



CaribVET information bulletin N°2

[DOWNLOAD PDF VERSION](#)

Editorial board words

Someone once said that the basic building block of good communication is the feeling that every human being is unique and of value. CaribVET values every member country/territory and organization/institution and we were very much encouraged in our first issue to receive many congratulatory comments from our CVOs. Through this second issue of our Bulletin we hope to reach out not only to our members but also to the entire veterinary service personnel in the Caribbean. We want to inform you on the activities of all our units and update you on research findings. A surveillance network depends on the exchanges of information at all levels with the persons out there in the field especially in remote areas being as important as those of us in central office. We have had the opportunity to dialogue with these remarkable field agents in Varadero, Cuba; Wallerfield, Trinidad; Commewijne, Suriname and Santa Elena, Belize and everywhere we have found talented, well-trained people in love with what they do. We dedicate this issue to those field agents out there - to name some of you out there: those doing meat inspection, border inspection, ambulatory clinics, disease investigation, or disease control.

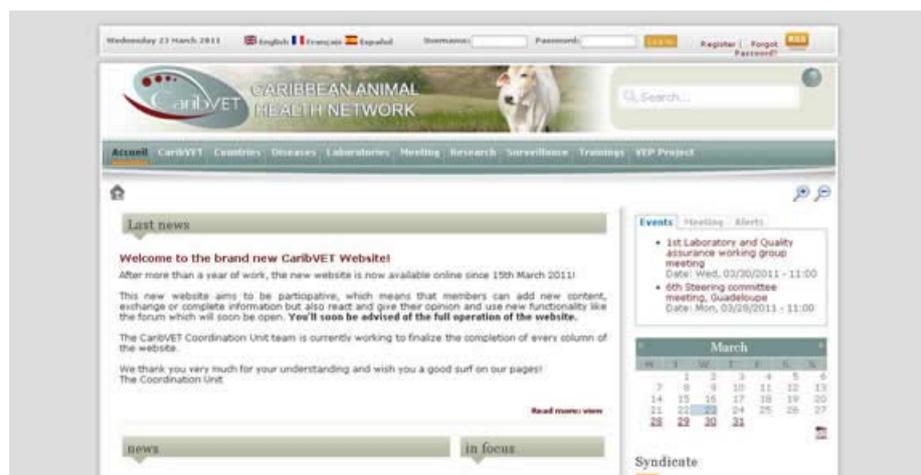
This year 2011 is also a special year for all veterinarians and friends of veterinarians for we celebrate the 250th world anniversary of veterinary education, the veterinary profession and the concept of comparative pathobiology. We are pleased to inform our readers that the 6th CaribVET Steering Committee meeting to be held in Guadeloupe on 28-29 March 2011 is an accredited Vet2011 event! And to the VET2011 motto of Vet for health, Vet for food and Vet for the Planet, we add "Caribbean Vet for Vet2011.

We hope you enjoy this second issue. Do not forget to check us out on our new website www.caribvet.net and do contact us for articles for future Bulletins: caribinfo@caribvet.net

Victor Gongora
Chair of CaribVET

EVENT: LAUNCHING OF THE NEW WEBSITE!

CaribVET Website



We are very pleased to announce the launch of our new website. CaribVET.net aims to be clear, accurate and collaborative. Indeed, you can directly contribute to the writing of articles, news and announcements of events. A guide will be put on the website to explain you how to do. In addition, you will find a rich content and tools to facilitate sharing information (forum, newsletter, mailing). The interface has been completely redesigned. Indeed, important information such as news, events, meetings and health alerts appear separately from the homepage. We strive to continuously improve our information system and communication with you. Before long, new tools will enrich the site (database, online training ...)

Enjoy your visit and feel free to contact us or send us your suggestions: we will do our utmost to continue improving our services and our communication with you!

Willy Hilaire,
Web developer, CIRAD Guadeloupe

IN THIS ISSUE

- EDITORIAL BOARD WORDS
- EVENT: LAUNCHING OF THE NEW WEBSITE!
- ECHOES FROM WORKING GROUPS
- LIFE OF LABORATORIES
- MEMBERS
- VEP
- CAPACITY BUILDING
- ANNOUNCEMENTS
- OIE
- REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS
- IN BRIEF
- FOCUS
- SPECIAL FEATURE

MEMBER'S

Lloyd Webb, from PAHO to Tuskegee University (USA)



As former chair of the CaribVET Salmonellosis Working Group, I am no longer employed with the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), having

retired in January 2011. I have taken up a new assignment as Director/Program Coordinator/Assoc Professor with the College of Veterinary Medicine, Nursing and Allied Health (CVMNAH) at Tuskegee University, Alabama, USA. Having served CaribVET since its inception, I am still committed to support this network, and to maintain my contact and working relationship with both the CaribVET Steering Committee and with the Salmonellosis and other Working Groups.

