

Dear [FirstName] [LastName],

5th Annual Meeting EPIZONE

30-5-2011 11:03:40

From 11-14 April, the 5th Annual Meeting EPIZONE, was held in Arnhem, The Netherlands. The meeting was named 'Science on Alert' and was hosted by the Central Veterinary Institute. Around 310 scientists, people from the industry and policy makers...

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Keynote lectures 5th Annual Meeting

30-5-2011 11:07:01

Tuesday 12 April, after the Welcome session 'How veterinary research relates to animal health policies', the afternoon programme began with the keynote lecture from Professor Alexei D. Zaberezhny, Ivanovsky Institute of Virology, Moscow. His lecture...

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Keynote lectures Satellite symposium 5th Annual Meeting

30-5-2011 11:08:44

For the Satellite symposium on 'Bluetongue and other vector borne diseases' two keynote speakers were invited. Dr. Lyle Petersen of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, USA and Dr. Piet van Rijn of the Central Veterinary Institute of Wageningen...

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5th AM Poster prizes

30-5-2011 13:29:09

For the second year in a row the best posters displayed at the EPIZONE Annual Meeting have been rewarded with a prize. The poster prizes were sponsored by Merial and Ingenasa. The prize for the two best posters was € 250 each. Two more prizes of €...

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EPIZONE workshop "Data information sharing"

30-5-2011 14:13:50

Information sharing represents a challenge that the European veterinary community is ready to face in the near future. At present, the EU is promoting information sharing through a series of compliance frameworks that will be put into force for all Member...

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Building Bridges workshop 2011

30-5-2011 14:19:53

The third Building Bridges workshop in a row will be held in Beijing, China, 2-4 July 2011, organised by EPIZONE, Conflutech and Lanzhou Veterinary Research Institute (LVRI). The workshop will discuss the latest issues and developments concerning FMDV,...

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Extension of the Short Term Missions up to end of July 2011

30-5-2011 14:22:12

Part of the EPIZONE activities will be extended up November 31st 2011. Short Term Missions (STMs) are included in the prolonged activities and it will be possible to apply for such a mission up to end of July 2011 with expenses eligible up to end of...

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Short-term mission Marzena Rola and Magdalena Materniak from NVRI, Poland

30-5-2011 14:23:10

Marzena Rola and Magdalena Materniak from the National Veterinary Research Institute (NVRI), of Poland visited the Animal Sciences Group of Wageningen University and Research Centre in Lelystad, The Netherlands from 8-2 till 11-2-2011, under the...

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Short term mission Ilse Vangeel from CODA-CERVA, Belgium

30-5-2011 14:24:23

Ilse Vangeel from Veterinary and Agrochemical Research Centre (VAR), Belgium visited the Complutense

University of Madrid (VISAVET research group) from 10-18th of March 2011. The purpose of my visit to the Animal Health Department (SUAT) of the Health...

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Activity Agenda

30-5-2011 14:26:24

10-11 June 2011 - The EuroPRRSnet Workshop on PRRS Immunology and vaccinology: Vaccines against RNA viruses, Barcelona, Spain. 2-4 July 2011 - Workshop building bridges, Beijing, China. 3-7 July 2011 ...

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www.epizone-eu.net

EPIZONE is the Network of Excellence for Epizootic Disease Diagnosis and Control, supported by funding under the Sixth Research Framework Programme of the EU.

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5th Annual Meeting EPIZONE

From 11-14 April, the 5th Annual Meeting EPIZONE, was held in Arnhem, The Netherlands. The meeting was named 'Science on Alert' and was hosted by the Central Veterinary Institute.

Around 310 scientists, people from the industry and policy makers attended this meeting, representing 25 countries.

12 and 13 April

Over 200 abstracts were submitted of which 54 were selected for an oral presentation. A wide range of scientists presented their research. There was a welcome session on 'How veterinary research relates to animal health policies', 4 keynote speakers and a 'Bluetongue and other vector borne diseases' symposium, a [programme](#) filled with outstanding work. In the satellite symposium special attention was given to the latest research results and lessons learned from the past.

