghold Plus** (grouped, subject to a work-sharing procedure) and **Vaxxitek HVT+IBD** (subject to a work-sharing procedure).

The Committee adopted a positive opinion recommending the extension of maximum residue limits for **toltrazuril** to poultry eggs.

The Committee adopted two separate scientific advice reports further to requests for initial advice, of which one concerned an immunological product, and one was in relation to a pharmaceutical product. The respective target species were horses and cattle.

Following three requests for classification relating to three veterinary medicinal products as intended for a limited market and for eligibility for authorisation concerning Article 23 (applications for limited market) under [Regulation 2019/6](#), the Committee classified:

- A product for dogs targeting the alimentary tract and metabolism
- A product for pigs (sows) targeting the genito-urinary system and gynaecological
- A product for rabbits for immunologicals

Regarding pharmacovigilance, the Committee reviewed the periodic safety update reports for **Bovela, CircoMax Myco, Coliprotec F4/F18, Nasym, Neptra, NexGard Combo, Porcilis Porcoli Diluvac Forte, Prevexxion RN+HVT+IBD, Profender, Reconcile** and **VarroMed**, and concluded that no further action was required.

The Committee reviewed the periodic safety update reports for **Fevaxyn Pentofel** and **Vectra 3D**, and concluded that changes to their respective product information were required.

OTHER ISSUES

Latest news on animal health

Publication of the "One World One Health" report on zoonotic diseases and foodborne outbreaks in 2020 by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) and the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC)

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) published on 9th December an [annual report on zoonotic diseases and foodborne outbreaks in 2020](#), co-authored by the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC).

The results of the [analysis](#) highlight a **significant decrease in reported zoonotic diseases in humans between 2019 and 2020**, which could vary from 7% to 53% depending on the diseases reported. This includes the most common zoonotic diseases including *Campylobacteriosis*, *Salmonellosis*, *Yersiniosis*, shigatoxin-producing *E. coli* and *Listeriosis*.

According to experts, one of the explanatory factors behind this decrease in the number of cases could be the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic in Europe. This includes changes in health care seeking behavior, restrictions on travel and events, restaurant closures, quarantines, lockdowns and other mitigating measures such as the use of masks, physical distancing and hand disinfection.

The [report](#) also looks at foodborne outbreaks in the EU, which are events where two or more people contract the same illness after eating the same contaminated food. The [paper](#) concludes that the **number of notifications of foodborne outbreaks has also decreased by 47%**. Nevertheless, *Salmonella* remains the most frequently detected agent causing about 23% of outbreaks. The most common sources of outbreaks due to salmonellosis are eggs, egg products and porc meat. The [report](#) also contains data on *Mycobacterium, bovis/caprae*, *Brucella*, *Trichinella*, *Echinococcus*, *Toxoplasma gondii*, rabies, Q fever and *tularemia*.

In addition, EFSA has published two interactive tools on foodborne outbreaks: an [interactive geographical map](#) and a [dashboard](#). The map provides background information on foodborne outbreaks, the responsible agents and the foodborne transmitters involved, while the dashboard gathers data on foodborne outbreaks collected by EFSA from EU Member States and other reporting countries since 2015.

The United Kingdom has announced mandatory microchip identification for cats

As part of its [Animal Welfare Action Plan](#), the United Kingdom has decided to make microchipping of cats mandatory. Now, all owners will have to ensure that **their pet is microchipped before they reach 20 weeks of age, and that their details are stored and updated on a pet database**. Owners who have not microchipped their cat will have 21 days to have one implanted, or risk a **fine up to £500**.

The new micro-chipping rules follow [a government consultation](#), in which **99% of respondents expressed support for the measure**.

Veterinary associations welcomed the announcement but declared that the government "*urgently needs to sort out the patchwork of pet databases that makes it difficult to trace animals*".

According to the United Kingdom's Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, **around 2.8 million of the 10.8 million pet cats in the UK are unchipped**, making it more difficult to identify owners following robberies or losses.

Indeed, the country's leading charity, named "*Cats Protection*", estimates that nearly **8 out of 10 stray cats that enter shelters are not microchipped**, as mentioned in their [2021 report](#). Faced with this observation, the British

minister in charge of animal welfare, Zac GOLDSMITH, considers that microchipping cats will help "reunite thousands of lost or abandoned animals each year".

This new microchipping requirement for cats complements other measures already taken by the UK to improve pet welfare, including [tackling puppy trafficking](#) and introducing a [new pet removal offence](#) to tackle theft. In addition, the British government has also announced a **review of the regulation of dog microchipping and related database systems** to determine whether improvements can be made.

Publication of the progress report on the digitalisation of the food chain and veterinary controls during the Slovenian Presidency in the Council

On 20th December 2021, the Council of the European Union published a [progress report](#) on the "digitisation of the food chain and veterinary controls" under the Slovenian Presidency of the Council of the European Union, which took place between July and December 2021.

Considered a priority for the Slovenian Presidency, and in line with putting digital issues on the European agenda as set out in the communications on the [European Green Deal](#) and the [Farm to Fork strategy](#), the application and impacts of digitalisation have been the subject of reflection in the Council's Working Party on Animal and Veterinary Questions (WP CVO).

In order to evaluate the different situations in each Member State, a [questionnaire](#) was developed to assess the methods of data collection, processing, analysis and storage. Divided into three parts, the first part of the questionnaire focuses on the technical aspects of data management, the second part defines the legal aspects and obstacles in national legislation, and the last part explores the level of interest of the Member States in this field. Member States were also invited to present projects related to digitisation.

