

MATRA Training for European Cooperation

(MTEC)

Animal Health

24 November – 12 December, 2008



Key information

- The general aims of the MTEC Animal Health Course are
 - to train higher level policy makers and staff of government organizations and that of implementing agencies (animal health services, laboratories,) in the area of development and implementation of programs for animal disease prevention and control)
 - to facilitate the development of networks with Dutch parties and among participants of the course.
- Period November 24 – December 12, 2008
- Location of the training program: The Hague and Wageningen in the Netherlands
- Accommodation during the training program
 - NH Hotel Beatrixkwartier, The Hague, The Netherlands
 - Wageningen International Conference Center WICC, Wageningen, The Netherlands
- Target group: The training on animal health is designed for government officials as well as for persons working for semi-public agencies in the New Member States, candidate Member States, potential candidate Member States and in the neighbouring countries. The participants are professionals in animal health policy development or are engaged with the delivery of services (e.g. inspection, monitoring, communication, enforcement, etc.) that are essential for the animal health systems to function and develop effectively.
- Participants: 50 in total from Albania, Belarus, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Jordan, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Morocco, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Turkey and Ukraine will be invited for this three-week training program.
- Application deadline: October 3rd.

Introduction

This course on animal health is organized by the Wageningen International (WI) of the Wageningen University & Research (WUR) Centre for the MATRA Training for European Cooperation program managed by EVD / CROSS in The Hague.

The course on Animal Health is centered around the main ideas of the strategic paper on "Animal Health Strategy for the European Union (2007-2013) where "Prevention is better than cure"" published by the EU Commission, the implementation of the strategy in the new and candidate member states, and on the impact on potential EU candidate countries and neighbour countries.

The course program is prepared in cooperation with our partners:

- Animal Health Service (GD-Deventer)
- Central Veterinary Institute
- Animal Sciences Group (animal production division)
- PTC+
- Wageningen Business School

and after consultations with the Department of Food Quality and Animal Health in the Dutch Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality, and the Food and Consumer Product Safety Authority (VWA).

Context

Because of the far reaching impact of possible contagious animal disease outbreaks in terms of public health, food safety, and economic costs; animal health and animal welfare considerations have always been high on the EU agenda and on the national agenda of the Member States.

The outbreaks of animal diseases (Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy, Foot and Mouth Disease, Classical Swine Fever, Avian Influenza, Bluetongue) and their social, economic and political impacts forced policy-makers to rethink the Community approach to the protection of animal and public health and to food safety issues to regain consumers' confidence. The 2000 White Paper on Food Safety partly addressed the problem but animal health issues were not fully dealt with. Consumers have been growing more conscious of environment and animal welfare and have demanded these issues to be considered.

The fragmented national approach to disease control has been steadily replaced through progressive harmonization of animal health measures and systems of disease surveillance, diagnosis and control at EU level.

With the launch of the Health Strategy 2007 - 2013, the EU Commission, for the first time, set out its strategic aims and objectives for animal health for the following six years. It covers the health of all animals in the EU which are kept for food, farming, sport, entertainment, as pets and in zoos. Wild animals, hunted animals and animals used for research will also fall under its remit, as will any animals which are transported to, from or through the EU. This wide scope is an acknowledgement of the fact that animal disease are not limited to particular species, and a health problem for one category of animals can also pose a threat for many other animals.

Main goals of the new 2007 – 2013 strategy are:

1. To ensure a high level of public health and food safety by minimizing the incidence of biological and chemical risks to humans.
2. To promote animal health by preventing/reducing the incidence of animal diseases, and in this way to support farming and the rural economy.
3. To improve economic growth/cohesion/competitiveness assuring free circulation of goods and proportionate animal movements
4. To promote farming practices and animal health and welfare which prevent animal health related threats and minimize environmental impacts in support of the EU Sustainable Development Strategy.