EPIZONE is now running for 5 years and during the parallel sessions the theme leaders of the EPIZONE themes [Diagnostics](#), [Intervention Strategies](#), [Epidemiology and Surveillance](#), and [Risk Assessment](#) presented their 'Theme's highlights of five year international collaboration'. Throughout the conference there was plenty of time to review and discuss the posters and to network.

Welcome session

12th April the morning started with a welcome from Dr. Christianne Bruschke, Chief Veterinary Officer of The Netherlands, followed by the special session 'How veterinary research relates to animal health policies'. Chair of this session was Professor Ludo Hellebrekers, President of the Royal Netherlands Veterinary Association and Professor at the University of Utrecht. Invited speakers were: Dr. Pascal Hudelet, Merial; Dr. Elisabeth Erlacher-Vindel, OIE; Dr. Filip Claes, FAO and Sanna Mesman, DG-Sanco. The presentations were concluded by a case study and panel discussion and participants were able to ask questions.

Keynote lectures 5th Annual Meeting

Tuesday 12 April, after the Welcome session 'How veterinary research relates to animal health policies', the afternoon programme began with the keynote lecture from [Professor Alexei D. Zaberezhny](#), Ivanovsky Institute of Virology, Moscow. His lecture entitled '[Current situation and methods of control of African swine fever](#)' started with a clear sketch of the geographical situation in the Caucasus Mountains. 'In the spring of 2007 the ASF was detected in Caucasus region. Same virus was detected in Georgia, Armenia, Azerbadjan, and Russia. The ASF circulating in the Caucasus and the Russian Federation is a highly virulent virus. Domestic pigs play an important role in ASF spread as they transfer the virus to wild boars. Occasionally, the disease is spread from wild to domestic pigs. There is no evidence of ticks being involved in the process. Thus, human activity in raising pigs is largely responsible for continuous spread of the disease'.....[Read more](#)..

The keynote lecture was followed by two parallel sessions, concerning the EPIZONE themes 4 Diagnostics and theme 6 Surveillance and epidemiology. Besides the oral presentations Theme leader theme 4, Martin Beer presented '[Highlights of five years collaboration on diagnostics](#)'. Theme leader theme 6, Claes Enøe presented '[Highlights from five years of international collaboration on surveillance and epidemiology](#)'.

Wednesday 13 April, the morning keynote lecture of [Professor Jim Maclachlan](#), School of Veterinary Medicine, University of California was entitled 'The History and Global Epidemiology of Bluetongue Virus Infection'. 'Bluetongue (BT) is an insect-transmitted virus disease of ruminants caused by BT virus (BTV). The disease was first described in southern Africa in the 17th century. For much of the 20th century BT was considered a disease of Africa that was silently spread around the world, putatively by livestock trade and movement. It is now evident that BTV infection is endemic on all continents except Antarctica, coincident with the distribution of competent Culicoides insect vectors. Climate change has been incriminated as the cause of the remarkable recent expansion of the virus' global range, notably in Europe'.. [Read more](#)..

Keynote lectures Satellite symposium 5th Annual Meeting

For the Satellite symposium on 'Bluetongue and other vector borne diseases' two keynote speakers were invited. Dr. Lyle Petersen of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, USA and Dr. Piet van Rijn of the Central Veterinary Institute of Wageningen UR, The Netherlands.

Dr Lyle Petersen started the satellite symposium with his lecture entitled: Global emergence of viral vector-borne diseases - why and how?. 'The past three decades have witnessed a dramatic geographic expansion and increase in human incidence of many viral vector-borne diseases, most notably expansion of West Nile virus throughout the Americas, Japanese encephalitis virus in western parts of Asia, and Chikungunya virus in Africa, the Indian Ocean region, and parts of Southeast Asia and the Pacific..... [Read more](#).....