Laure Bournez, change of position: from CaribVET Coordination Unit to pursuit of PhD dealing with tropical bont tick!



"I have been working within the CaribVET Coordination Unit for one year until January 2011. I started my PhD, in Guadeloupe studying the different factors

that play a role on the distribution of the main vector of heartwater, the Tropical Bont Tick, which is present in our region and in Africa. More specifically, I shall study possible interactions of ticks of the genus *Amblyomma*. My former position in the CaribVET Coordination Unit allows me to link research and surveillance and I do hope my research will bring new useful information to the Caribbean region. Besides this change, I'm still involved in some activities in CaribVET, more especially in the Avian Influenza Working Group."

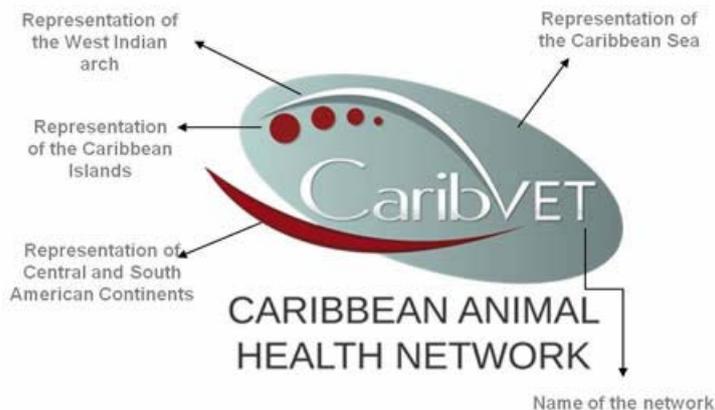
ECHOES FROM WORKING GROUPS

New CaribVET Logo!

We have the pleasure to introduce our new CaribVET logo and the graphic charter! After more than a year of deliberation, this logo was unanimously adopted and validated by the Steering Committee few months after its 5th meeting.



Why was it decided to change the CaribVET logo? Because the recent development of the network which now includes 32 countries and territories from the Caribbean, Central America and South America has brought significant evolution of the logo which was not representative of the central and South American continent. The CaribVET logo is the base and the reference of our corporate image which keeps our traditional objective: to make the animal health in the Caribbean a priority. It is now composed of 5 elements which correspond much better to the CaribVET network area and topics.



What is a graphic charter for? There are two main interests in having a graphic charter. First, the graphic identity remains intact regardless of the graphic works, so that the network (which is a sum of individualities) speaks with « one voice », the logo is corporate design. Secondly, the graphic charter allows the receiver to easily identify the transmitter. We will be able to visually identify the various accomplishments and graphics within a single graphical support. The graphic charter can be downloaded on the website www.caribvet.net.

Aurelie Raer

Project manager, CIRAD Guadeloupe

VEP

Experience of a VEP at a CaribVET Working Group Meeting

The 7th meeting of the CaribVET Epidemiology Working Group was held in Barbados, 1 – 3 December, 2010 (see Echoes from working group). As the Veterinary Epidemiologist/Para-Epidemiologist (VEP) for Barbados, I was invited to attend this meeting as an observer.

It was a most worthwhile experience. I was able to get a “behind the scenes” look at the hard work that goes into devising questionnaires, planning and evaluating the SNATs, and planning activities of the CaribVET network. The discussion on Risk Assessment was particularly informative. It was also an opportunity for me to give a brief update on the VEP project and to present my Epiproject entitled “Investigation of risk factors for Salmonella on commercial layer farms in Barbados”. The group gave valuable feedback and advice on how to proceed with the epiproject.

I would like to sincerely thank the Chair and organisers for giving me the chance to participate in the meeting. I would also like to encourage the other VEPs, whenever possible, to attend such meetings when held in their country.

Quick minutes of the 7th Epidemiology working group meeting, Turtle Beach Hotel, Christ Church, Barbados



Barbados was chosen as the venue to hold the 7th meeting of the CaribVET Epidemiology Working Group (1 - 3 December 2010). This was the first Epidemiology Working Group meeting to be held in Barbados and members arrived on 30th November, the day of the 44th Independence celebration of Barbados. Participants came from far and wide to visit our beautiful island and enjoy our hospitality. The meeting was held at the Turtle Beach Hotel and guest participants included Dr Cedric Lazarus, FAO and Dr Vicki Aimey, Veterinary Epidemiologist/Para-epidemiologist (VEP), Barbados (see her article, VEP corner).

