

Next generation livestock farming: what drivers for improved animal health and welfare?

Brussels, 17 June 2021 - AnimalhealthEurope's annual event focused this year on the next generation of Europe's livestock farmers and their needs when it comes to meeting the multitude of demands set out in the EU Farm to Fork and Biodiversity strategies.

Keynote speaker, Prof.dr.ir. Louise O. Fresco, President of the Executive Board for Wageningen University and Research set the scene sharing her thoughts on how Generation Z livestock farmers are faced with more challenges than ever before, as well as a more critical consumer base, adding that young farmers can look to the many new tools and opportunities on the horizon to invent new ways of farming to meet with demands.

Asking the question, what is driving improved animal health and welfare practices, panellists including young livestock farmers Kerli Ats from Estonia and Alexander Bernhuber from Austria, who is also a member of the European Parliament, expressed their views on Precision Livestock Farming techniques and the new digital tools coming to the fore in animal health. Often these advances are welcomed by livestock farmers, but not every farm has the means and opportunities to implement them, perhaps an opening for EU policies to take a more supporting role in terms of finance and knowledge transfer to ensure a viable future for young farmers.

Also coming from a 'boots on the ground' level, panellist Tommy Heffernan, a veterinary consultant and educator spoke of his current work with farmers both young and old in Ireland, who are currently trying and testing new methods of ensuring better management of animal health, as well as more responsible use of antibiotics.

Speaking at the event, AnimalhealthEurope Secretary General Roxane Feller said, "The animal health industry believes that working directly with livestock farmers and veterinarians is the best way to understand current and future needs. This helps industry to set priorities for research and development. As the livestock sector moves into an era of digitally enhanced farming that co-exists with nature-positive solutions, we're focusing our efforts into innovations that help improve the health and welfare of animals, reduce environmental impacts and ensure better traceability, while improving farm management efficiencies and productivity. It is our hope that EU policies affecting the next generation of Europe's livestock farmers will foresee adequate support and training so that their future in farming is both a secure and bright one."

Notes for editors:

- You can [download our event booklet](#) with speaker biographies and summary statements on the debate topic from our website.



- Visit our new microsite for more information on the latest advances in animal health and find out how they can deliver on both EU aspirations and the UN SDGs: <https://connectedhealth.animalhealtheurope.eu/>
- AnimalhealthEurope represents 12 of Europe's leading manufacturers of animal medicines and 17 national associations in 19 countries, covering 90% of the European Market. The animal health industry provides tools for veterinarians to care for around 700 million animals in Europe, supporting 5.7 million livestock farms and 85 million pet-owning households across Europe.
- This event was organised with [Parliament Magazine](#). Visit www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/ and follow [@Parlimag](#) for event coverage.