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From the Executive Director

Watch IFAH Executive Director Carel du Marchie Sarvaas' short video message.

Reaching out to emerging markets: India and China

Carel du Marchie Sarvaas visited Delhi in February, where he spoke at a conference organised by the Indian Federation for Animal Health (INFAH) on the theme ‘Healthy Animals – Healthy India: the contribution of the Indian animal health industry towards healthy animals and healthier India’.

Some 100 government, industry, academic and media people attended the event. Other speakers included Dr G N Singh, Drug Controller General of India and Dr Suresh S Honnappagol, Animal Husbandry Commissioner, as well as leading academics. IFAH’s Executive Director also took the opportunity to meet officials at the Ministry to discuss regulatory challenges, as well as many INFAH members. IFAH has over 45 members, including all the leading companies, and is an example of a well-run association. The event was very successful in relaying core messages.
Carel du Marchie Sarvaas also visited Xiamen in Southern China in March, where he presented IFAH during the 23rd meeting of the Chinese Veterinary Drug Association (CVDA). The meeting, organised by the rotating presidency under Boehringer Ingelheim, considered implementation of the new 2D code, trends in animal husbandry and other regulatory developments.

The IFAH Executive Director had the opportunity to engage with leading government officials including Yang Jinsong (Deputy Director-General of IVDC), Lin Diansheng (Chief of Division of Pharmaceutical Administration, Ministry of Agriculture) and Li Xiangdong (Executive Vice President of CVDA). Additionally, he met the general managers and the regulatory affairs managers of IFAH member companies to discuss organisational and regulatory matters. Also present during the meetings were the Director of the Asian Animal Health Association (AAHA), Yoshishiro Shimizu, and Jackie Atkinson (Bayer), the new chair of IFAH’s Regulatory Strategy Team.

IFAH benchmarking survey 2015

The new and streamlined benchmarking survey on best regulatory practice is progressing well. An online questionnaire went live in March with completion expected by mid-April. Interviews with selected company people will be completed by the end of May. The goal is to have all seven final reports (Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, Europe, Japan and USA) ready for October 2015. The focus will then be on how to use these effectively to influence improvements to regulatory requirements and processes in those regions.

Regulatory convergence

IFAH has engaged with local industry associations in addressing the regulatory priorities identified for Brazil, China, India and Russia. You will find further information on IFAH’s participation in events held in India and China under ‘Reaching out to emerging markets: India and China’.

Meanwhile, the IFAH Regulatory Strategy Team (RST) has agreed dossier templates for Asia and Latin America, which will be rolled out. The goal is to avoid duplication of work and to increase regulatory efficiency.

VICH Steering Committee and Outreach Forum

An IFAH delegation participated in the 5th VICH Outreach Forum and the 31st VICH Steering Committee meeting, held in Washington DC on 23-26 February 2015. The Steering Committee finalised the programme of the 5th VICH public conference on the theme ‘Reaching out to the world’ (Tokyo, 28-29 October 2015). The conference will focus on the contribution of VICH to the global One Health approach and to animal welfare in test for veterinary medicinal products. Additionally, it will look into the benefits of the VICH Outreach Forum to all countries.

At the Forum OIE provided a progress report on their work in international harmonisation, and representatives from ASEAN, CAMEVET and China presented their respective activities regarding the application of VICH guidelines. Additionally, the Steering Committee, OIE and Forum participants discussed strategies to improve the application of VICH guidelines in Forum member countries and regions. Other key outcomes of the meeting include:
• Agreement to establish a VICH Quality Expert Working Group with the goal of developing guidance on harmonised stability testing requirements (particularly storage conditions during the studies) for new veterinary drug substances or medicinal products for countries in climatic zones III and IV.
• Finalisation of the training and communication strategy which outlines the training on VICH guidelines in two levels: level 1 covers the general understanding of VICH and the guidelines, while level 2 will consider training modules on specific guidelines. A concept paper will be developed on how this would be delivered and implemented.
• Adoption of final VICH guideline 53 (electronic file format – electronic exchange of documents: file format requirements) for implementation in the VICH regions by February 2016.


New infographic: differences between the human and veterinary medicines sectors

IFAH has published an infographic entitled ‘We are similar, but we are not the same: veterinary medicines vs human medicines’. The infographic highlights some of the processes involved with developing and marketing veterinary medicines and how having the same regulatory processes can impact product development. Download

Global animal health conference 2015: register!

Registration is open for the 4th global animal health conference on regulatory convergence, which will be held in Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania, on 24-25 June 2015. Funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF) and facilitated by IFAH, discussions will centre on regulatory convergence in especially developing countries and on how to enable the widest availability of high quality, safe and efficacious products in these markets, with an emphasis on Africa and East Africa in particular. Register now.