After the parallel oral presentations and a 'small bite' break in the late afternoon the satellite symposium continued with the keynote lecture of **Dr. Piet van Rijn**, '[EPIZONE and the BTV-8 episode, remarkable timing and opportunities!!](#)'

'In the 5 years of EPIZONE, many European countries have suffered from an outbreak of bluetongue virus serotype 8 (BTV-8). In this BTV-8 episode, research on bluetongue was significantly accelerated. Virological and serological diagnostics were developed and/or improved. Established assays were harmonised by efforts of EPIZONE and organized by the Community Reference Laboratory and others. New assays to identify circulating viruses in more detail are under development'. 'Collaboration and established networks like EPIZONE are tremendously important to combat diseases, in particular vector-borne diseases, threatening livestock and human health'... [Read more](#)'

The key note lecture was followed by parallel oral presentations on the fields of epidemiology, risk assessment, diagnostics and intervention.

The satellite symposium was closed by **Professor Peter Mertens**, Institute for Animal Health, United Kingdom, with the lecture entitled: 'Lessons learned'. He gave a historical overview of the bluetongue epidemiology and control worldwide.

5th AM Poster prizes

For the second year in a row the best posters displayed at the EPIZONE Annual Meeting have been rewarded with a prize. The poster prizes were sponsored by Merial and Ingenasa.

The prize for the two best posters was € 250 each. Two more prizes of € 250 were given to the best PhD posters. Young EPIZONE members have elected the best PhD and non PhD posters and highlighted why they have been chosen.

The winners of the Merial PhD poster prizes are :

- Helena Ferrera (Central Veterinary Institute, The Netherlands):
 - *"Excretion patterns in ASF: a quantitative approach"*.
- Carine Holz (Centre de coopération Internationale en Recherche Agronomique pour le Développement, France):
 - *" Original modifications of peste des petits ruminants virus (PPRV) genome induced by RNA interference (RNAi)"* .

The winners of the Ingenasa poster prizes are:

- Alessandro Cristalli (Istituto Zooprofilattico Sperimentale delle Venezie, Italy):
 - *" Avian Influenza of the Moeyingyi Wetland of The Union of Myanmar: Findings of and epidemiological study"*.
- Tom Willems (Veterinary and Agrochemical Research Institute, Belgium):
 - *" Alternatives for in vivo Foot-and-Mouth disease vaccine potency tests: serotype dependency of the in vitro vaccine potency models"*.

EPIZONE workshop “Data information sharing”

Information sharing represents a challenge that the European veterinary community is ready to face in the near future. At present, the EU is promoting information sharing through a series of compliance frameworks that will be put into force for all Member States.

‘How is the scientific veterinary community adapting to this approach and what are the IT resources that will make this dialogue possible?’ have been the objects of the workshop *‘Data information sharing within the veterinary scientific community: legislative state of the art and the role of EPIZONE’* EPIZONE’s Theme 2 Strategic Integration’ held in Mira, Italy, 23 - 25 March 2011. The workshop was organized in cooperation with the Istituto Zooprofilattico Sperimentale delle Venezie (IZSVe) of Padova – Italy. More than 40 European experts and researchers from EPIZONE partner institutes, veterinarians as well as epidemiologists and IT experts, have discussed these issues around the same table.

Key priority issues

During the workshop key priority issues have been examined: e.g. what is appropriate information to share and how?; definition of data accessibility and data policies, and potentially available technologies. These are complex issues that require careful and detailed discussion as they have direct implications on public and animal health.

Within EPIZONE a database has been developed, online since 2008, that contains a number of datasets of bio-molecular information regarding infectious diseases (epizootic diseases) namely rabies, bluetongue, classical swine fever, foot-and-mouth disease and avian influenza. The EPIZONE server communicates with health departments, laboratories, health ministries, partner agencies and scientific institutions. Access to the data acquired by EPIZONE from the various partners is already available to all consortium members through features that allow the automatic upload, as well as download, of raw data and reports.

