Experts call for increased collaboration between doctors and veterinarians

Experts agree to call for greater collaboration between veterinarians and doctors with the aim of preventing the transmission of diseases of animal origin to humans. That´s the principal conclusion at the first Livestock Forum Networking Day, organised by Fira de Barcelona in conjunction with the Institute of Agrifood Research and Technology (IRTA) of the Catalan Government's Department of Agriculture.

In this respect, professor in Animal Health and president of the General Council of Veterinary Associations of Spain, Juan José Badiola, highlighted the role of vets 'not just in terms of treatment but also in the prevention of animal diseases' to minimise the transmission of these diseases to humans, whether through direct contact or via the food chain, especially in certain areas of Asia, Africa and Latin America.

Meanwhile, Dutch doctor Marion Koopmans, head of the Department of Viroscience at Erasmus MC Rotterdam, asserted that 'the new One Health, One World concept, which highlights the relationship between animal diseases and public health, forces government health administrations

to come up with a harmonised and coordinated policy.'

According to Koopmans, 70% of new infectious diseases suffered by humans are caused either directly or indirectly from contact with animals. Koopmans emphasised that 'easier access to more remote areas of the world and climate change', amongst other factors, have facilitated the propagation of new and unknown diseases. Dr Sandra Blome, the head of the Friedrich Loeffler Institute of Germany, pointed out that 'vaccination of farm animals helps to control diseases' and asserted that 'in this way we can stop them being transmitted to consumers.' Blome also noted that 'the consumption of meat from vaccinated animals poses no risk to health.' In another presentation, professor Jack Dekkers from the University of Iowa in the USA called for 'greater use of genetics to increase animals' resistance to certain diseases.'

More than 160 delegates from over 80 companies in every segment of the animal production value chain from countries such as Germany, France, Argentina and Chile attended the first Livestock Forum Networking Day, which took place yesterday at Fira de Barcelona with the collaboration of the Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Environment (MAGRAMA), the Catalan Government's Department of Agriculture and the European Commission, and with the support of the main sector associations. Yesterday's conference was a forerunner, along with another one to be held in 2017, of the main trade fair event planned for 2018.

Source: Livestock Forum