Overview of activities in 2014

IFAH has published an overview of animal health associations’ activities in 2014. The document contains a summary of IFAH’s and members associations’ achievements in terms of regulatory affairs, antibiotics, communications and stakeholder dialogue across the world (Europe, North America, South America, Asia and Africa, as well as Australia and New Zealand). Download

Investment in new veterinary antibiotics: barriers, consequences and solutions
IFAH published an article in the International Animal Health Journal (IAHJ) outlining the main barriers that prevent or slow down development and coming-to-market of novel veterinary antibiotics, and the consequences of diminishing investment. [Download](#)

**Feature interview: A day in the life of George Heidgerken, CEO of Boehringer Ingelheim Animal Health, and IFAH President**

George Heidgerken, Corporate Senior Vice President of Boehringer Ingelheim and Global Head of Boehringer Ingelheim Animal Health, leads IFAH as President since 18 March 2015. In an interview, he shares his views and vision on the animal health sector.

**IFAH Update (IU): Tell us about your background**
George Heidgerken (GH): I am Canadian. I have academic degrees in both Agriculture and Geology. I have more than 29 years of experience in the Animal Health industry and have worked in Canada, the USA and in Germany. I started my career in Sales, working for Pfizer and eventually worked my way up through Marketing and Sales Management to General Management.

**IU: You lead Boehringer Ingelheim Animal Health, a company with more than 50 years’ experience in the sector. How would you define your role as CEO?**
GH: My role is to bring innovative therapeutic solutions to our customers. Innovations that help farm animals, farmers, pets, pet owners, innovations that create value and meet so far unmet medical needs and which will hopefully be beneficial to our society.

**IU: The animal health industry and the pharmaceutical sector as a whole are in constant change, with mergers and acquisitions underway. What are the challenges facing the animal health industry at the moment and where do you see opportunities for growth?**
GH: Our customers are expecting more and better solutions to animal diseases. These solutions must be safer, more effective, and of the highest standards of health and welfare for animals and people. Bringing more of these solutions to our customers is our industry’s clear opportunity. In order to bring these solutions to our customers, we need to promote a predictable, science-based regulatory environment that facilitates the supply of innovative, quality products into a competitive market place.

**IU: How important are research and innovation in the animal health sector and how are they evolving within your company?**
GH: Research and innovation is the backbone of our company and our strategy. To a large extent the same can be said for our industry.

**IU: From your perspective, what are the benefits of working with other companies within IFAH?**
GH: IFAH and our member companies are aligned through these benefits. We are committed to make a tangible contribution to improved health and welfare for both companion and food-producing animals and to a better quality of life for animals and people. As only healthy animals produce safe and wholesome food, our commitment allows the farming community to provide safe and high quality food and at the same time conserve natural resources. Similarly, our constant commitment to develop better medicines for companion animals is adding to the length and quality of life enjoyed by pets and their owners.

**IU: Your company is based in Ingelheim am Rhein, Germany. What is it like working and living there?**
GH: Ingelheim is truly a multicultural, diverse and global community. Working here with this global team is always an enlightening and exciting experience.

**IU: What is your favourite animal? Do you have any pets?**
GH: I do not have a favourite animal. I like them all. I will always have a passion for the cattle industry based on my family background. But today, my favourite morning event is taking our Miniature Schnauzer for a long walk.
For further information about IFAH’s 25th General Assembly, see

- IFAH press release on George Heidgerken’s appointment as IFAH President
- Minutes of the 25th General Assembly
- Minutes of the 3rd Member Associations Forum

Events calendar

Internal meetings
7-8 October 2015, Washington DC (USA): IFAH Board and Global Teams’ meetings
See further details on the extranet

External meetings

- 13-17 April 2015, San José (CR): Codex Committee on Residues of Veterinary Drugs in Foods (CCRVDF)
- 21-22 May 2015, Madrid (ES): WVA/WMA global conference on One Health
- 11 June 2015, Brussels (BE): IFAH-Europe annual conference on ‘Healthy animals, healthy food, a healthy future’
- 24-25 June 2015, Dar Es Salaam (TZ): 4th global animal health conference on regulatory convergence
- 29 June - 1 July 2015, London (UK): First Global Alliance for Research on Avian Diseases (GARAD) conference
- 25-27 October 2015, Tokyo (JP): VICH Steering Committee meeting
- 28-30 October 2015, Tokyo (JP): 5th VICH conference

Your views interest us

Regional/national activities
We should be most grateful if you would provide us with information on regional/national activities concerning IFAH’s priority areas.

Emerging issues
We would also welcome your contributions on emerging issues that you feel need to be reported as they may have an international impact on our industry.
Send us your meeting reports
We look forward to getting from you written reports on meetings or conferences where you participated on behalf of IFAH. This will help us enhance our internal communication and the service to members.

Your input will help us complete information in future newsletters. Please send your contributions to the IFAH Communications Department.

Thank you very much.

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