

MEDIA ALERT***MEDIA ALERT**

9 September 2009

European zoonoses Network of Excellence to showcase leading research at launch of new beginning

Med-Vet-Net, one of Europe's foremost Networks of Excellence, presents a unique opportunity to hear about the latest research ideas and directions on zoonoses and food-borne disease in Europe.

- WHAT:** Press conference — “Med-Vet-Net: The launch of a new beginning”
- WHEN:** Tuesday 6 October 2009, 10.30am
(Lunch will be served from 12.30pm for pre-registered attendees only)
- WHO:** Med-Vet-Net, the European Network of Excellence on Zoonoses and Food-borne Diseases
- WHERE:** Management Centre Europe, 118 rue de l'Aqueduc, 1050 Brussels, BELGIUM
- WHY:** To celebrate and reflect on the scientific achievements of one of Europe's most successful Networks of Excellence, and to launch the newly formed Med-Vet-Net Association — the future incarnation of the Med-Vet-Net partnership that will forge ahead with research tackling the zoonoses and food-borne diseases that threaten the public health of the European Community.

Med-Vet-Net's leading scientists will be available for interview at their discretion following the press conference.

For more information or to register your attendance, please contact:

Med-Vet-Net Communications Unit
Tel.: +44 (0)1908 698810
Email: communications@medvetnet.org

Med-Vet-Net online: <http://www.medvetnet.org>

Notes for Editors

Med-Vet-Net:

Med-Vet-Net was initiated in September 2004 and is funded by the European Union (EU) 6th Framework Programme, within the 'Quality and Safety of Food' Priority Area for five years (to conclude in October 2009). The Network uniquely brings together medical, veterinary and food scientists working on the detection and control of zoonoses and includes many of the most prominent research groups working in this area in Europe. Most of the partner institutes involved have responsibilities for provision of advice and consultancy to their respective national governments on aspects of human health risks, animal diseases and welfare, and food safety. By adopting multi-disciplinary and multi-national approaches, Med-Vet-Net is enabling knowledge throughout the food chain to be shared across regional, national and international borders.

Food-borne diseases:

Infectious diseases remain a major public health concern worldwide, causing over 14 million deaths per annum (WHO). Of the 1,415 species of infectious agents known to be pathogenic to humans, about 61% are able to be transmitted from animals to humans. 'Zoonotic' food-borne diseases include *Salmonella* in eggs, *Campylobacter* in poultry meat, and *Cryptosporidium* in water. Other notable zoonotic diseases include rabies, bird flu and West Nile virus.

The occurrence of zoonotic diseases is growing worldwide, due to increasing global travel, greater international livestock trade, increasing encroachment of man and livestock into previously uninhabited habitats, and changes in livestock production.

The role of animals, including wildlife, as reservoirs of potential and existing public health problems, transmitted via food or other routes is an area that requires monitoring and continued research. In addition to the human pain and misery caused by these diseases, the cost to the EU is well in excess of €6billion annually.