

To
Science Journalists

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Public Relations

Prioritising Foodborne and Zoonotic Pathogens
Press conference, 19 July 2006, 10.45-11.15 am, BfR, Berlin-Marienfelde

Dear Colleagues,

For months bird flu has dominated the media. Experts feared that the virus could mutate and become transmissible to humans, growing into a serious health threat. Indonesia has since reported the first case of the transmission of the virus from human to human, when a father contracted the H5N1 pathogen from his son. According to the World Health Organization, however, the virus does not manifest any changes resulting in easier transmission to humans. Other zoonotic diseases (which are naturally transmitted from animals to man) such as *Salmonella* are far less publicised but currently cause much greater economic impact. For example, more than 52,000 cases of *Salmonella* were reported last year in Germany alone. The major source of *Salmonella* infection is from eggs and uncooked chicken. The bacteria can be easily spread by poor hygiene and cross-contamination during preparation of food in the kitchen. The most recent surveys reveal that *Salmonella* that are dangerous to man are to be found in just under one-quarter of the German lay hen flocks examined.

In the European Union alone, zoonoses of this kind cost well in excess of EUR 6 billion each year. In response to this, the EU funded the Network of Excellence in zoonoses, Med-Vet-Net, in September 2004. The network uniquely brings together medical, veterinary and food science researchers working on the detection and control of zoonoses and includes many of the foremost research groups working in this area in Europe. From 19 to 21 July, experts from science, research and policy advice will gather at the Federal Institute for Risk Assessment for an international conference organised by European Med-Vet-Net experts and scientists from the American Food Safety Research Consortium (FSRC). The topic is the setting of priorities in the control of pathogens which may be transmitted to man via food from animals. On the first day of the conference there is a press conference to which we cordially invite you:

➤ **Press conference: Prioritising Foodborne and Zoonotic Pathogens**

Date Wednesday, 19 July 2006, 10.45-11.15 am

Place Federal Institute for Risk Assessment, Marienfelde site

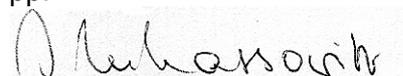
Conference room D146, 1st floor, Diedersdorfer Weg 1, 12277 Berlin

The conference programme and further information on this subject can be accessed on our website (www.bfr.bund.de) under "Events".

We would be very grateful if you could let us know whether you will be attending the press conference. Please bear in mind that you must register if you wish to attend the whole conference.

Sincerely yours,

pp.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Irene Lukassowitz', is written over a light grey rectangular background.

Dr. Irene Lukassowitz
(Head Communication and Public Relations)

Participants in the press conference

Professor Dr. Dr. Andreas Hensel
President of the Federal Institute for Risk Assessment, Berlin

Arie Havelaar, PhD
National Institute for Public Health (RIVM) Bilthoven, Netherlands

Professor Michael R. Taylor
University of Maryland, Baltimore, USA

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Prioritising Foodborne and Zoonotic Pathogens
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I will attend the press conference

I will attend the whole conference

Please send me information

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