



Minutes FEEVA GA October 2022

Thursday 27th October 9:30-17:00 CET, Rome



Welcome

Julius Peters, FEEVA President, opened the meeting and welcomed all the FEEVA delegates, thanking them for joining the FEEVA GA in Rome. A special welcome to the guests; **Caterina Termine** (FEI), **Giovanbattista Guadagnini** (UEVP), **Mette Uldahl** (FVE), and the speakers **Huw Griffiths** (UK) and **Karen E. Wolfsdorf** (US).

Julius Peters announced the apologies received from the following member's associations: Belgium, Norway, Romania, and Switzerland.

Rodolfo Gialetti, SIVE president welcomed all FEEVA members to Rome, wishing them a fruitful meeting and a pleasant staying in Rome. He invited all presents to join the SIVE congress and the Internal Medicine congress in the following days.



Greetings from UEVP

Giovanbattista Guadagnini, UEVP Vice president, brought greetings from UEVP, mentioning the important contribution of FEEVA as a UEVP member.



Update FVE activities ([presentation](#))

Mette Uldahl, FVE vice president, brought greetings from the FVE board and presented the latest activities of FVE.

She highlighted the work of FVE regarding the problems with SPCs EU regulations, the potential of notifiable diseases alert system, animal welfare laws and regulations across Europe, and about Veterinary pressure, transparency, integrity, and conflict of interests. She concluded by asking the member associations for their contribution to the FVE Diversity, Equity & Inclusiveness [Campaign](#).



- **Evija Liepiņa** commented on the importance of teaching young vets how to deal with pressure, considering that the Veterinary profession is high in suicide rates and with big depression tendency
 - **Joe Collins** referred to the EU Regulation 2019/6, Article 106 about the use of medicines and conforming to SPCs and queried whether it is in direct conflict with the cascade rules defined by the same regulation.
 - **Guinevere Hørning** commented that instead of using a human licensed product, we need to use a licensed product that comes from other countries, according to the EU regulation
 - **Claire Scicluna** commented that society changes for example the request from the client for vet availability. Veterinarians are trying to adapt to that. she suggests finding a way to make clients understand the real effort and job that a vet is doing.
 - **Mette Uldahl** agreed that we should reach out to clients and make them understand better the vet work.
- Regarding the use of SPCs and cascade, she clarified that if there is no licensed medicines adjusted for the vet diagnosis or the relevant species, then the vet can use cascade, but if there are licensed medicines, they must be used.

FEI activities ([presentation](#))

Caterina Termine from FEI expressed her gratitude to FEEVA on behalf of FEI, for inviting her to the assembly and for the important collaboration between FEEVA and FEI.

She told the members about FEI's activities, mentioning that FEI is the International governing body of the equestrian sport working on Equine Welfare, Fair Play, and Public Perception & SLO. She highlighted the workaround for infectious diseases such as EI, and EHV1. She mentioned the projects who have been completed as Climate Study, Pony Measuring, the Rules revision, and the New Education System, and the launched and planned projects such as Equipment Expert Group, the Biosecurity training course, the Horse Movement, the Prohibited Substances Campus course, Review of oral cavity examination systems and more. She concluded by inviting all the national associations who might be interested in the Biosecurity training course to contact her.



- **Heidi Kiiskinen** asked about the vaccination schedule for Influenza,
- **Caterina Termine** answered that it should be within 7 months (with no minimum time between them)
- **Guinevere Hørning** asked to explain what will happen after the 1st of April regarding the vaccination program since the EU regulations and the SPCs are contrasting regarding the vaccinations.
- **Caterina Termine** answered that she will be informed and reply about it.