According to the [responses](#), the majority of delegations (21 out of 27) supported the idea of harmonisation in data collection, storage and analysis. Indeed, the [document](#) underlines that if national authorities are proactive in their digital transition, the efforts made remain isolated which could pose problems in terms of interoperability of the systems managing the data collected. However, most delegations believe that harmonisation should not be legally binding. Despite this, the responses indicated a willingness to seek further guidance in this area. Delegations agreed that due to the extent and complexity of veterinary and food chain control systems, a progressive approach would be beneficial.

In conclusion, the [report](#) mentions that the Working Party on Animals and Veterinary Issues (WP CVO):

- would like to **continue and intensify their work** on the research and development of digital tools for use in veterinary and food chain controls ;
- considers that it is a **priority to further analyse the disparity of the different data management systems** in the European Union, as a precondition for the development of harmonised guidelines on standardised data management in the Member States ;
- requests **regular updates** from the Commission services on developments in this area ;
- Stresses the importance of **continuing the exchange of examples and best practices** between Member States regarding the digitalisation of official veterinary and food chain controls.

Latest news on animal welfare

Meeting of the European Parliament Intergroup on the Welfare and Conservation of Animals on structural infringements of Regulation 1/2005 on the transport of unweaned calves

On Thursday 16th December, the European Parliament's [Intergroup on the Welfare and Conservation of Animals](#) discussed **structural infringements of Regulation 1/2005 on the transport of unweaned calves**.

According to the figures mentioned during the exchange, approximately 1.4 million unweaned calves are transported between EU Member States each year. Following [Regulation 1/2005](#), calves may be **transported for up to eight hours from the age of 10 days and for more than eight hours from the age of 14 days**.

However, based on the [presentation](#) of the two speakers Peter STEVENSON and Caroline ROWLEY (policy advisors to *Compassion in World Farming* and founder of *Ethical Farming Ireland*), this provision is regularly infringed and unweaned calves are transported **up to 22 hours with no rest period**.

In response, Members of the European Parliament who attended the meeting supported the need to start a new reflection to move towards an "*alternative model*" and reminded the [European Commission's public consultation](#) on the review of animal welfare legislation (open **until 21st January 2022**) as a way for stakeholders to communicate on the issue.

Finally, it should be noted that MEP **Tilly METZ** (Greens/EFA, Luxembourg) has been appointed President of the Intergroup for the second half of the mandate, replacing **Anja HAZENKAMP** (GUE/NGL, Netherlands) in this position. The next meeting of the Intergroup is scheduled for **20th January 2022**.

Results of the European Commission's Animal Welfare Conference on 9th December 2021

On 9th December 2021, the European Commission organised a [high-level conference on "EU Animal Welfare - Today and Tomorrow"](#). The speakers included the European Commissioners for Health and Food Safety Stella KYRIAKIDES and Agriculture Janusz WOYCIECHOWSKI, the member of the European Parliament Norbert LINS (EPP, Germany), the Slovenian Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Jože PODGORŠEK (as representative of the rotating Presidency of the Council) as well as Dr. Jane GOODALL, whose speech highlighted the ethical aspects of animal welfare.

On this occasion, the [preliminary findings](#) of the fitness check of the current EU legislation were presented. It emerged that while the current European rules have improved animal welfare in Europe, they are becoming outdated and need to be amended to respond to future expectations and challenges. Stakeholders' views validated these conclusions.

Future policy options were also discussed as regards animal welfare labelling, animal transport, slaughter and farm level welfare, including the phasing-out of cages. The round tables focused on the approaches presented in the Commission's [inception impact assessment](#) of 6th July 2021. In combination with the [open public consultation](#) on animal welfare (which runs until 21st January 2022), the European Commission explained that this event will help it to better shape its proposal for the revision of EU animal welfare legislation, expected in **2023**.

Vote postponed in plenary session of the European Parliament on the implementation report on "on-farm animal welfare"

At the request of rapporteur Jérémy DECERLE (RE, France), the [draft resolution](#) of the implementation report on on-farm animal welfare has been withdrawn from the agenda of the European Parliament's plenary session from **13th to 16th December** in Strasbourg.

As a reminder, this [draft report](#) was [adopted](#) by the European Parliament's Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development (AGRI) (with 36 votes in favour, 5 against and 7 abstentions) on 26th October. Prior to this, the Parliament's Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (ENVI) had already delivered [its opinion](#) on 13th October.

The European Parliament could deal with the issue in plenary **in early 2022**.

Meeting of the European Ministers of Agriculture within the Council on 13th December

On 13th December 2021, the European Agriculture Ministers [held a meeting](#) to discuss the emergency plan for food safety, unfair trade practices in the food supply chain and also animal welfare.

On this occasion, the Danish delegation requested the European Commission **to include the issue of genetic selection in the revision of the animal welfare legislation**. The reason for this was the potential consequences of genetic selection techniques "*aimed at obtaining smaller hens [...] and at the same time high egg production*" as mentioned in the [Danish study](#) presented during the meeting. This demand, supported by the Danish Minister of Agriculture, was also endorsed by the German Minister of Agriculture.

In response, European Commissioner for Agriculture Janusz WOYCIECHOWSKI acknowledged that "*certain breeding techniques*" could be detrimental to animal welfare but did not confirm that this dimension would be taken into account in the revision of the legislation.

For his part, the new German Minister of Agriculture, Cem ÖZDEMİR, announced that the issue of animal welfare was one of his priorities, and explicitly mentioned his support in the [German media](#) for measures relating to compulsory labelling from 2022, the development of a "*financial system*" to support the "*transformation of livestock farms*", and even the "*end of stall farming in ten years at the latest*".

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