



# FECAVA

The Federation of European Companion  
Animal Veterinary Associations

Newsletter  
December 2008  
nr. 6

## New continuing education system for practitioners



President of FECAVA,  
Andrew Byrne

Striving to improve the quality of the practice of companion animal veterinary medicine and surgery is one of FECAVA's key objectives, and education is the fuel that achieves this outcome.

But how can we encourage and facilitate structured continuing education for practitioners that are achievable with appropriate recognition?

Veterinarians in practice need to advance their knowledge and skills and within group practices individuals may select personnel areas of clinical interest so that the practice as a whole can advance in several fields. This is not specialization - practices who advance their knowledge push their frontiers further and so recognise the importance of doing the best for their patients which means referring to a specialist when that is appropriate.

To be a specialist one must follow a particular rigorous path of professional development within an appropriate clinical environment leading to the undertaking of diplomate qualifications. It is usually not possible for veterinarians in practice to follow this route while remaining in full time practice, and yet there is a professional desire and a need for continuing education that is focused in an area of interest.

In order to explore ways of facilitating and encourage veterinarians in practice who wish to follow a structured continuing education path FECAVA has convened a postgraduate education working group, which reports to the FECAVA Council. One of the first outcomes of this group is the proposal to collaborate with our colleagues in FVE and UEVP to form a continuing education accreditation committee.

This committee will have three members from FECAVA, three from the statutory bodies and three from FVE/UEVP/ECCVT. This accreditation committee will be called the "European veterinary accreditation (committee) of Continuing Education (EVACE). The object is to develop and test through a pilot object an accreditation system that will facilitate and quality assure structured continuing education for practitioners. We are in the early stages of this project and there is plenty work to be done.

This is a part of FECAVA's strong commitment to continually advance the quality of the practice of veterinary care through education.

If you have any comments or suggestions, please contact your association's FECAVA Director or any FECAVA Board member. See [www.fecava.org](http://www.fecava.org) for e-mail addresses. Ideas and comments is what will keep FECAVA active and relevant.

*Andrew Byrne*  
President of FECAVA



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## Veterinary Week 2008



**EU Veterinary Week 2008**  
Animals + Humans = One health

For the first time the European Commission (DG SANCO - Directorate General for Health and Consumer Affairs) and FVE (the Federation of Veterinarians of Europe) are organizing the EU Veterinary Week. The objective is to heighten the awareness of the role that vets play in animal and human health.

The week will promote the EU Community Animal Health Strategy, together with the One-Health concept. The aim of the EU Community Animal Health Strategy is to provide the best possible framework for animal disease control in Europe, based on the principle that "prevention is better than cure". The One Health concept arose from the realization that human health and animal health are inextricably linked and that a holistic approach is needed to understand, to protect, and to promote the health of all species.

### Biosecurity

The EU Veterinary Week was launched with a conference on biosecurity in Brussels on November 10th. There were over 400 delegates drawn from a wide variety of sectors including, veterinarians, farming organizations, food safety scientists, members of the medical profession and EU Commission members.

The importance of food security, welfare, health and biosecurity was discussed at the opening conference. The global demand for animal protein is expected to increase by 50% by 2020. Increased and rapid transport of people and animals including pet animals means that carriers of disease can move between countries within incubation periods making surveillance difficult.

60 % of human pathogens originates in animals and 75% of emerging diseases are zoonotic. Thus, communication and networking between the veterinary, medical farming and scientific communities is important.

### Road shows

Following the launch of the EU Veterinary Week it is intended to hold road shows in member states using the Veterinary Week Bus and associated promotional material. Tools include a biosecurity calendar to be distributed to every farmer in the EU by their vet, and poster campaigns to alert travellers to the requirements for authorization to move pet animals and transport of food items.

### EJCAP special issue on zoonoses

DG SANCO is very interested in the EJCAP special issue that is devoted to zoonoses that is to be published in December this year. The on line format was found to be very attractive as it would make the information very accessible, and it may be possible to produce CD ROM versions.

Log on to [www.one-health.eu](http://www.one-health.eu) to read more about the EU Veterinary Week.

*Andrew Byrne*  
FECAVA President



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## FECAVA supports continuing education in member countries

The FECAVA Continuous Education Project has existed for more than 6 years and mainly concerns the Eastern European countries, which can apply for support from FECAVA. For any event supported by the FECAVA CE project, the FECAVA logo should be printed on the cover page and shown on the introductory slide. Many of the events are visited by FECAVA officers, Directors and some offer an opportunity to hold FECAVA Council meetings (e.g. Krakow 2005, Istanbul 2007).

