

## **KEYNOTE: THREATS TO ANIMAL HEALTH FROM INFLUENZA, AN EU PERSPECTIVE.**

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During the last ten years there have been multiple threats to animal health in the EU from influenza. Primarily this has involved outbreaks in domestic poultry with highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) of various subtypes. The cost to the industry and the community can be estimated in billions of Euros. Spread of low pathogenic avian influenza from wild bird reservoirs to domestic poultry with resulting mutation to virulence can have catastrophic consequences as was reported in Italy 1999-2000 (H7N1) and the Netherlands 2003 (H7N7). In addition, global spread of H5N1 HPAI has presented an additional threat since the virus appears to be maintained at least temporarily in wild bird populations and is influenced by complex dynamic interactions between domestic and wild birds. Furthermore, there have been frequent introductions of low pathogenicity notifiable avian influenza viruses to domestic poultry that have resulted in the imposition of control measures in accordance with the EU Directive 2005/94/EC. Other influenza viruses present significant disease threat to other hosts such as the recent pandemic (H1N1) 2009 virus whereby spread to animal populations provides additional challenges to the veterinary community and industry alike. The dynamic and long term persistence and evolution of this virus in domestic livestock, principally involving pigs remains to be defined, with potential consequences for veterinary public health. The presentation will include a synopsis of recent events, and look to preparedness and implications for EU Community animal health in the future.