Disease Surveillance Working Group - DSWG ([Presentation](#))

Donald Collins, presented the Disease Surveillance WG Objectives and activities, mentioning the Education / Information Sharing as the different campaigns (WNV Campaign, EHV Campaign) and the cooperation with the different associations (WOAH, Respe, FEI). He gave special attention to the meeting held in Zagreb, Croatia in October this year. For 2023 the chosen topic is Pastern Dermatitis mentioning that there was an outbreak in Scandinavia and this can be a likely future disease therefore we need to be proactive and not reactive. He emphasized that cooperation is one of the chief objectives of this organization, especially referring to the



collaboration between FEI and FEEVA in the long-term resolution of the EHV outbreak. He commended all the ideas and information exchange that happened during the last year as a collaborative effort to reach a minimum collateral spread of diseases.

- *Miguel Llorca* commented the WG is in contact with Eva Camara, the one responsible for equine matters in the EC, and, during the last year, contact was established with FAO.

Medicines Working Group - MWG ([Presentation](#))

Andrea Brignolo presented the work that has been done in the Medicine Working Group (MWG).



He briefly informed the members about the EU veterinary medicines [database](#), the new EU Regulation 2022/1255 designating antimicrobials or groups of antimicrobials reserved for the treatment of certain infections in humans, and the new EU regulation 2019/6 regarding veterinary products.

- *Claire Scicluna* commented that she is continuing her work for years on phenylbutazone pushing forward the idea to have it on the essential list of medicines with 6 months of waiting time before slaughtering. She asked the members to lobby for keeping this medicine in their parliaments emphasizing this is a welfare issue, it is an effective and cheap drug.
- *Miguel Llorca* asked what is the position of EMA.
- *Claire Scicluna* answered that the French National Pharmacology Group is also pushing EMA.

Horse Welfare Working Group HW WG ([Presentation](#))

Anette Graf presented the members and the activities of the HW WG, highlighting the FEEVA and FVE statement on PMSG production from mares and the monitoring of the situation, telling about the Position paper about Animal welfare implications of animal behaviour and training that in its second consultation process and about the Position paper of Management and control of horse welfare in Equestrian sport in the process of the first consultation. She added the ongoing and future activities of the group as the Re-wilding project, Monitoring EU-Commission activities, and cooperation with other organizations. She closed by asking every country member that still doesn't have a representative in the extended HW WG, to join.

Also, for this WG sponsors are being searched and any suggestions would be welcome.



- *Joe Collins* commented as the chair of the Voluntary Initiative on Equidae (VI-E) under the EU Platform on Animal Welfare, that the VI-E had received an invitation from the Animal Welfare Unit at the EC to meet in order to engage with the development of critically important European legislation. We currently have an EU Directive on the Welfare of Animals kept for Farming Purposes and it seems to be the intention that the EU will develop a new Regulation on the Welfare of Animals Kept for Commercial Purposes, which would also include not only horses destined for the food chain but also horses kept for competition, leisure and sporting purposes. As well, he noted that the profession needs to pay attention and be involved in the early stages of developing new EU legislation..
- *Mette Uldahl* commented that she will meet the Canadian and American Associations that are looking into making a joint position paper to recommend welfare impositions to PMSG production, as South America is having the same problem as Iceland.
- *Miguel Llorca* commented that we cannot be against the use of mares for PMSG otherwise we should explain why we use it for Hyperimmune serum for vaccines. The general public should be informed that this kind of production needs to keep happening, keeping up with the welfare systems.
- *Anette Graf* clarified that FEEVA and FVE are not against PMSG production itself, only want to make sure it's done under proper welfare conditions

- *Miguel Llorca* commented on the joint paper about animal behavior and training. He said that FEEVA should not mix and let conducted in such a position with small animals since they have much less complicated processes when training, especially when compared to horses, and therefore should not be represented in the same position paper.
- *Mette Uldahl* explained that the joint paper was planned years ago in order to change the perspective of training in general principals as negative vs positive reinforcement. The HW WG will produce one for horses after the voting of the joint one

FEEVA FEEVA activities & WVA matters ([Presentation](#))

Heidi Kellokoski-Kiiskinen presented the current activities of FEEVA giving for example the Quality of Equine Education-Analysis paper which is been elaborated together with FVE. She talked about the Ukrainian situation and the involvement of FEEVA in the Ukraine Equestrian Charity foundation. She asked the members to consider a donation from the associations and from each association member in order to help them in bringing the hay to the horses.



