

Press release – Under embargo until 17h00, 17 January 2019

Digitalization improving ability to protect against animal disease, advance well-being and support livestock production

17 January 2019, Berlin; Hosted jointly by animal medicines industry associations, experts in veterinary science, agriculture and policy discussed digitalization and the future of livestock production at a panel debate during the Global Forum for Food and Agriculture.

Drawing attention to the host of opportunities that digitalization in animal health offers across the world, participants discussed the many benefits that can be brought in terms of: optimal animal well-being; increased food safety and security; resilience against economically devastating crises; enhanced resource efficiency; and a drastic reduction of food losses and waste.

Through collection, monitoring and analysis of health data combined with availability of innovative and digital solutions in livestock production, veterinarians and farmers can make great strides in identifying and preventing the spread of animal diseases. The use of digital, data-driven technologies such as wearable sensors, AI-driven monitoring systems, and high-tech diagnostics, is helping farmers around the globe to improve the health of their animals and produce more sustainably.

The Deputy Director General of the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) Jean-Philippe Dop used the occasion to showcase the new World Animal Health Information System (WAHIS), demonstrating how surveillance and modelling of disease outbreaks such as avian influenza or African swine fever, combined with the opportunity to analyse massive amounts of data, can be used to manage macro threats to farm animals and the ensuing impacts on economies.

Experts also debated, next to data ownership, the advances generated through better standardization of data collected, digital body composition and growth evaluation, tracking and tracing systems for animals and diseases across countries/regions, and how to ensure the application of such technologies for the benefit of global food and agricultural production.

With the impacts of livestock production being central to some burning debates today, a favourable political and regulatory environment is essential to encourage application of digital technologies and consumer acceptance of these innovations so that livestock can continue to be optimised as a part of the solutions to planetary challenges. Governments and international organisations should consider the need for support at regional and farm level to ensure accessibility to the latest advances.

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About the organisers:

AnimalhealthEurope is the association representing the animal medicines industry at Europe-level. It represents both innovators and generics alike, and its membership includes both companies and national associations, covering around 90% of the European market for animal health products.

www.animalhealtheurope.eu



Bundesverband für Tiergesundheit is the association representing the animal medicines industry in Germany, covering with 22 members around 95% of the German market for animal health products. www.bft-online.de

HealthforAnimals is the association representing the animal medicines industry at global level. Its membership includes the world's largest animal health companies, as well as national associations in both developed and developing countries across five continents. www.healthforanimals.org

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