

Joint AnimalhealthEurope, FECAVA, FVE press release

World Animal Vaccination Day: prevention is better than cure

Brussels, 20 April 2020

The exceptional circumstances we are finding ourselves in at the moment are highlighting in no uncertain terms the importance of effective vaccination programmes - both in humans and in animals.

As we unite to ensure a continuum of care for animals during this crisis, so we come together for World Animal Vaccination Day, which this year falls on the first day of European Immunisation Week. Companion animal vets, veterinary associations and the animal health industry in Europe emphasize, more than ever, the importance of the ‘*Prevention is Better than Cure*’ approach for improved animal health management and a greater One Health implementation.

Stopping disease in humans by preventing disease in animals underpins the concept of “One Health”, an approach to public health that recognises the links between animals, people and the planet. By identifying disease threats as early as possible, health authorities can take pre-emptive action, such as vaccination where it exists, tighter biosecurity controls on farms or at food markets, or public awareness campaigns for both companion animals and livestock.

FVE Chair, Rens van Dobbenburgh, speaking on behalf of the Federation of Veterinarians of Europe commented: *“Vaccination is essential. It prevents, controls and eradicates diseases in both animals and people. Veterinary vaccination is not simply a key tool for improving animal health and welfare, it is an integral part of overall health plans against infectious diseases and a part of rapid-response plans to prevent the spread of emerging infectious diseases. With today’s globalised travel and trade activity and climate change, animal diseases not previously reported in Europe are on the increase and it is essential that preventive action be taken.”*

Roxane Feller, AnimalhealthEurope Secretary General stated: *“The spread of animal diseases, like African Swine Fever, reminds us how necessary it is to continue researching solutions to protect animals against illness. Animal disease outbreaks not only affect animal populations, but they also have consequences on food production and farmers’ livelihoods, sometimes even on human health. Vaccination helps to decrease animal suffering, prevent transmission to other animals or people, and avoid production losses.”*

Speaking for the companion animal veterinary federation in Europe, FECAVA President Denis Novak stated: *“The prevention is better than cure approach is particularly important for companion animals. These are the animals that share our lives and our homes with us. Their protection through regular vaccination against advised diseases is a key part of responsible pet ownership. Vaccination ensures our pets and those surrounding them enjoy a disease-free environment, offering pet-owners peace of mind. We fully support the core message of European Immunisation Week that immunisation is vital to prevent diseases and protect life.”*

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NOTES TO EDITORS:

World Animal Vaccination Day - 20 April - is an initiative of [HealthforAnimals](#) and the [World Veterinary Association](#), occurring annually ahead of [European Immunisation Week](#).

[AnimalHealthEurope](#) represents 13 of Europe's leading manufacturers of animal health products and 17 national associations. It represents innovators and generics alike, as well as large, medium-sized and small companies.

FECAVA - [Federation of Companion Animal Veterinary Associations](#) represents more than 25,000 companion animal veterinarians in 40 European countries.

FVE - [Federation of Veterinarians of Europe](#) is an umbrella organisation of veterinary organisations from 38 European countries.