In 2008, the following 9 countries applied for a FECAVA CE grant: Bulgaria, Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia, FYROM, Montenegro, Poland, Serbia and Slovenia. 10 educational events were organized with the participation of 1147 delegates.

Multidisciplinary and more specific conferences and workshops were organized covering most of the clinical disciplines: physiotherapy and rehabilitation, imaging, cardiology, dermatology, marketing, veterinary nurse education, exotic animal medicine, oncology, pediatrics and neonatology, endocrinology, ophthalmology, surgery and orthopedics.

32 European speakers were presenting contemporary veterinary medicine under the FECAVA banner.

*Jerzy Gawor*  
FECAVA Treasurer



Poland and Serbia were among the countries that received grants from the FECAVA Continuous Education Project in 2008.

## FECAVA develops a new website

At the recent FECAVA Council meeting in Dublin, it was decided that FECAVA will develop a new website. Ideas and thoughts about the new website should be sent to Executive Assistant Astrid Bjerås, [astrid.bjerkas@gmail.com](mailto:astrid.bjerkas@gmail.com)



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## New FECAVA Day proposed

The FECAVA Eurocongress is held once a year. Every second year it is held together with the WSAVA World Congress.

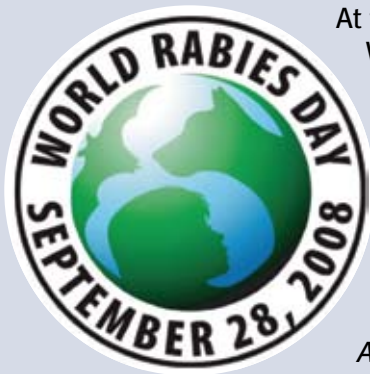
The FECAVA Eurocongress concept is by essence a means to make national congresses better known to other associations and their members. In doing this, the national congresses increase their size and audience, but keep their own style.

In addition to the FECAVA Eurocongress, FECAVA now encourages national congresses to organize a FECAVA Day as part of their congress. The purpose of the FECAVA Day is to promote FECAVA to national members and all delegates at national congresses.

Guidelines for the FECAVA Day were introduced at the FECAVA Council meeting in August and will be voted on and adopted in the spring.

*Astrid Bjerckås*  
Executive Assistant

## FECAVA wants to support the World Rabies Day



At the last FECAVA Council meeting in August, Ray Butcher gave a presentation on the World Rabies Day. The mission of World Rabies Day is to raise awareness about the impact of human and animal rabies, how easy it is to prevent it, and how to eliminate the main global sources. World Rabies Day events are occurring throughout the world. Log on to [www.worldrabiesday.org](http://www.worldrabiesday.org) to find out more.

At the Council meeting in August FECAVA Past President Didier Carlotti proposed that FECAVA should be a supporter of World Rabies Day. The proposal was seconded by the President and accepted unanimously by the Council.

*Astrid Bjerckås*  
Executive Assistant



## Veterinary nurse education across Europe

The Board of ACOVENE, the Accreditation Committee for Veterinary Nurse Education, met in Palma in October to review the self-assessment reports from the accredited teaching institutions. The meeting was hosted by Jose Marin from AVEPA, the Spanish Small Animal Veterinary Association.

The aim of ACOVENE is to monitor and accredit education for veterinary nurses (technicians). This means that potential employers can be assured of veterinary nurses who are educated to a known standard. This, in turn, should facilitate greater ease of employment across national boundaries within the EU.

So far, accreditation has been granted the following teaching institutions: Warwickshire College (UK), Groenhorst College (the Netherlands), Katholieke Hogeschool Kempen (Belgium), Swedish University of Agricultural Science (Sweden), Hanseberg (Denmark), School of Agriculture, Food Science & Veterinary Medicine (Ireland), Abivet (Italy), Norwegian School of Veterinary Science (Norway) and Institute Bonaparte (France).

A recent survey through FECAVA showed that in 29 responding countries, veterinary nurse (technician) education was provided in 22. In a majority of cases the education was provided by the public school system at different levels.

The fact that so many countries provide this education and that it is mostly within the national school or university system, shows that this education is indeed considered significant to the veterinary profession and thus to animal welfare.

Log on to [www.acovene.com](http://www.acovene.com) to read more about ACOVENE.