The meeting was intensive with several subject areas being discussed; among these were SNAT*; the potential use of Social Network Analysis (SNA) by CaribVET and the Risk Analysis database. With the assistance of Dr. Gongora (Belize) and Dra. María-Irian Percedo-Abreu (Cuba), a demonstration was given on the application of the English version of the territorial-based risk analysis database.

In addition, the EpiGroup discussed new topics, particularly dealing with passive surveillance, the lack of long term training in Epidemiology in the Caribbean and the role CaribVET may play in emergency situations. These, along with the scoring of priority diseases, will be discussed more deeply during the next EpiGroup meeting. The full report of the meeting will be available on the website (www.caribvet.net)

Unfortunately, the group was unable to see much of Barbados, but I am sure what they did see will encourage them to visit these wonderful shores again!

* SNAT: Surveillance Network Assessment Tool

Bryan Sanford,

Senior Animal Health Assistant,
Veterinary Services, Barbados

LIFE OF LABORATORIES CENSA – Final workshop of the OIE Twinning project in Epidemiology between Cuba and Italy (11-15 October, 2010).

The twinning project in Epidemiology started in 2008 with the visit of the CENSA specialist to IZS A&M*. The workshop was attended by Dr. Vincenzo Caporale (Director of IZS A&M), Dra Ondina León (sub-director of CENSA) and Dr. Emerio Serrano (General Director of the IMV*) among other specialists from these institutions.

The experiences and the main results achieved during the project were presented and a discussion about the future collaborations was held. Also the proposal of CENSA as an OIE Collaborating Center for Epidemiology and Diagnostic in the Central American and Caribbean Region was presented, as is the purpose of twinning projects. Among the previous activities, workshops on informatics applications use for the strengthening of the epidemiological surveillance



Dr. Aimey right of her colleagues (Dr. Titus from Trinidad and Dr. Frías from Cuba) listening intently at the meeting

Vicki Aimey
Agricultural Officer
Veterinary Services, Barbados

The USAHA 114th Annual General Meeting, the VEP Experience



The VEP group was honoured to have participated in the 114th Annual General Meeting (AGM) of The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA), during the week of November 11th to 17th in Minneapolis Minnesota. One may ask what is the USAHA and what was the significance of our participation. The USAHA is a science-based non-profit, voluntary organization founded in 1897 with a mission to protect animal and public health through various interventions.

On our Arrival we were briefed by Dr. Mo Salman (Epidemiologist at the College of Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences, Colorado) as to how best we can make use of the lectures, and which ones would be most meaningful to us. Participation in such a high level meeting meant a lot to the VEPs and although the schedule was exhaustive, we were able to broaden our knowledge through attendance at and participation in the various lectures. We also had the advantage of attending the small exhibition by various companies, exposing us to future contacts for various supplies and expertise.

Those series of lectures and presentations not only broadened our knowledge and exposed us to what exists in a developed country, but they also cemented and expounded what we have been trying to achieve in our individual countries and by extension our region, especially the concept of "ONE HEALTH" which is a movement to cultivate an all inclusive collaborative approach between human health, animal health (which includes wildlife, pets and livestock) and environmental health. This exposure left us with a renewed zeal to implement in our countries what the USAHA has achieved.

Auria King-Cenac,
Veterinary Officer,
Veterinary Services, Saint Lucia

Next VEP meeting in Costa Rica, April 3rd-9th

and a course on the use of the geographic information Systems (GIS) and risk analysis in animal health, were held (see Capacity building section) with the participation of several specialists from the Region. The Epidemiology twinning project allows strengthening the bases to acquire the necessary tools in epidemiological analysis of animal diseases considered as priorities for the country and the Region, either exotic or endemic and the evaluation of the climatic change impact on animal health through the use of modeling and simulation techniques.

CENSA: Centro Nacional de Sanidad Agropecuaria, Cuba;
IZS&M: Istituto Zooprofilattico Sperimentale dell'Abruzzo e del Molise "G. Caporale" IMV - Veterinary Medicine Institute.

María-Irian Percedo
CENSA, Cuba

CENSA – publications

Pérez L.J., Díaz de Arce H., Frías M.T. (2010). Genetic characterization and phylogenetic analysis of porcine circovirus type 2 strains present in Cuban swine herds. *Research in Veterinary Science* 89, 301–305.

