



PRESS RELEASE

Scientists discuss research towards mitigating anthelmintic resistance in livestock

León, 28 September 2018 – 90 researchers from 30 countries came together at the University of León (Spain) to present research results and to discuss a coordinated approach towards solutions for anthelmintic resistance, a part of the larger drug resistance problem in infective pathogens. The meeting was held in the framework of the EU COST Action CA16230 COMBAR – “Combating anthelmintic resistance in ruminants” and combined with the annual meeting of the Livestock Helminth Research Alliance (LIHRA).

Worldwide, anthelmintics are an important drug class to treat parasitic worm infections and are a cornerstone to preserve animal health, welfare and productivity in grazing livestock. With an increasing number of treatment failures due to anthelmintic resistance, new solutions are needed. The research network sets in on three strategies, each dealt with in a separate working group.

1. Improving diagnostic tools to facilitate targeted and selective treatment approaches and early detection of anthelmintic resistance;
2. Studying socio-economic aspects to understand the impacts, the barriers and drivers of sustainable anthelmintic usage;
3. Developing integrated control strategies based on a broader panel of control options including pasture management, vaccination and use of bio-active forages.

During this meeting, scientific leaders from all continents as well as young European researchers presented the current knowledge, recent research results and their thoughts on how to move forward. The first results are planned to be presented at a special session during the annual meeting of the European Federation of Animal Science (EAAP) in Ghent, 26 August 2019.

“We are on track to coordinate research activities at European level and achieve important collaborative research results. New collaborative projects have started in all participating countries, including those where research in the domain was previously absent such as Portugal, Poland, Serbia and Slovenia. These projects will benefit from collaboration with more experienced researchers from across Europe,” said Johannes Charlier (Kreavet, Belgium), chair of the action.

“This kind of project was highly needed and now it is finally happening. The technologies and tools to combat anthelmintic resistance are available, now we need to find ways to make them usable on the ground” said Jan van Wyk (University of Pretoria, South-Africa), a pioneer in research on anthelmintic resistance.

Through financial support from the Secretariat for the STAR-IDAZ International Research Consortium on Animal Health it was possible for the COMBAR meeting to host several eminent anthelmintic resistance researchers from non-EU countries such as Canada, Argentina, Mexico, New Zealand and South-Africa. *“The STAR-IDAZ International Research Consortium is developing road maps to guide and coordinate animal health research at the global level, we welcome the contribution of COMBAR together with the Livestock Helminth Research Alliance in designing the research road maps for helminth infections and anthelmintic resistance,”* said Alex Morrow (DEFRA, UK), head of the STAR-IDAZ IRC secretariat.

“EPRUMA partners have recognised the emerging risk of anthelmintic resistance. However, because of the much lower public health importance, it can’t be compared with antibiotic resistance. Specific research is needed to allow for science-based decision making,” said Rens van Dobbenburgh, chairman of the European Platform for the Responsible Use of Medicines in Animals (EPRUMA).



Group photo of Second COMBAR Joint Working Group meeting, León, Spain (26 & 27 September 2018)

Further information:

Dr. Martin Kašný (Charles University in Prague): COMBAR Science Communication manager

Email: martin.kasny@natur.cuni.cz;

Tel: +420 221951822

Web: www.combar-ca.eu and http://www.cost.eu/COST_Actions/ca/CA16230