*Ellen Bjerås*  
ACOVENE Board member  
representing FECAVA

COUNTRY	NURSE EDUCATION?	PLANNED?	ACOVENE ACCREDITED?
Austria	Y		N
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Y		N
Belgium	Y		Y
Czech Republic	Y		N
Cyprus	N	N	
Denmark	Y		Y
Estonia	N	Y	
Finland	Y		N
France	Y		Y
FYROM	N	N	
Germany	Y		N
Greece	N	N	
Hungary	N	Y	
Ireland	Y		Y
Latvia	Y		N
Lithuania	Y		N
Luxembourg	N	N	
Malta	N	N	
Montenegro	Y		N
Netherlands	Y		Y (one)
Norway	Y		Y
Serbia	Y		N
Slovakia	Y		N
Slovenia	Y		N
Spain	Y		N
Sweden	Y		Y
Switzerland	Y		N
Turkey	Y		N
UK	Y		Y

A recent survey through FECAVA showed that 22 out of 29 responding countries provide veterinary nurse (technician) education.



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## How to assess practical skills in veterinary nursing education?

FECAVA is a partner in the PEPAS project, which is part of the European Credit System for Vocational Educational and Training project (ECVET project).

The aim of the ECVET project is to develop systems to aid recognition of knowledge, skills and competence within the EU in order to facilitate movement of labour between the member states. The challenge is how to recognise and validate learning outcomes acquired in another member state. The ECVET project seeks to achieve comparability and compatibility rather than harmonization, because it is recognised that there is diversity within education in order to meet regional needs.

Educational outcomes will be described in terms of units of learning outcomes and will operate within a voluntary framework. The aim of the EU Commission is that ECVET is implemented by 2012.

### Clinical examinations

The specific aim of PEPAS is to develop a pan-European system for objective structured clinical examinations, a so-called OSCE. FECAVA will act as an external evaluator and will represent the veterinary profession in the PEPAS project. Ellen Bjerkås, Jose Marin and Andrew Byrne represent FECAVA.

An OSCE is a practical test in which the student carries out a practical task. The OSCE usually comprises several short tasks, each evaluated by a different individual trained examiner. Various marking systems and statistical analysis can be employed to ensure fairness and objectivity as well as providing valuable feedback for educators and the profession in regard to areas that may require special attention in teaching. An OSCE exam tests practical skills in a practical setting and

augments other examinations that assess knowledge (written and oral examination) and team work (employment based assessment).

OSCE have been used in the medical profession for some time and the UK Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS) has been using such a system since 2005. RCVS will act and as a project partner in the PEPAS project and will allow its system to be used as example upon which a European version can be developed.

The PEPAS project held its first meeting in London at the RCVS building on 30th and 31st October. FECAVA is a partner in the European PEPAS project and will play a key role in this project and will keep members updated on progress.

*Andrew Byrne*  
*President of FECAVA*



FECAVA is part of a project that aims to develop a pan-European system for clinical examinations. Photo: Astrid Bjerkås



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## 50 years of service to companion animal vets in France

2008 is a special year for the French Companion Animal Veterinarians (AFVAC), celebrating 50 years of service to French companion animal vets.

The concept of European unity has always been championed by AFVAC. Didier Carlotti, the present AFVAC President, was instrumental in founding FECAVA some 19 years ago. AFVAC, then called CNVSPA, was one of the 13 founder member associations of what is now our 36 member Federation.

Next year AFVAC will start its second 50 years by hosting the FECAVA Eurocongress in Lille.

*Keith Davis*  
Editor of *EJCAP*



The French Companion Animal Veterinarians (AFVAC) recently celebrated its 50th anniversary in Strasbourg. President of AFVAC, Didier Carlotti and his wife Debora and WSAVA President David Wadsworth (right).



Photo: Pixelio.de

## FECAVA/WSAVA/BSAVA Congress 2012 in Birmingham

The joint FECAVA/WSAVA/BSAVA Congress 2012 will take place in Birmingham, England.



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15 th FECAVA CONGRESS

# FECAVA LILLE 2009

November 27-28-29



## Anything but dogs *ou le chat et la souris*



[www.fecavalille2009.com](http://www.fecavalille2009.com)



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## Upcoming FECAVA Congresses

### 15th European FECAVA Congress

Lille, France 26th - 29th November 2009

FECAVA, Association Française des Vétérinaires pour Animaux de Compagnie (AFVAC), and Small Animal Veterinary Association Belgium (SAVAB) and the Letzeburger Associatioun vun de Klengdeiere – Pracktiker (LAK, Luxemburg)

### 35th Annual WSAVA and 16th FECAVA Congress

Geneva, Switzerland 2nd - 5th June 2010

WSAVA /FECAVA/SVK/ASMPA

### 17th European FECAVA Congress

Istanbul, Turkey 2011

FECAVA and the Turkish Small Animal Veterinary Association (TSAVA)

### 35th Annual WASAVA and 18th FECAVA Congress

Birmingham, England 2012

WSAVA/FECAVA/BSAVA

## Merry Christmas

*FECAVA WISHES YOU  
A MERRY CHRISTMAS  
AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR!*