In order to successfully pursue the Animal Health Strategy of the EU the following interrelated preconditions are to be met:

- Understanding and agreement with the philosophy and objectives behind the Animal Health Strategy of the EU among all public sector staff involved with animal health and welfare;
- Capacities to establish and operate a well-organized animal health, prevention and crisis management system within the responsible authority to be able to implement effective animal disease control;

- Awareness on the organization and functioning of the agri-food chains related to animal health, welfare, tracking and tracing of animals, food safety and food quality issues;
- Capacity and attention for research and development on animal welfare, animal and public health and issues;
- A clear division and understanding of institutional responsibilities whereby the primary responsibility for animal health depends on categorization of animal diseases;
- Adequate capacities – attitudes, skills, knowledge – of (semi-)public sector staff involved with animal health and welfare policy and planning, monitoring and inspection and enforcement;
- Effective monitoring and communication systems – both at national level and with other member states within the EU have to be in place.

Third countries are not required legally by the EU to meet all these conditions in their domestic production and trade, but to develop fruitful trade relations with the EU they must be able to prove that animal health and welfare issues have been handled according to EU standards.

Objectives of the course

The general aims of the MTEC Animal Health Course are

1. to train higher level policy makers and staff of government organizations and that of implementing agencies (animal health services, laboratories,) in the area of development and implementation of programs for animal disease prevention and control)
2. to facilitate the development of networks with Dutch parties and among participants of the course.

More specifically the MTEC Animal Health Course is designed to ensure that by the end of the course the participants are able to:

- A. Explain the principles, objectives and key elements of the EU legislative framework and the role of other international organizations (e.g. OIE, FAO, WB, WHO, FVO) pertaining to animal health and animal welfare;
- B. Outline the main institutional responsibilities of the European and national institutes involved in planning and operation of animal health and welfare systems at national and international levels;
- C. Summarize the key features of the animal health and welfare system in The Netherlands and the role of the main stakeholders as an example for future reference;
- D. Explain the link between sharing of responsibilities for action among public and private stakeholders in profiling and categorization of risks, setting up and implementing disease control systems.
- E. Analyze animal health and welfare control system in own country and identify attention points in case within / to EU trade;
- F. Explain the principles of the development, update and implementation of contingency plans (legal powers, financial provisions, chain of command, national and local disease control centers, expert groups, personnel resources, equipment and facilities resources, roles of diagnostic laboratories, emergency vaccinations, training programs, publicity/disease awareness);
- G. Summarize the key features of effective communication systems in relation to animal health, prevention, control and during crisis situations;

- H. List some of the main trends and developments in animal diseases and welfare research (new diseases, vaccination, veterinary diagnostic tests and diagnostic tools);
- I. Analyze and plan change processes within own professional context aimed at strengthening the animal health control systems;
- J. Effectively communicate the proposed changes and innovations to different stakeholders;
- K. Explain the main management principles and approaches that lead to successful organizational and/or institutional change.

Course outline

In order to achieve the general objectives listed above and to allow for sufficient flexibility to meet the individual participant's needs and interests the three-week course is sub-divided into different components. Each course component contains several sessions which will enable the course participants to tailor the program within the context of the overall objectives towards their own areas of needs and interest.

A more detailed overview of the draft course program is included in annex A. Below a summary overview of the main course components is provided:

1. Component: Foundation

The background, leading principles and objectives of international organizations such as WHO, FVO, FAO, OIE, WB related to animal health and welfare, and the EU animal health system are introduced and discussed; the importance and philosophy behind the EU animal health systems in the context of a common market and consumer confidence will be explained. Comparisons are made with the situation in the respective countries of origin of the participants. Also the chain approach used to pursue integrated animal health, animal welfare and food safety issues is explained with an emphasis on chain analysis techniques and practical applications. The participants are also briefed on the institutional set-up and current policy issues within the Netherlands and the EU, including trade with third countries, through visits to Min LNV and VWA.

2. Component: Enhancing Animal Health and Welfare within a multi-stakeholder context

Tools and techniques for developing animal health systems in a multi-stakeholder context are introduced. The participants are familiarized through presentations, manuals and practical assignments with stakeholder assessments, situation analyses (SWOT, issue analysis, problem tree), strategic and policy planning techniques within a participatory context. Furthermore training on effective communication and (international) negotiation skills is included. Enhancing networking skills will be also part of the program to facilitate East-East and East-West linkage building among participants. The practical assignments will be centered on realistic cases to enable participants to test their newly acquired skills in a relevant context. The participants will be sub-divided into two groups on the basis of their professional backgrounds; assignments will be done in smaller groups of 4 – 6 participants.

