



PRESS INFORMATION

Brussels, 22 April 2008

Forum to discuss how cooperating on animal welfare can boost global trade

Working together on higher standards for animal welfare will stimulate trade between countries, participants at a special forum will be told. The International Forum on Global Aspects of Farm Animal Welfare will take place in the Jean Monnet Room of the Berlaymont Building of the European Commission in Brussels today [22 April] and tomorrow [23 April]. It is being organised by the Directorate-General for External Trade and the Directorate-General for Health and Consumers of the European Commission, together with Eurogroup for Animals, Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, Compassion in World Farming, and World Society for the Protection of Animals.

The forum brings together anyone from farmers, retailers, politicians, academics, and animal welfare organisations to discuss the opportunities cooperation on animal welfare can offer. Developing standards for animal welfare on a global scale will mean better quality for consumers, improved treatment for animals, and increased trade for producers as it will be easier for them to export.

Sonja Van Tichelen, director of Eurogroup for Animals which represents animal welfare organisations throughout the European Union, said: "The route from farm to fork increasingly involves more countries, and it is only right to make interested parties come together to find ways to cooperate. Like the environment, animal welfare is something that touches upon all of us."

Adolfo Sansolini, trade policy advisor for RSPCA, Compassion in World Farming, Eurogroup for Animals and WSPA, commented: "Companies and governments have got a lot to gain from sharing experiences and expectations, and working together. Business opportunities don't stop at the border."

Mrs Van Tichelen and Mr Sansolini are both speakers at the international forum.

The forum will be followed up by a Conference on Global Trade and Farm Animal Welfare on 20 and 21 January 2009. For more information about the forum and the conference, visit www.animalwelfareandtrade.com.

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To interview Sonja Van Tichelen or Adolfo Sansolini, call Steven Blaakman, senior press officer at Eurogroup, on 0032 (0)27400823 or email him on s.blaakman@eurogroupforanimals.org. Outside office hours, he can be reached on 0475731066.

Notes:

- Eurogroup for Animals represents animal welfare organisations in each of the European member states. Since it was launched in 1980, Eurogroup has succeeded in encouraging the European Union to adopt higher legal standards of animal protection. For more information about Eurogroup, visit www.eurogroupforanimals.org.
- The European Union explicitly states in its Community Action Plan on the Protection and Welfare of Animals 2006-2010 that the Commission wants to promote high animal welfare standards in the EU and at the international level. This involves co-operating with developing countries on creating production systems with higher standards for animal welfare, which would help them to export to the union.