Pérez L.J., Díaz de Arce H., Cilloni F., Salviato A., Marciano S., Perera C.L., Salomoni A., Beato M.S., Romero A., Capua I., Cattoli G. (2010). A SYBR Green-based Real-Time RT-PCR Assay for the detection of Avian H5 Hemagglutinin Subtypes. *OFFLU Technical Meeting, 16-17 November FAO HQ Rome, Italy.*

Pérez L.J., Díaz de Arce H., Martí Cortey, Domínguez P., Percedo M.I., Perera C.L., Tarradas J., Frías M.T., Segalés J., Ganges L., Núñez J.I. (2010) – 6th International Symposium on Geminivirus and the 4th comparative SSDNA. Origin and evolution of porcine circovirus type 2 in Cuba. *Virology Workshop, Guanajuato, México, November 7-12.*

Heidy Diaz de Arce,
CENSA, Cuba

LAVECEN – Avian and human Influenza project in Dominican Republic



The Avian & Human Influenza project in Dominican Republic, funded by the World Bank, started in September 2009 for a period of two years. During the period September 2009-December 2010 a total of 9390 samples were collected by official veterinarians and processed by DIGEGA-LAVECEN* for AI detection (ELISA, AGID, HI, HA, RT-PCR, VI) majority from poultry birds, reaching a total of 57161 samples since the official Surveillance AI Plan was initiated in 2006.

The VEPs will be convening in San Jose, Costa Rica, April 3rd – 9th, in order to present the findings of their individual epidemiologic studies and receive further training in survey design, database management, and data analysis. The meeting will be hosted by IICA, and facilitated by the project mentors (experienced epidemiologists from USDA-APHIS-VS, CIRAD, Colorado State University, University of Florida, and IICA) who have been working with the VEPs over the past year and a half. In addition, the various studies will be evaluated by Dr. Dave Hird, from the University of California-Davis, and Dr. Linda Logan, from Texas A&M University. We are all looking forward to seeing the contribution that these studies make to animal health in the Caribbean region.

Amy Delgado

VEP Coordinator, IICA Costa Rica

CAPACITY BUILDING

IATA training

USDA-APHIS facilitated training on IATA regulation using the Compliance Training CD "Shipping Division 6.2 Dangerous Goods, Biological Substances, GMOs and Dry Ice", from Saf-T-Pack™. The topics included in the training module included, among others, international regulations, shippers and carrier responsibilities, classification of infectious substances, correct packaging, labeling and documentation and emergency response procedures. The CD and a Reference Training Manual was sent to 26 countries/territories of the Caribbean.

In addition, sample boxes were purchased and delivered to 21 countries. A simulation exercise for the delivery of samples is scheduled for April or May 2011.

Technical description of the boxes sent:

Product #	Description	Quantity	Unit of measure	Items per case/ carton
STP-320 R	STP-320 R Category B, Insulated shipping system with reusable secondary pressure vessel. 1.25 L, Polypropylene Secondary pressure vessel.	1	case	4
STP-104	STP-104 1.25 L reusable secondary pressure vessel. Includes O-ring for refurbishment.	2	case	6
STT-410-500	STT-410-500 Saf-T-temp freezer packs – 500 g	2	carton	16
STP-308	STP 308 SYS, category B/ Exempt shipping system insulated 8/case outer box pre printed, Category B and UN 3373 markings, Insulated Chest ID 8x67x11 ½” STP-151 Absorbent Strip STP-609 Saf-T-Rap Sticky bubble wrap 6x12” STP-710 Disposable secondary pressure vessel (medium) STP-803 Class 9 hazard label STP- 804 UN 1845 marking STP-819 Exempt human/animal specimen marking	Various items	Various Items	Various items

Paula Morales,

USDA-APHIS-IS, Dominican Republic

Trainings in Dominican Republic

Within the frame of the Avian and human influenza project (see “Life of laboratories column”), other important activities are/ or were programmed for 2011: a course of Epidemiological surveillance and GIS (February 21 to 25); Avian Diseases workshop for official and accredited veterinarians (May); an Avian Influenza Simulation exercise (April), diagnosis supervision by the RT-PCR installed in the Central Veterinary Laboratory in may 2010 and strengthening of bio security –BSL2- in virology and pathology diagnosis AI areas.

Dejelia Gómez

LAVECEN, Dominican Republic

Monitoring wild birds (surveillance and identification of virus carriers) is one of the most important activities in this project, in some protected areas of Biodiversity like Enriqueillo Lake (salty water lake), Cabral Lagoon, Oviedo Lagoon, Tuna Kay, Saladilla, Limon and Nisibón Lagoon. A total of 211 samples from wild birds have been taken so far and all the results are negative.

*DIGEGA: Dirección General de Ganadería; LAVECEN Laboratorio Veterinario Central,

Dejelia Gómez DIGEGA, Dominican Republic

ANNOUNCEMENTS OF CARIBVET WORKING GROUP MEETINGS

The 6th Steering Committee meeting (28th – 29th March) and the CVO CARICOM meeting (31st – 1st April) will convene in Saint François, Guadeloupe. The program of the Steering Committee meeting is available online on www.caribvet.net.