3. Component: Public & private cooperation in animal health and welfare

Through a series of excursions to various representative organizations in the animal health and welfare sector, participants will be familiarized with the division of responsibilities between (semi-)public and private sector organizations within the Dutch context. Ample opportunity will be given to see and discuss how the Dutch colleagues perform their duties. A session deals with the specific issue of how to deal with public and private interests during crisis situation.

4. Component: Research & development in Animal Health and Welfare

Research and development on detection, diagnostic techniques, surveillance, inspection techniques, food safety, risk assessments, traceability systems, animal welfare, destruction systems, etc. is an extremely important part of the European animal health prevention and control system. Participants are familiarized through visits to Dutch research institutes (CVI, ASG, GD) on various state-of-the art techniques and developments. Furthermore R&D capacity development is stressed, the setting of the research agenda is discussed and the institutional linkages between the laboratories and the other public and private stakeholders are explained. Participants are separated into 2 groups in order to meet the specific subject matter interests of the participants.

5. Component: Planning for change

During the course, participants will prepare in small groups (4 – 6 group members) a plan of action around a current animal health and welfare related theme. The list of themes is based on the pre-course assignments and on the areas of interest of the participants. The sub-groups will be facilitated and supported by WI resource persons. The sub-group assignments will enable the participants to apply the newly acquired skills and insights from the previous course components and thus will consolidate the process of learning.

On the last day the sub-groups will present their plan of action which will be discussed during the concluding plenary session.

Organization

Wageningen International
Website: www.wi.wur.nl

Wageningen International will be responsible for the overall organization and coordination of the MTEC course on Animal Health. Wageningen International plays a specific role in mobilising the resources of Wageningen UR for the design and implementation of comprehensive programs for capacity development and training. Meeting the challenges of sustainable development and realising the Millennium Development Goals requires the coupling of technological and institutional innovation. Supporting organisations and individuals to achieve such interdisciplinary and holistic strategies for change is the core business of the Program for Capacity Development and Institutional Change (CD&IC - www.cdic.wur.nl). Wageningen International has broad experience in the organization of courses, advisory projects, study tours, etc. which are organized in close cooperation with subject matter specialist of departments of WUR and various knowledge institutes. The MTEC 2008 course on Animal Health will be organized together with the following department and knowledge institutes:

1. Central Veterinary Institute

The Central Veterinary Institute of Wageningen UR is a knowledge organisation with an international reputation in the field of animal health. The core activities feature scientific and practice-based research.

The Central Veterinary Institute performs legally required research related to notifiable animal diseases for the Dutch government, referred to as statutory research tasks. This includes all animal diseases subject to national and/or international regulations. Being the reference laboratory for notifiable animal

diseases in the Netherlands, the Central Veterinary Institute is responsible for diagnosing and advising on any suspected notifiable contagious animal diseases. Such statutory research tasks are managed and carried out by a program that is distinct from the other research tasks at the Institute

The Central Veterinary Institute is integral part of the crisis organisation when outbreaks of animal diseases occur in the Netherlands. The Institute plays both an executing and an advisory role. In compliance with the contingency plans made by the Ministry of LNV, the Institute has compiled detailed scenarios to control the outbreak of avian influenza (bird flu), foot and mouth disease, classical swine fever and bluetongue. For other animal diseases, such as African swine fever and African horse fever, scenarios are now being developed. Drills are held regularly to update and improve the plans so that everyone is fully prepared for his or her role in case of an outbreak. If a disease breaks out, a large number of samples often need to be processed in a short period of time. To achieve this, the Institute has advanced robots capable of doing a large amount of work. It also has wide experience in upgrading the research and in mobilising extra staff required in such circumstances.

2. Animal Health Service Deventer (GD)

GD is a market oriented organisation primarily for the improvement of animal health and safety of animal products. Veterinary specialists provide farmers and veterinary practitioners with assistance and advice not only with the fight against infectious diseases but also with aspects of animal husbandry and animal welfare. GD has a large diagnostic laboratory which has been accredited by the Dutch Accreditation Board (RvA) based on NEN-EN-ISO 17025 since 1993. GD employs several specialists in the fields of pathology, microbiology, chemistry and toxicology. The GD performs testing for export and import permits.

