

Full of questions rich in answers: The workshop “Introduction to socio-economics of helminth infections and anthelmintic resistance in ruminants” in Bruges (21-23 November 2018)

People with different specialisations and experiences, all passionate about combatting anthelmintic resistance in ruminants, came together at a convenient location for this workshop where we enjoyed an excellent and very diverse programme.

On the first day, the pioneers on that field taught to us the general background on ruminant parasites and anthelmintic resistance as well as their effect on productivity. Then we went deeper into theory and I was confronted with economic theories for the first time. We were introduced into models of calculating the effect of parasitism on the profit of the farm. With practical exercises on efficiency theory, we had a very refreshing hands-on approach while the philosophical approach of questioning everything certainly stimulated and broadened our minds.

On the second day, we got some insight into social marketing and possible methods of influencing human behavior. It was fascinating and entertaining but also somewhat scary to see how we are sometimes manipulated without even realizing it. With examples from innovative work from Belgium and the UK we also learned about possible motives and believes of farmers and how to study these using diverse research methods.

During the whole course, we had highly motivated experts who gave us several opportunities to discuss and interact. Throughout the programme, we had enough time to introduce ourselves, to get to know each other and to discuss different viewpoints and different approaches. The most challenging for sure was to come up with a consensus plan for the future on the third and last day!

Certainly, there was not enough time left to fully worship the medieval beauty of Bruges, but the workshop was enriched with two great evening events downtown were the cosy atmosphere set some of us in Christmas spirit already.

I want to thank all speakers of this successful programme. My special thanks goes to Johannes, who perfectly organized this workshop.

Vienna, 15th of December

Barbara Hinney