- *David Rendle* commented that it is a tricky situation and we need to deal with caution and be sure that the help will reach the right people. He mentioned that BEVA was approached by a charity foundation that they found was not reliable but they have been working with different welfare working groups to help Ukraine.

- *Heidi Kiiskinen* clarified that there is an arrangement for buying the hay. It is reserved for the horses but they need the money to buy and transport it.

- *Thibault Frippiat* asked what the future of these horses is and if this is a good/necessary investment, because if giving them hay to prevent starvation in winter 2022-2023 is a good short-term solution. He raised an issue regarding the long-term situation for example the following winters.

- *Mette Uldahl* said that besides the donation of hay, potentially, veterinarians could help in other ways as euthanasia of a percentage of the horses needs to be considered when the animals cannot survive through the winter, and also slaughtering a percentage of these horses to the human diet could be an option.

- *Heidi Kiiskinen* commented that the concern about the reliability of the foundation was discussed in the last board meeting, and they will keep on checking the transparency of the process and how the hay will be distributed. She believes we should focus on how to help the situation immediately.

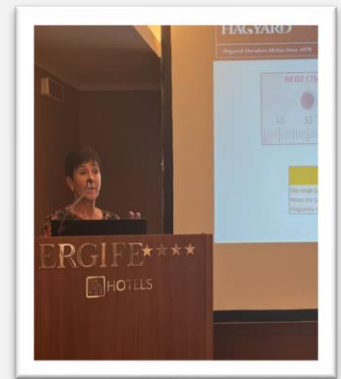
Finances ([Presentation](#))

Andrea Brignolo, FEEVA treasurer, presented the finance balance of the FEEVA account, showing an income of € 12.267,00 euros in 2021 and costs of € 8.333,68 which brings to a positive balance. He continued by giving detailed figures for the expenses and mentioning that the membership fee invoices for 2022 are being sent later this year. He also mentioned that the missing payment from 2021 will be sent soon to the members.



'Changes in Equine Reproduction: Have they been good or bad for the horse industry?' ([presentation](#))

Karen Wolfsdorf, presented the goals in Equine reproduction and the reasons why have changes occurred. Among the different changes, she highlighted the increased demand for high performance of stallions, the access stallions in different parts of the world, and the decreased fertility in the mare for age or endometritis problems. One of the most important reasons is the continuing in performing while reproducing. She mentioned some of the useful solutions for mare fertility problems and of the factors that affecting success rates. She discusses the trend techniques as embryo transfer and cryopreservation of embryos and the advantages of artificial insemination. She concluded by bringing to discussion the fact that the breeding is for performance and not for fertility and also, the fact that the decreased fertility does not prevent future progeny.



- *Thibault Frippiat* asked about a few ethical concerns and recommendations for the welfare of the mares in the OPU procedure
- *Karen Wolfsdorf* answered referring to a paper presented during the AAEP, about the welfare of the mares during the post-procedure for care and management and the return to training of the post-OPU mares
- *Joe Collins* asked whether vets unintentionally contribute to the production of poor-quality mares and the perpetuation of any genetic issues through assisted reproduction techniques?
- *Karen Wolfsdorf* answered that veterinary doctors can always recommend clients to look at some specific problems when they buy a mare, but that doesn't necessarily mean that they will listen to the veterinary advice. Also, we lack evidence on if some diseases have genetic markers or if there is only a predisposition for them (it can be an individual characteristic)
- *Guinevere Hørning* asked if have been seen changes in behavior for embryo transfer mares after few weeks time
- *Karen Wolfsdorf* answered that behavioral questions in ET mares were not observed
- *Evija Liepiņa* expressed her concern about the use of antibiotics in the post-breeding endometritis.
- *Karen Wolfsdorf* answered that 90% of the mares get clean alone and only in 10% she observed a persistent inflammation, the use of antibiotics is minor and has been used after culture and sensitivity.

