

## Animal Nutrition and Health - Benefiting from Research Networks

VIV exhibition is the ultimate meeting place for international top decision makers in the Feed-to-Meat industry. The COST workshop on *Animal Nutrition and Health – Benefitting from Research Networks* aims to bring scientific expertise close to industry and promote bilateral networking. The workshop will include sections on pig development and health, aquaculture and animal nutrition. Researchers, Scientists and Stakeholders related to Research and Development are the target groups of this event.

Pork represents about 40% of the world's meat production so there is a need to improve pig husbandry in terms of health, sustainability, food quality and safety. Recently, a conference in Hinxton, Cambridge, UK, co-organised by COST, celebrated the completion of the pig genome sequence. This scientific breakthrough is expected to yield many benefits for the pork industry. It will allow scientists to pinpoint genes associated with a variety of production and health traits. Members of the COST PigNet network, have been actively involved in this global sequencing collaboration.

In the same line, COST Action FA0902 sets out to understand and combat Porcine Reproductive and Respiratory Syndrome (PRRS) through genetics and genomic tools. Participants will develop current knowledge on epidemiology and immunopathology of PRRS to identify ways to combat it.

PRRS accounts for about \$600 million annually, a third of the cost of infectious disease to the US pig industry. However, respective figures in Europe have still not been defined. Combating PRRS, with its impact on reproduction, will undoubtedly improve the competitiveness of the pig industry and enhance its sustainability.

Another thriving European industry is aquaculture, which produces about 1.3 million tones of fish. Despite considerable progress in the aquaculture sector, there are still many unsolved issues.

These include high mortality during larval production and the variability in larval phenotype, performance. There is also a need for more scientific knowledge on fish larval physiology, quality and performance predictors for larval-juvenile production and better production protocols and hatchery management procedures.

These are the main goals of COST Action FA0801. All these, along with an improved fish welfare, will enable a sustainable growth of a competitive and profitable aquaculture industry. Improving fish welfare will not only reduce the impact of aquaculture on the environment but will also increase consumers confidence in farmed fish products. COST Action FA867 aims at advancing our knowledge on fish welfare, formulating a set of guidelines of welfare in farmed fish and constructing a range of welfare indicator protocols to be used in the industry.

Consumers confidence in food products from animals has been recently shaken due to the outbreaks. For this reason, farmers, nutritionists, industry and governments are obliged to pay attention to animal feedstuff production processes. They need to acknowledge that animal feed safety is a prerequisite for human food safety. Considering that at least 450 million tones of feedstuffs are required each year within the EU-25, the feed industry is not dispensable. The health-promoting aspects of feeds and feed components need to be optimised to have healthy animals, a prerequisite for the production of high quality and safety of foods for human consumption and for improving the confidence in food products from animals. COST Action FA0802 deals with these issues and aims at promoting acquisition of knowledge on the roles of feed and animal nutrition in improving animal health and enable animal industry to regain public confidence in animal products.

The COST workshop Animal Nutrition and Health – Benefitting from Research Networks aims to identify common ground between science and industry, stirring discussion, promoting networking and creating bilateral science-industry collaborations.