

NEWSLETTER No 2 / 2013

Economic decision making



Thinking about the health and welfare of animals and economics, the first topic that springs to our minds are the costs associated with large outbreaks of animal diseases. A close second is the impact of trade in animal products on the national balance sheet. Yet these are just examples

of a much wider range of animal health and welfare topics where economics can play a role. Many more animal related topics, which do not necessarily make big headlines in the news, are subject to economics decision making.

Economics or “**making decisions and choices in the allocation of scarce resources** in order to achieve different goals” is to a very large extent about why people do what they do, or may-be why they don’t do what one might think they should do. It takes into consideration people’s behavior and how this is shaped by what they value. It is not only money that matters, but everything people care for.

Economics helps to understand why individual animal owners can see things differently than politicians and institutions. It also gives an insight in the reasons why people might not comply with a good advice, or how to increase the effectiveness of such advice.

A good education and training in understanding the structure and functioning of different animal species, relevant diseases, public health implications, animal behavior, etc. are what makes the animal health professional an animal health professional. However additional training and good understanding of economics is what makes the animal health professional an effective animal health professional. And that is exactly what NEAT is aiming for: something very valuable!

Jan Vaarten

Content

- 1 Update on the online survey
- 2 Update on the NEAT annual meeting
- 3 Work package 4: Development and testing of teaching and training materials & tools
- 4 Update on dissemination activities
- 5 Meet new members of the NEAT team

1 Update on the online survey

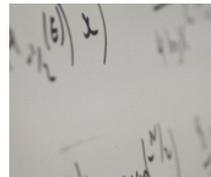
The first draft of the survey questionnaire to enquire about the status quo of teaching and training in the economics of animal health and about future needs in this domain has been prepared and is currently being revised following comments from NEAT partners. The first and main part of the survey is targeted at educational institutions that are a part of the target group “Veterinary bodies”. Three shorter sections are addressing the three target groups “public bodies”, “industry bodies” and “European bodies”. Definitions will be included as a glossary and the final version of this glossary will be available in the website as a common reference document.

The information collected from the survey will be used to map the current animal health economics teaching, define current and future needs, and to identify gaps. This information will form the foundation for enhancing existing or developing new teaching and training materials.

2 Update on the NEAT annual meeting

A date for your diaries: Please note that the third NEAT annual meeting will take place on Mon, 7 & Tue, 8 September 2015 in Bologna, Italy.

We look forward to the first NEAT annual meeting which will take place in less than six months in London (Tue, 10 & Wed, 11 September 2013 at the Royal Veterinary College). This first meeting will present the results of the first 12 months of networking activities, discuss relevant



topics of the network in workshops, and outline activities for the next year. A list of hotels near the venue and a description of how to get to the venue can be found on the meeting page: www.neat-network.eu/neat-events

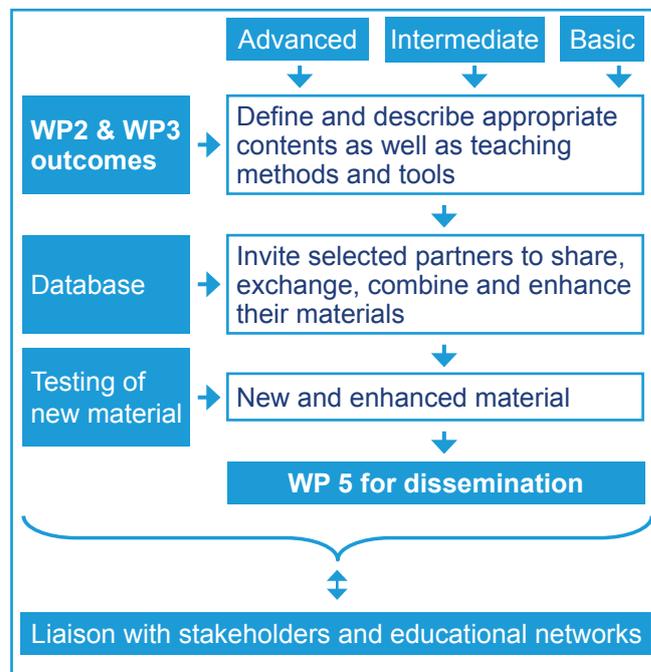
It is a requirement of the funding body that all NEAT partner institutions are represented at the annual meeting. Please allow enough time to make your travel arrangements and book your accommodation in London. For travel and subsistence costs, all partners need to apply the internal rule of their institutions (per diem or actual costs), which needs to be documented (an official document describing the rule signed by the legal representative or the accountant is accepted). As a reminder regarding documentation: All partners are responsible for keeping their supporting documents such as receipts and boarding passes; a complete list of supporting documents needed is available on skydrive (www.skydrive.com). Please also check the financial and reporting guidelines available on the NEAT Skydrive Folder: [01_Administration > 01c_Finances](#).

