EU NEWS

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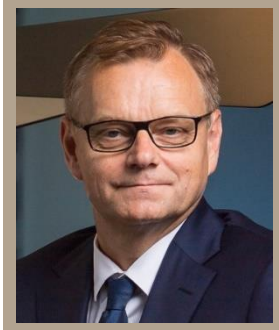
UEVP

Union Européenne des Vétérinaires Praticiens – AISBL
Union of European Veterinary Practitioners - AISBL



At this very beginning of 2021, I would like to wish you all a Happy New Year, hoping that it would be full of new achievements and safe for every one of you.

While this year starts with the effective removal of the United Kingdom from the European Union, the European institutions are still negotiating the future rules applying to the reformed Common Agricultural Policy which should contain additional measures on animal welfare. The protection of animal welfare, including during transport will also be a crucial topic this year with discussions on a European label.

UEVP will closely follow the work of the European institutions on these important issues during the upcoming year.

Piotr KWIECIŃSKI, UEVP President

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PRIORITY ISSUES

Latest EU institutional news

Latest developments on Brexit

On 31 December 2020, the European Union and the United Kingdom reached an agreement on their relationship after the Brexit. They concluded a Trade and Cooperation Agreement which sets out preferential arrangements in several areas such as trade in goods and in services, digital trade, intellectual property, public procurement, aviation and road transport, energy, fisheries, social security coordination, law enforcement and judicial cooperation in criminal matters, thematic cooperation and participation in Union programmes.

This Agreement is applicable from 1st January 2021.

In addition, in the context of Brexit, the British government envisages to ban live animals' exports in order to improve animal welfare in transport. It launched a consultation on this topic on 3 December 2020. This ban would apply to animals exported for slaughter or fattening from England and Wales.

The consultation is open until 28 January 2021.

Update on the EU long-term budget

On 16 December 2020, the European Parliament approved the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) for 2021-2027 (548 in favour, 81 against and 66 abstentions). The Council also formally adopted the EU budget on 17 December 2020.

In the European Parliament, the text was supported by a majority of Members of the European Parliament including the European People's Party (EPP), the Socialists & Democrats (S&D), the Liberals (Renew Europe), the Greens, and a majority of the European Conservatives and Reformists (ECR). MEPs also approved the mechanism for suspending funding to countries that do not respect the rule of law.

As a reminder, the MFF amounts to €1074.3 billion (2018 prices) and is associated with the €750 billion European Recovery Plan ("*Next Generation EU*"), which will enable the European Union to provide more than €1,800 billion in funding over the next 7 years.

Latest developments on the CAP's reform

CAP's transition measures

On 16 of December 2020, the European Parliament approved the regulation on the transition measures of the revised Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) for 2021 and 2022 by a large majority (653 votes in favour, 19 against and 22 abstentions).

Following the European Parliament's vote, EU Member States also approved this agreement, which allow it to enter into force.

As a reminder, this agreement extends the current CAP rules for another two years and includes 8 billion euros as part of the agricultural recovery plan.

CAP's reform

The new CAP rules which should apply after the transition period are still being negotiated between the European Parliament, the Council and the European Commission in trilogues.

During the trilogue of 17 December 2020, the principle of "reinforced eco-schemes" supported by the European Parliament has been approved. These reinforced eco-schemes should go beyond conditionality requirements and minimum thresholds required at EU level for animal welfare or plant protection.

In addition, on 18 December 2020, the European Commission published its recommendations to Member States on strategic plans. These documents assess national situations in relation to the objectives of the Green Deal and provide advice to achieving them. Member States should submit their strategic plans before the end of 2022.

Portugal, which took over the presidency of the Council from January 2021 for 6 months, aims at reaching a final agreement on the CAP reform by June of this year.

Latest news on antibiotics at EU level

Parliamentary question on antimicrobial resistance and live animal transport

On 10 December 2020, six Members of the European Parliament from the Greens group submitted a parliamentary question to the European Commission on antimicrobial use when transporting live animals.

The majority of these MEPs – Thomas Waitz (Austria), Caroline Roose (France), Manuela Ripa (Germany), Sylwia Spurek (Poland), Pär Holmgren (Sweden), Benoît Biteau (France) – are either members of the Committee of Inquiry on the Protection of Animals during Transport (ANIT) or of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (ENVI) of the European Parliament.

Among the information requested by the MEPs to the Commission, they ask whether it has evaluated the impact of live animal transport on antimicrobial use as well as whether the Commission will include antimicrobial resistance in its revision of Council Regulation (EC) 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport.