The 1st meeting of the CaribVET Laboratory and Quality Assurance working group will be held on 30th & 31st March 2011 in Guadeloupe. CaribVET activities related to laboratory will be reviewed; members will work on the activities to be developed in the Caribbean, inter-laboratory assays, quality assurance and training(s) to organize: on diseases, diagnostic tests, IATA system and simulation exercise.

3rd CSF working group meeting in Cuba (3rd – 6th May). The first day of the meeting will be common with SISA meeting whose program has been adapted according to it. The programme is available on CaribVET website.

The 3rd Avian Influenza and Newcastle working group will be held in Athens (Georgia, USA), 19th – 20th May, 2010. The group decided to meet during the first International Avian Respiratory Disease Conference which is of relevance for the group which will broaden its scope to deal with Newcastle disease in addition to Avian Influenza.

2nd Tick and tick-borne diseases working group, St Vincent and the Grenadines, 7th-9th June. Members will review the situation of Tropical Bont Tick (TBT) and, according to the recommendations of the first T&TBD working group meeting, *Boophilus* sp. ticks in the Caribbean. They will also work on surveillance protocols of TBT according to the level of infestation of the islands and define activities dealing with other ticks.

8th Epigroup meeting, July. Precise dates and location will be communicated in the next issue of the bulletin.

IN BRIEF

Surveillance Network evaluation by the Epidemiology working group members: SNAT

Three SNATs were conducted since last issue of the bulletin:



In Belize, 18th–20th October 2010

Course on the use of the Geographic Information Systems and risk analysis in animal health (CENSA, 11-15 May 2010).



This training was organized within the OIE twinning project linking CENSA with the IZS A&M (Italy). Twenty specialists from several Cuban institutions (IMV* national and IMV provincial Camagüey, University of Agriculture of La Havana, Civil Defense and CENSA, among other) were trained in GIS and risk analysis use in animal health issues. The University of Yucatán (Mexico) supported the participation of Dr. Jorge C. Rodríguez-Buenfil, Professor of epidemiology in the Vet School of Yucatán. The participation of Dr. Lissette Gómez (in charge of the Standards and Risk Analysis Division in the DIGEGA* in Dominican Republic and member of the CaribVET Epidemiology working group) was supported by CaribVET. The training was attended by Dr. Paolo Calistri and Dr. Carla Ipoliti, IZS A&M researchers internationally recognized in these fields. Eventually, Dr. María-Irian Percedo (CENSA) and Dr. Yolanda Capdevila (IMV) gave presentations about the Cuban experience in risk analysis and surveillance referenced with GIS.

IMV: Instituto de Medicina Veterinaria (Cuba); **DIGEGA:** Dirección General de Ganadería; **IZS A&M:** Instituto Zooprofilattico Sperimentale dell'Abruzzo e del Molise "G. Caporale"

María-Irian Percedo-Abreu
Epidemiologist, CENSA, Cuba

OIE

Summary of OIE Meeting: 1st Global conference on Veterinary Legislation December 2010, Tunisia.

Several CaribVET members attended the first OIE Global Conference on Veterinary Legislation, which was held December 7-9, 2010, in Djerba, Tunisia. The objectives of the conference included raising awareness of the requirements for effective veterinary legislation, to brainstorm on the associated challenges, and to begin the process of providing guidance (in particular to developing countries) on this issue. The conference presentations and discussions addressed the global situation in regards to veterinary legislation, legal principles necessary for effective legislation, and the use of tools such as the OIE Performance of Veterinary Services for development of an effective veterinary infrastructure. Conference attendees developed and discussed recommendations at the close of the conference.

Cynthia Johnson
Centers for Epidemiology & Animal Health
USDA-APHIS-Veterinary Services

REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

New position: Advisor, Veterinary Public Health at PAHO in Trinidad and Tobago

PAHO is a member of CaribVET since its early days. Main interests for this collaboration are the human-animal health interface, zoonosis and food-borne diseases. PAHO representation to CaribVET is ensured by the Office of Caribbean Program Coordination (OCPC) based in Barbados, in coordination with the Pan American Foot-and-Mouth Disease Center (PANAFTOSA) in Brazil. The position was ensured by Dr Lloyd Webb until the end of 2010, when he retired from PAHO. A vacancy notice has been published on January 26 to replace him and to continue this fruitful collaboration between CaribVET and PAHO. A full description of the duties and skills of that person are described in: https://erecruit.who.int/public/hrd-cl-vac-view.asp?o_c=1000&jobinfo_uid_c=24223&vaclng=en