INSPIRE

The actions identified within EPIZONE have taken into account the EU norms contained in the INSPIRE Directive of 2007 (DIR 2007/2/EC), which defines a set of rules and guidelines for the establishment of an infrastructure for spatial information in Europe to support Community environmental policies (INSPIRE: INfrastructure for SPatial InfoRmation in Europe), with respect to compatibility and use of scientific data by all member countries. The architecture proposed within the framework of INSPIRE is the so-called System of Systems (SoS). Compared to a centralized database system where data are copied from the database which is peripheral to the central database, SoS has the advantage of being more flexible and adaptable to the needs of the entities involved, thus avoiding problems of synchronization, replication, and harmonization between the central and peripheral databases.

Interoperability has not only technology implications. Often the success of agreements between research institutes is determined by their data sharing strategy, the extent of access permitted and the terms of data use. With this in mind, one of the most crucial issues for the future will be security and data policies, which will need to be discussed and shared with other stakeholders, in compliance with national laws.

INSPIRE can be an opportunity to overcome technical barriers and give more weight to the international veterinary community while addressing health issues, which increasingly require interdisciplinary and collaborative actions.

Building Bridges workshop 2011

The third Building Bridges workshop in a row will be held in Beijing, China, 2-4 July 2011, organised by EPIZONE, Conflutech and Lanzhou Veterinary Research Institute (LVRI).

The workshop will discuss the latest issues and developments concerning FMDV, swine and avian influenza, CSFV and re-emerging diseases in China. As always we will stimulate cooperation and create vast opportunities for networking and scientific exchange. A draft programme can be found [here](#).

Building Bridges 2008 and 2010

This workshop is a follow up from the 2008 workshop. '[Building Bridges for Research in Swine Diseases](#)' in Shanghai and the 2010 workshop '[New generation researchers in pig viral diseases: building bridges from labs to policy and the farms](#)' in Madrid.

Both workshops gathered a large number of young and senior scientists working in swine viral diseases from European and Asian countries and allowed young scientists to interact and exchange views among them and with senior scientists on their research activities in a relaxed and fruitful atmosphere.

[Downloads](#) the reports of the two former workshops can be found on the EPIZONE website. A hard copy of the reports is also available (epizone.cvi@wur.nl)

Building Bridges 2011

Like the other two meetings, we wish to raise awareness among the young researchers of the importance of the research carried out in the laboratories in different parts of the world. It is also meant as a tool to introduce European and Asian scientists to each other and encourage cooperation.

This workshop is coordinated by close cooperation between LVRI, other institutes of CAAS, relevant Chinese Universities and EU supported research projects in FP6 and FP7 in particular EPIZONE and ConFluTech.

Extension of the Short Term Missions up to end of July 2011

Part of the EPIZONE activities will be extended up November 31st 2011. Short Term Missions (STMs) are included in the prolonged activities and it will be **possible to apply for such a mission up to end of July 2011** with expenses eligible up to end of October 2011.

From the start of the EPIZONE network of excellence, support for STMs of EPIZONE members has been offered to stimulate research collaboration, promote education and contribute to the spreading of excellence as one of the main activities of WP3.2 Education in theme 3. On the whole, the level of STM use has been satisfactory up to month 54 of the project. Figure 1 represents the number of STM per year and the average duration of each application.

Application forms and conditions for eligibility can be found at the EPIZONE website here. The application has to be sent to epizone.cvi@wur.nl for review.

Don't miss this great opportunity!

Short-term mission Marzena Rola and Magdalena Materniak from NVRI, Poland

Marzena Rola and Magdalena Materniak from the National Veterinary Research Institute (NVRI), of Poland visited the Animal Sciences Group of Wageningen University and Research Centre in Lelystad, The Netherlands from 8-2 till 11-2-2011, under the supervision of Dr Marcel M. Hulst.