As a reminder, at the beginning of 2021, the European Commission will launch a public consultation on its evaluation of current EU rules on animal welfare, including this Council Regulation.

The European Commission's reply to the above-mentioned parliamentary question is expected in the upcoming weeks.

Update on the 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 8 to 10 December 2020.

The Committee adopted a positive opinion for Solensia (*frunevetmab*) from Zoetis Belgium SA concerning a marketing authorization application.

The Committee adopted positive opinions on type II variation applications for Circovac, Innovax-ILT, Galliprant and Ubac concerning quality-related changes.

The Committee adopted by 2 positive opinions for Evalon and Lefifend concerning marketing authorisations.

The Committee concluded the referral procedure for Adjusol and its associated names (*sulfadiazine and trimethoprim*) from Virbac. The Committee agreed harmonised product information for the concerned products and adopted by consensus an opinion concluding that the marketing authorisations of the concerned products should be varied in order to amend the product information accordingly.

The Committee agreed to revise the current entry for propylene carbonate in the list of substances considered as not falling within the scope of Regulation (EC) No 470/2009 under the heading of excipients and adopted a revised list.

The Committee adopted 2 scientific advice reports further to requests for initial advice, of which one concerned an immunological and one a pharmaceutical product.

The Committee adopted a reflection paper on dose review and adjustment of established veterinary antibiotics in the context of SPC harmonization. This reflection paper proposes non-experimental approaches for dose review, and for evaluating the consequences for withdrawal periods, target animal safety and environmental risk assessment. The aim is to facilitate the improvement of Summaries of Product Characteristics for established veterinary antibiotics in the EU in circumstances where new studies are not feasible.

OTHER ISSUES

Latest news on animal welfare

EU Member States supports an EU-wide animal welfare label

On 15 December 2020, during the last Council meeting of 2020, EU ministers for Agriculture unanimously adopted the German presidency's conclusions on an EU animal welfare label.

On this topic, Member States ask the Commission to present a non-mandatory system going beyond the current EU legal requirements on animal welfare.

At this meeting, Commissioner for Agriculture Janusz Wojciechowski, announced that in 2021 the European Commission would launch an evaluation of the labels already in place in some Member States.

Parliamentary question on the removal of animal use in innovation

On 18 December 2020, 36 Members of the European Parliament submitted a parliamentary question for oral answer to the European Commission.

These MEPs are from various political groups and include several members of the Committee of Inquiry on the Protection of Animals during Transport (ANIT) of the European Parliament, such as Tilly Metz (Greens/EFA, Luxembourg) and Anja Hazekamp (GUE/NGL, The Netherlands), respectively Chair and Vice-Chair of the ANIT Committee.

MEPs essentially question the European Commission on its ambitions to reduce and eliminate the use of animals in research, testing and education.

The Commission's oral answer is expected in the upcoming weeks.

Latest news on animal health

European Commission's initiative on the integrated management system for official controls

On 22 December 2020, the European Commission launched an initiative which aims at specifying and clarifying existing procedures on how integrated management system for official controls (IMSOC) works. This initiative allows stakeholders to provide feedback to the Commission's draft act on this topic.

IMSOC comprises several EU information systems which enable EU Member States to exchange information on official controls of food, animals and plants in order to prevent food fraud.

The European Commission intends to amend its Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/1715 and focuses among others on the system for notifying and reporting information on animal diseases (ADIS) and Trade Control and Expert System for exchanging data, information and documents (TRACES).

Concerning veterinarians' practice, the Commission's initiative will allow them, along with official plant health officers and certifying officers, to use electronic signatures in electronic common health entry documents (CHEDs) and certificates with lower identity assurance levels and without recording timestamps.

The feedback period on the European Commission's draft act is open until 19 January 2021.

Animal health Europe releases a report benchmarking the EU Regulatory system for veterinary medicines

On 17 December 2020, Animal health Europe published a report benchmarking the EU Regulatory system and comparing it with regulatory systems from non-EU countries for veterinary medicines.

The key findings and recommendations of the organization are among others, the following:

- The need for quicker approval times for certain vaccines;
- The growing cost of pharmacovigilance systems is becoming a serious challenge;
- There are concerns that efforts by the European Commission to reduce administrative burden through Regulation (EU) 2019/6 will be eroded when implemented by the EU Member States;
- Risk assessment procedures for environmental safety and antimicrobial resistance proportionate for the veterinary medicinal products sector should be continued;
- Greater harmonisation within the EU regulatory network should also be pursued.

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