Philippe Tabard,
PAHO, Trinidad and Tobago

Team of assessors:

- Bryan Sanford, Animal health assistant, Veterinary services Barbados
- María Irian Percedo Abreu, Epidemiologist, CENSA, Cuba
- Laure Bournez, Veterinarian, Cirad, Guadeloupe



In Trinidad and Tobago, 14th–16th February 2011

Team of assessors:

- Cynthia Johnson, Epidemiologist, USDA
- Victor Gongora, BPA, Belize
- Jennifer Pradel, Epidemiologist, CIRAD, Guadeloupe



In Suriname, 28th February–2nd March 2011

Team of Evaluators:

- Kathian Herbert-Hacshaw, CVO St Vincent and the Grenadines
- Victor Gongora, Belize Poultry Association in Belize
- Marion Petit-Sinturel, Epidemiologist, CIRAD, Guadeloupe

FAO booklet available online

FAO's booklet entitled, "International trade in wild birds and related bird movements in Latin America and the Caribbean" is now available [\[here\]](#). The booklet was compiled with the assistance and support of the veterinary services of many of the CaribVET member states who completed the questionnaire which was sent out a few years ago under the regional project, "Emergency assistance for early detection and prevention of Avian Influenza in the Caribbean". Hard copies of the booklet are not yet available but the electronic version can be downloaded at the link given above.

Cedric Lazarus,
Livestock Development Officer, FAO
Sub-regional Office for the Caribbean, Barbados

International conferences/meetings in animal health

Third Seminario Internacional de Sanidad Agropecuaria (SISA), 3rd–6th May, La Habana, Cuba. During the meeting, there will be dedicated i/a session about disasters management in the Food and Agricultural Sectors and ii/the workshop entitled "Animal

FAO/ Meeting TCP H1N1, Georgetown, Guyana, 21-22 March

On March 22 and 23, 2011, FAO in conjunction with the CARICOM Secretariat will host the inception workshop for the regional project entitled, "Technical assistance for the surveillance of Influenza A H1N1/2009 virus and other influenza viruses in swine populations in the Caribbean region." The workshop will be held at the Grand Coastal Hotel in Georgetown, Guyana. Participants will be representatives from the veterinary services of the fourteen participating countries as well as various other stakeholders (including IICA, CIRAD, PAHO and UWI) who are working in the areas of human and animal health in the region. The objectives of the workshop will be to develop and agree on the work-plan of the project and to review the current status of swine influenza viruses worldwide.

The project will assist in strengthening veterinary field surveillance and veterinary diagnostic laboratory systems across the region to ensure prompt detection and diagnosis of the swine influenza virus and other potential subtypes of the virus in the pig population in the participating countries. Through surveys and studies, the project will also address interrelated issues such as bio-security, socio-economics and farming production systems.

Cedric Lazarus,

Livestock Development Officer, FAO
Sub-regional Office for the Caribbean, Barbados

IN BRIEF

New books!

"Handbook on Import Risk Analysis for Animals and Animal Products Introduction and qualitative risk analysis".

The OIE has just published a revised edition of the Handbook on Import Risk Analysis for Animals and Animal Products (Volume I). The revised text provides practical guidance to Veterinary Services needing to conduct risk analyses on proposed imports of animals and animal products consistent with the standards and recommendations of the OIE, particularly those found in the OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Code and Aquatic Animal Health Code. The revised version includes a checklist, a template for the presentation of results and several worked examples, to reflect the use and justification of OIE standards. The Handbook gives practical examples of relevance to OIE Members, especially those wishing to develop their expertise in the area of import risk analysis.

Cristóbal Zepeda

Centers for Epidemiology and Animal Health,
Fort Collins, Colorado

"13 years of hell in paradise"



The idiom "A ticking time bomb" has been used to illustrate many different types of tragedy - in the sports industry, in country economics and politics, to diseases. But it has never been used more appropriately than on the subject of ticks. In September 2000, a Business Week Online article "Cross-Border Bugs: A Ticking Time Bomb" described various threats of foreign tick introductions to the USA. The greatest risk in the case of the Tropical Bont Tick (TBT) is the cattle egret, a migratory bird, over which there is no control. In a 2008 editorial comment on an article about the premature closure of the Caribbean Amblyomma Programme (CAP), the Editor of the EU Newsletter on Ticks and tick-borne diseases concluded his remarks with a very germane avowal: "The time-bomb to the Americas keeps ticking". After the failure of the CAP to eradicate the TBT in the Caribbean, several experts believe that it is only a matter of time before the cattle egret drops the tick to detonate in the southern states of the USA, and then the livestock industry of the whole region will suffer in striking disproportion to the industry required to eliminate the threat. This book describes the long history of the Programme, its eventual implementation, its successes, and then its very painful termination.