3 Work package 4: Development and testing of teaching and training materials & tools

The aim of this work package is to promote exchange and integration of materials used for education and training in EAH. The results from the survey and the workshops at the first annual NEAT conference will be used to enhance existing materials for teaching and training of animal health professionals at the undergraduate and postgraduate level, develop and test new materials for teaching and training of animal health professionals, and organize and provide courses for staff of veterinary faculties and organisations involved in training and working with animal health professionals.

Based on the NEAT data collection activities of the first 12 months, appropriate teaching and training materials will be described for three different levels: basic, intermediate and advanced. Then partners will collaborate to share, exchange, combine and enhance their materials and develop new materials where appropriate.

WP4 activities and its links to other WPs are illustrated in the figure below.



4 Update on dissemination activities

NEAT blog

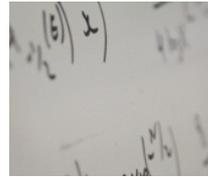
The NEAT blog provides a public platform to discuss current topics relevant to animal health economics and is now online on www.neat-network.eu/blog

On the NEAT blog articles on current research results and important topics will be published. The blog will be open for NEAT partners and public stakeholders to write comments. We are looking forward to vivid discussions.

The blog will be maintained and coordinated by Jostein Pettersen, Jostein.Pettersen@nvh.no. Please contact him if you would like to contribute a short blog article or if you have any questions regarding the blog.

Conferences, courses and training events

A list of events relevant for partners and stakeholders of the NEAT project has been set up on the NEAT website: www.neat-network.eu/events&courses. Please contribute to this list by informing Jostein, Jostein.Pettersen@nvh.no on any NEAT relevant events you know of.



5 Meet new members of the NEAT team

Houda Bennani



Houda graduated as a Veterinarian from Hassan II Institute of Agronomy and Veterinary Sciences, Morocco and joined a private surgery where she has worked for 5 years. In 2006 she obtained her Master of Science in Fundamental and Applied Microbiology from Bretagne Occidental University, France. In 2010 she completed her Master in Control of Infectious Diseases in Animals at the Royal Veterinary College. Houda has worked at the RVC as a research assistant in the Economics of Zoonotic Disease Control. Houda has joined the RVC team to work as a part time Research Assistant for NEAT and she is in charge of a variety of scientific and administrative NEAT tasks.

Maria Mihaita



Maria has graduated as a veterinary doctor in 1989, in Bucharest. In 2004, she gained her PhD diploma in veterinary medicine and the theme was: "Abnormal behaviours in dogs".

Between 1989 and 2005, she has been a practitioner on large and small animals, as a governmental vet. Since 2005, she has worked as a senior councillor in the central veterinary administration of Romania. The main job duties in the actual position are: disease notification and communication, TRACES issues and disease control.

Maria has published three books relating to dogs ethology and psychopathology, and more articles on the same theme.

Sara Babo Martins



Sara Babo Martins graduated as a veterinarian from the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine of Lisbon in 2005 and obtained her MSc in Control of Infectious Diseases of Animals at the Royal Veterinary College, London, in 2009. She has worked at the Ministry of Agriculture of Portugal and in the World Health Organization, besides that she has worked as a research assistant at the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine of Lisbon and at the Royal Veterinary College. Sara is currently a PhD candidate with the Royal Veterinary College, based at SAFOSO. Her research focuses on the economic assessment of surveillance of zoonoses from a "One Health" perspective.

Jostein Mulder Pettersen



Jostein graduated as a veterinarian specialized in aqua medicine from the Norwegian School of Veterinary Science (NVH) in June 2012. He has since been working at the NVH in a project related to salmon welfare in Norwegian aquaculture. He will start his PhD on animal health economics and salmon aquaculture in autumn 2013 and believes that NEAT will provide an excellent platform for exchanging knowledge of AHE and an arena for creating useful professional and social networks. In addition, he will also contribute to the NEAT, particularly in the dissemination of curricula, course contents, teaching and training materials.

Contact

Jonathan Rushton / Barbara Häslér
RVC, Department of Veterinary Clinical Sciences
info@neat-network.eu