The aim of this training

was to acquire the knowledge and skills about bioinformatic tools and databases to perform a functional analysis of microarray data, which would be useful during the realization of the project connected to EPIZONE W.P.5.2; Host responses to infection, in our home laboratory, as well as our further work in this field.

Our own microarray datasets

We appreciated that during the training we were able to focus on the analysis of our own microarray datasets to select genes which show significant changes in expression. We could also process the functional analysis in DAVID bioinformatic tool to get insight in to the role of selected genes in biological pathways, what was very interesting for us.

During our visit we were also able to discuss with Dr Marcel Hulst and his co-workers details of our own project which includes microarray application and find out their opinion of our project.

Discussing problems with experts

We can recommend the training as it's beneficial for us to strengthen our knowledge in the field of microarray data analysis and discuss our problems and ideas directly with scientist experts in the field.

Short term mission Ilse Vangeel from CODA-CERVA, Belgium

Ilse Vangeel from Veterinary and Agrochemical Research Centre (VAR), Belgium visited the Complutense University of Madrid (VISAVET research group) from 10-18th of March 2011.

The purpose of my visit to the Animal Health Department (SUAT) of the Health Surveillance Centre (VISAVET) of the Complutense University of Madrid was to learn a number of epidemiological methods that are very useful as tools to study the epidemiology of epizootic diseases and for disease surveillance, control and risk analysis.

This visit was focused on learning the following methods:

- Social network analysis
- Cluster analysis
- Geographic Information Systems (GIS)
- Bayesian modelling for risk factor -and risk analysis

Dr. Beatriz Martínez-López, who was an excellent mentor, explained to me the theoretical background of the methods and showed a large number of practical applications for each of these methods. She also demonstrated and explained a number of different software programs that can be used (Pajek, SaTScan, ArcGIS, WinBUGS) and I had the opportunity to practice some of these applications myself using own data or data provided by her.

A lot of knowledge and information

I found my stay in Madrid extremely useful as I gained a tremendous amount of knowledge and information within a very short period of time. I obtained a good overview of the epidemiological tools used and how they can be combined to address specific epidemiological problems or questions. This provides me as junior epidemiologist of CVD-ERA with a solid basis upon which I can further build and brings additional expertise into our group whose main areas of expertise are survey methodology, the evaluation of monitoring and surveillance programs and evaluation of diagnostic tests. Especially the knowledge of GIS can be directly applied to visualise the results of Belgian monitoring and surveillance systems and to produce risk maps for risk based surveillance (policy supporting advice). The insights gained into the application of social network analysis will be an asset to our group as the application of network analysis in veterinary epidemiology is still relatively new.

Further collaborations in the future

The SUAT group lead by Prof. José Manuel Sánchez-Vizcaíno is a group of experienced and motivated veterinary epidemiologists and virologists. Everyone was very friendly and I felt really welcome in the group. I am positive that my visit will result in further collaborations in the future. I would certainly recommend this Short Term Mission program to anyone wanting to expand their skills and expertise and extend their network of collaborations.

Activity Agenda

- 10-11 June 2011 - The EuroPRRSnet Workshop on PRRS Immunology and vaccinology: Vaccines against RNA viruses, Barcelona, Spain.
- 2-4 July 2011 - Workshop building bridges, Beijing, China.
- 3-7 July 2011 - XV International Congress in Animal Hygiene (ISAH 2011) 'Animal Hygiene and Sustainable Livestock Production, University of Veterinary Medicine, Vienna, Austria.
- 13 – 15 September 2011 - AHVLA International Conference 2011 - Animal Diseases and their Consequences, Royal Holloway, University of London, United Kingdom
- 27 -29 September 2011 - Young EPIZONE Workshop project management, Amsterdam, The Netherlands.
- 3 -7 October 2011 - Classical virology course, Pulawy, Poland
- 12-14 June 2012 - 6th Annual Meeting EPIZONE, Brighton, UK.
- 20-24 August 2012 - ISVEE 13th International Symposium on Veterinary Epidemiology & Economics, Maastricht, The Netherlands.