

## World Animal Vaccination Day: Prevention is better than cure

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Press Release

Brussels, 20 April 2018; Vets and the animal medicines industry join forces on World Animal Vaccination Day to remind Europe's 80 million pet-owning households of the importance of vaccination, a cornerstone of responsible pet ownership that protects the important relationship people have with their pets.



**Photo credit: Fotolia**

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Highlighting the increasing trend for bringing pets into our homes in Europe, and recalling the many benefits that pets bring us, the three associations; AnimalhealthEurope, FECAVA and FVE published a [joint infographic](#) [1] to remind animal owners of the need to keep up both primary and booster vaccines.

“Preventative healthcare is a central part of companion animal veterinary medicine of the 21st century. An important part of the 'annual health check' is ensuring that pets are appropriately protected from infectious disease by vaccination,” stated FECAVA President Dr. Wolfgang Dohne.

Speaking for the companion animal veterinary federation in Europe, Dr. Dohne continued: “Within Europe, pet vaccination has been actively practiced for decades, and in many areas this has resulted in good control over infectious diseases by establishment of effective levels of 'herd immunity' (population immunity). However, there are other areas of Europe in which these diseases remain prevalent due to poor vaccination uptake. Even in areas with traditionally high levels of herd immunity, recent economic issues have led to reduced uptake of preventive healthcare measures, including routine vaccination. This places our pet population at risk, and for some vaccine-preventable zoonotic diseases (e.g. canine rabies, leptospirosis), this has a potential impact for the human population.”

FVE President, Rafael Laguens, speaking on behalf of the federation of veterinarians in Europe echoed the prevention message and shared a direct message for all pet owners: “Prevention is better than cure. Vaccination is an integral part of the prevention plan to keep your pets healthy. Vaccination is also important to prevent yourself and your family from zoonotic diseases, such as rabies. Ensure that you visit your veterinarian regularly, at least once every year to check on your animal health status, and to get advice on the necessary vaccinations against major infectious diseases. Your veterinarian will also help you regarding other preventive healthcare measures such as deworming and flea treatments as well as on proper diet and behavioural issues. Veterinarians care for animals and people.”

Now in its third year, World Animal Vaccination Day falls directly ahead of [European Immunisation Week](#) [2], when the European region organises awareness-raising activities on the importance of immunisation for people’s health and well-being.

Recalling the One Health role of animal vaccination, Wijnand de Bruijn, AnimalhealthEurope President concluded: “Vaccination plays an important role in animal health management, but we must never forget the important role that animal vaccination plays in our own health. This applies equally for both pets and farm animals. Disease prevention protects against transmission to other animals or to people, it can help to safeguard precious resources like antibiotics by reducing the occurrence of infectious bacterial disease, and in the case of farm animals it can help to protect people against food-borne illnesses. This is why AnimalhealthEurope’s members continue to invest in developing new vaccines and other solutions for preventing disease in animals.”

## **About the author**

### **Press contact:**

Clare Carlisle, Public Relations Manager

[c.carlisle@animalhealtheurope.eu](mailto:c.carlisle@animalhealtheurope.eu) [3]

M: +32 474 388711

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**Links**

- [1] <https://www.animalhealtheurope.eu/resources/37:infographic-wavd-news.html>
- [2] <http://www.euro.who.int/en/media-centre/events/events/2018/04/european-immunization-week-2018>
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