GD organises and implements several mandatory and voluntary eradication and prevention programs.

3. PTC+

PTC+ is *the* Practical Training Center in the Netherlands that yearly trains 30.000 mid-career professionals and students looking to acquire practical knowledge and skills to tackle today's challenges and to profit from market-oriented agriculture, livestock and horticulture prospects.

PTC+ International was formed in 2007 to respond to the growing need to manage the demand for international training. PTC+ International is your gateway to PTC+ 's services:

- A training partner in international project tenders and consortia;
- A preferred training provider for Dutch and foreign private companies;
- A trainer-of-trainers for other training organisations, extension services, governmental institutions and non-governmental organisations in developing countries;
- A capacity builder with decades of experience for national and regional training institutes (i.e. curriculum design, extensive train-the-trainer programs, management development and functional design of training facilities);
- A training partner to support the development of Practical Training Centers modeled on the PTC+ concept.

4. Animal Sciences Group

The Animal Sciences Group of Wageningen UR is an internationally renowned knowledge organisation in the field of animal production, animal welfare and animal health. Core activities are scientific and practice-based research, academic education and generating (animal) production systems and innovations.

The staffs of highly qualified people instruct young academics and undertake research for a large group of clients. The research varies from specialist to multi-disciplinary, while the focus is always on the concepts of quality and independence for both education and research.

Dates and locations

The course will be held in The Hague and at the Wageningen International Conference Centre (WICC) in Wageningen (<http://www.wicc.nl>):

Wageningen International Conference Centre	23 November – 29 November
NH Hotel The Hague	29 November – 3 December
Wageningen International Conference Centre	3 December – 13 December

From The Hague and Wageningen, excursions will be organized, among others, to:

- Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality
- The Dutch Food and Consumer Product Safety Authority (VWA)
- Central Veterinary Institute
- Animal Health Service Deventer

Fees/Accommodation

The Netherlands government will provide fellowships. The fellowship includes costs such as international travel, board and lodging, visa and insurance, tuition fees, lecture materials and excursions insofar and included in the program. Participants will be accommodated in the NH Hotel Beatrixkwartier, The Hague and the Wageningen International Conference Centre.

Admission Requirements

Participants should be government officials or persons working for semi-public agencies in the New Member States, candidate Member States, potential candidate Member States and in the neighboring countries. The participants are professionals in animal health policy development or are engaged with the delivery of services (e.g. inspection, monitoring, communication, enforcement, etc.) that are essential for the animal health systems to function and develop effectively.

Training approach

Since a group consisting of 50 individuals is too big for interactive didactical working methods, most of the time the group will be split up into two groups of 25 persons. Assignments will be carried out in small working groups of 4-6 participants or on individual basis. The opening and closing of the course, some of the presentations and the (social) excursions will be organized as plenary sessions.

Applications

Applications should be made through the Netherlands Embassy in the applicant's country. Application form should be downloaded from the website: www.cross-agency.nl
Go to Downloads, click on application form for the relevant course, click on your country; you can download the application form.

Application (duly signed by the applicant and his or her employer) should be submitted before the 3rd of October 2008, through the Royal Dutch Embassy in the applicant's country. By this date, all form, including the signed employer statement, must be received by the Royal Netherlands Embassy. Please, note that the application instructions on the website need to be followed carefully.

Only fully documented applications will be considered. The total number of applicants will be limited to 50. Admission will be on a competitive basis.

Applicants who have been accepted for the course are expected to attend. In case of no-show or (too) late cancellations (i.e. three weeks before the course commences), the course organizers have the right to claim all costs incurred from the candidate's employer.

More information on the application procedure and course organization of MTEC Animal Health course can be obtained from:

Wageningen International – WUR
Wageningen International
P.O. Box 88
6700 AB Wageningen, The Netherlands
Contact person: Monika Sopov
Phone: +31 317 481406
E-mail: monika.sopov@wur.nl

More information on other courses developed under the MTEC program can be obtained from:

EVD/CROSS
P.O. Box 17355
2502 CJ The Hague
The Netherlands
Contact person Michiel Zimmer
Telephone +31 70 778 81 42
Website www.cross-agency.nl
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