‘Recruitment and Retention in the Equine Veterinary Profession’ **(Presentation)**

Huw Griffiths showed the results of the BEVA survey regarding Recruitment and Retention, which was done in June 2022 and compared with the previous survey from 2018. The survey included questions about the employment status of veterinary surgeons and veterinary nurses, resulting in vets working hours being over the normal working hours in society and they have fewer hours of sleep per 24 hours. Continuing Professional Development (CPD) possibilities and CPD Financial Support and increasing but not significantly. The salary issues in the post-Brexit / covid period caused by increased cost of living and decreased real terms of salaries. One of the questions in the survey about employment history addressed understanding job satisfaction and understanding the drivers planning to stay (location, team, family) in the current position or to change it (work-life balance, family, salary). More questions in the survey about recruitment resulted that recruitment was difficult of an experienced veterinary surgeons and also for the newly qualified veterinary surgeon. Also, the retention topic appeared to be a problem where the answers about indications of what would need to change pointed out the need for a better salary and a better work-life balance. The strategy that was taken in BEVA was meant to support the members with CPD, congress, and discussion forums, to work on student engagement (vet school tours), and client education (better communication). To improve the management - good practice as Health and well-being, Diversity, Equality, and fair treatment as well as workload and flexibility, Reward and Recognition.



He concluded with the take-home message “Make the work fit the workforce, not the workforce fit the work”

- *Sabine Kästner* asked why students give up on the way
- *Huw Griffiths* answered that the negative influence should be changed and to stop thinking that only horse people can be good horse vets
- *Karen Wolfsdorf* commented that indeed the salaries gap is huge between small animals and horses, another point is that the clients need to understand the real cost of the work
- *Diana Teixeira* mentioned that new graduate students should be more involved and participate in this kind of discussion. She added that the common attitude of not paying new graduates in private practice is wrong

- Andrea Brignolo commented that it is a problem to pay someone who does not have any knowledge or experience, and that also happened in other professions, not only in veterinary (e.g engineering).
- *Guinevere Hørning* commented that a research institute made a study on social questions of being in the veterinary profession. Equine vets were found to be happier but said that many students shift to other fields where the salaries are higher
- *Mette Uldahl* commented that part of the business problem is that we think that the client cannot pay. She also added that not paying for new graduates should be unacceptable, the system should be changed.
- *Claire Scicluna* commented that our responsibility is to be good clinicians and to make the right necessary exams
- *Julius Peters* agreed that the expectations of the young vets are far from the real daily work,
- *Huw Griffiths* answered that the solution could be to go to see the practice before joining the vet school

Any Other Business from members

- *Julius Peters* asked the members delegates to point out new members in the PPE Working Group and the Medicines Working Group
- *Julius Peters* told the member's delegates that FEEVA's next GA will be in Poland, and reminded them that if they are interested to host the GA in 2024/2025 they are welcome to send an email and the details will be discussed further with the interested associations.
- *Claire Scicluna* raised a concern about the use of hormones in sports mares, mentioning that in France the use of @Altrenogest is very high
- *Karen Wolfsdorf* answered that a long term use of P4 did not show any problem, but as veterinarians we should keep the owner aware that the reasons for behavioral problems are much wider than only the ovaries.
- *Joe Collins* said that on the matter of PMSG/eCG production from mares, the MEP InterGroup on Animal Welfare and Conservation is organizing a presentation from AWF on the 15th of December. He added that equine veterinarians need to be concerned about this hormone production - from mares but largely for use in the pig industry. The images and video-footage regarding this production do not make for comfortable viewing, while, on the other hand, synthetic methods for producing analogues are receiving attention from concerned parties.

Thank you and goodbye

Julius Peters closed the meeting by thanking all participants and wishing them a pleasant staying in Rome.