Rupert Peggam,

FOCUS: CARIBVET EXPLORES THE RISK OF DISEASE INTRODUCTION THROUGH THE FIGHTING COCK TRADE

Cockfighting is a tradition in many Caribbean countries and territories, where the legal status of fighting or trading in these birds varies by country: legal (e.g. in Dominican Republic), tolerated (e.g. French West Indies) or illegal (e.g. Trinidad and Tobago). As a consequence, the movement and sale of roosters and hens may often be unregulated, representing an important route of avian pathogen introduction and spread into the Caribbean, and highlighting the need to study this particular animal industry. However, discrepancies in the legal status of these activities in each country create societal and political sensitivities that make accurate estimation of the risk of disease transmission between fighting cocks and the commercial poultry industry, complex.

Following the recommendations of the 5th CaribVET Steering Committee meeting, the CaribVET avian influenza working group (AIWG) is conducting a risk analysis and pathways study examining the introduction of contagious and destructive poultry diseases into the Caribbean and its neighbouring countries, through the fighting cock trade. A questionnaire has been sent to all the CVOs of the Caribbean in

Health from the field to the laboratory - the complexity of the scene in the target of the technological advances on the diagnostic and epidemiological analysis". This will be the opportunity for the interchange with specialists from the Caribbean and Central America to promote the joint work in the area of Epidemiology for the region interest. This will continue the OIE Twinning Project between CENSA and IZSA&M. For more information, visit the website: <http://www.sanidadagropecuaria.com/>.

First International Conference on Animal Health Surveillance (ICAHS), 17th–20th May, Lyon, France. CaribVET will be represented in this meeting with 1 oral presentation ("CaribVET charter, a tool for institutionalization and sustainability of a regional animal health network) and 2 posters (Capacity building as a main tool for improvement of Regional Animal Health Network; Establishment of Heartwater surveillance in an enzootic situation: example in Guadeloupe, French West Indies). More information available on the conference website: <http://www.ansespro.fr/icahs/>.

1st meeting of avian respiratory diseases conference, 15th – 18th May, Athens (Georgia, USA). It will focus on several families of avian viruses: avian coronaviruses, paramyxoviruses and laryngotracheitis virus, with an emphasis on infectious bronchitis virus, and Newcastle disease virus. More information, visit: <http://www.georgiacenter.uga.edu/cch/register/1st-international-avian-respiratory-disease-conference>.

6th symposium on emerging and reemerging pig diseases, 12th–15th June, Barcelona. CaribVET submitted two abstract for oral presentation (notification of acceptance mid-April): one dealing with the CSF working group and the other one to the EpiProject of Dr. Jean Rodney Jacques Simon, VEP of Haiti. Visit <http://www.emerging2011.com/index.php/en> for more information.

7th conference on ticks and tick-borne pathogens, August 28th–September 2nd, Zaragoza, Spain. Systematics, epidemiology, genetics and molecular biology research on ticks and tick-borne pathogens integrated as one. The main theme of the conference is Integration: studies aimed toward inclusion of different strategies to solve problems in the complex world of ticks and tick-borne pathogens. Integrative and comprehensive studies intended to solve the complex puzzle of pathogen-vector-host-habitat interactions. Submission of abstracts and early registration are open for more information please click on the website link: www.unizar.es/ttp7/TTP7.

Trainings, courses

Emergency Poultry Disease Response – July 11-14, 2011, held at the University of Delaware, in Newark, Delaware with support provided by the University of Delaware. Maximum 15 participants. Language: English. Deadline for applications: April 1, 2011. More information can be found at: <http://ag.udel.edu/abc/epdr.html>

We need you: CaribVET newsletter recruits!!!

If you want to be a regular or occasional reporter for the CaribVET newsletter for one or several columns, write us at caribinfo@caribvet.net

January 2011 in order to collect information dealing with practices linked to fighting cocks in the Caribbean. In addition to this questionnaire, which aims to collect official information, an important collaboration is also planned with a doctoral student in sociology, who works closely with arenas and fighting cock owners in Martinique (see article below). This researcher will be visiting several islands as part of her research, and we anticipate that her collaboration will provide important insights into the non-official, unregulated aspects of the fighting cock trade. In addition to evaluating the risk of disease introduction, the AI WG intends to improve the awareness of cock owners and fighting establishments in basic bird health and management, as well as avian disease prevention and surveillance, through the development of communication tools and strategies tailored for the Caribbean.

For more information on this project, look at the minutes of the last AIWG meeting (www.caribvet.net) and follow the news in future issues of the CaribVET Bulletin!

* Funding for this project is provided by USDA-APHIS-IS. The AIWG, together with CIRAD, is in charge of implementing and analysing questionnaire results and with IICA, is in charge of the communication aspect of the project.

Laure Bournez (CIRAD),
Amy Delgado (IICA),
Mark Trotman (Chair of the AIWG)

SPECIAL FEATURE - COCKFIGHTS IN MARTINIQUE: BETWEEN TRADITION AND MODERNITY REQUIREMENTS



A bit of history...

Tradition inherited from the early Spanish settlers, cockfights are held in Pits. These rustic arenas overhung by bleachers crowded of a huge number of fans and a few tourists attracted by such a curiosity. Cockfighting in the French West Indies and in northern France is permitted for just that "an unbroken tradition can be established", according to the section 521, paragraph 7 of the Grammont Law, which punishes cruelty to domestic animals. Roosters which compete in these duels are real athletes, pampered, and trained in specialized farms in fighting cocks. These "gladiators" equipped with natural set of spurs on their own pins, fight and hit one other chests. The fight takes place in a succession of attacks, flip-flops, feints and parades, all feathers erected to intimidate the opponent. Their aim is not to kill but to express the pride of men! Cockfight is a metaphor for conflicts showing in a certain way some animating aspects of the Martinican society. Actually, cockfights help and calm social tensions. Of course, these fights taking place in the afternoon are opportunities to make loads of bets; winners are paid as soon as the end of the battles, in respect of the word. Honor, respect, warmth and passion are the values that govern these gatherings. Cockfights take place every day in Martinique except on Friday.

Veterinary services working with cultural Affairs of Martinique to promote tradition and modernity to meet sanitary requirements.

For many years, the Veterinary Services (DSV) has started an action of communication among owners and breeders of fowls in order to make them aware of the need to maintain a high level of hygiene in Pits, the importance of vaccination and identification of fighting cocks. Despite some architectural and healthy improvements seen in the Pits in Martinique, the DSV and the Safety Committee of the Prefecture give an unfavorable verdict. In 2009, the Veterinary Services have joined the Regional Direction of Cultural Affairs (DRAC-Ministry of Culture) of Martinique and considered the necessity to save the heritage of Martinique Pits as well as to improve sanitary conditions. A first step consisted in conducting a complete inventory of the structures still in use in Martinique (location, architectural description, audiences, historical interest ...). Currently, 20 pits are scattered from north to south in the island and 15 of these structures offer fightings from November to September. However, this study revealed it was urgent to stop the decline of pits as, in 60 years, Martinique has lost more than 130 of its gallodromes!

In a second step, to redeem the pits in Martinique, owners of 5 structures were selected and urged to

question themselves about the future of their structure and to write projects for their own sustainable socio-economic development and apply for grant application. The DRAC has then commissioned an architect in 2010 to design a type plan including the possibility to rebuild some pits using keeping same characteristics of pits in Martinique (medium size, circular terrace, human promiscuity...) but using new materials, easy to clean and disinfect to meet new sanitary requirements. So, his mission is to get information wherever he can: photos, Pits actors' speeches and documentary research (archives, press, libraries, private records ...) to respect as much as possible the soul of the pits. In addition, the architect worked in collaboration with the veterinary services to choose the materials (aluminium, resin, treated wood, ...) and conformation (roundness preference) most suitable for easy cleaning and disinfection.

The last step will be the reconstruction and/or rehabilitation of the 5 selected Pits. All economic and tourism partners involved in the continuity of the tradition of cockfighting as a heritage item of high touristic value, will be involved in the final phase of the project "save the Pits". Two or three "Galodromes" will be affected by a possible inclusion or classification as a historical monument by the Ministry of Culture. In addition, these structures would be approved by the Veterinary services and the exhibition of traditional cockfights in new and clean structures would represent a golden opportunity for the Veterinary Services to make cocks' owners more aware of diseases risks. The inauguration of new pits with new rules would help owner changing habits and possibly adopt new sanitary rules: mandatory vaccination against major communicable avian diseases, identification, Pit registers, ...) which would eventually improve prevention and control of diseases.

The cockfight is a vivid reality in Martinique as it is in other Caribbean islands. This activity, which was considered years ago as "an undercover activity", has nowadays a future better defined which could be associated with prevention of pathogens diffusion risks, if new sanitary measures succeed in being implemented. This work will be valued with a photo exhibition and book publication whose format and deadline remains to be fixed, in 2011. A photo gallery can be consulted online on <http://patrimoines-martinique.org/?id=13> and some data are currently available on the website of the Digital Heritages of Martinique directed by the General Council of Martinique.

Mireille Mondesir,

DRAC - Ministry of culture, anthropologist Martinique