

## Celebration of Recognition of Animal Influenza Laboratory, Harbin Veterinary Research Institute as an FAO Reference Centre for Animal Influenza

FAO designated the Animal Influenza Laboratory (AIL), Harbin Veterinary Research Institute (HVRI) as an FAO Reference Centre for Animal Influenza on 4 March 2013. A celebration event was held in Harbin, Heilongjiang Province. The event was attended by Dr Juan Lubroth, Chief Veterinary Officer (CVO) of FAO; Dr Yu Kangzheng, CVO of China; Dr Zhang Zhongqiu, Director General of the Veterinary Bureau; Dr Subhash Morzaria, Regional Manager of FAO Emergency Centre for Transboundary Animal Diseases (ECTAD) Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (RAP); Mr. Percy W. Misika, FAO Representative in China, other high level of officials from the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) and its affiliated institutes, as well as technical and administrative officials for the provincial and municipal governments.

Dr Yu Kangzhen highlighted that the designation of the AIL as an FAO Reference Centre for animal influenza is a very important achievement after several years of collaboration with FAO. Dr Yu was looking forward to a higher level of collaboration with FAO in the future to accelerate the standardization and internationalization in the field of animal disease prevention and diagnosis in China. Dr Juan Lubroth also congratulated the AIL on its designation as an FAO Reference Centre. He hoped that the institute will be in a position to continue to advance science and improve tools to better control, detect and prevent high impact animal diseases, not only in China, but also in assisting its neighbors and other countries.



▲ Dr Lubroth and Dr Yu at the Launching Ceremony

After the ceremony, a technical workshop on the roles of an FAO Reference Centre and latest developments in animal influenza research was held. The AIL of HVRI is the first reference center recognized by FAO in China. The event attracted much attention. Major Chinese media, China Central



▲ Active discussion during the technical workshop

Television (CCTV), People's Daily, Xinhua News Agency, China Daily and over 50 other Chinese and international media outlets reported the story. The recognition of AIL as an FAO Reference Centre for Animal Influenza also signifies a new level of cooperation between FAO and the Chinese government.

## More than 50 Senior Veterinary Officials attended the China FETPV Veterinary Epidemiology for Executives Workshop

A two-day Veterinary Epidemiology for Executives Workshop was held in Beijing from 9 to 10 March 2013. In total, 53 senior officials from national and provincial Animal Centers for Disease Prevention and Control (CDCs) participated in the workshop. This workshop was organized as part of the China Field Epidemiology Training Program for Veterinarians (FETPV), with support from China Animal Health and Epidemiology Centre (CAHEC) and EU-China Trade Project (II).

The workshop was facilitated by Prof John Edwards from FAO ECTAD China, Dr Dirk Pfeiffer from the Royal Veterinary College (RVC), and Dr David Castellan from FAO RAP. It aimed to enhance senior government officials' understanding of the basics of veterinary epidemiology and its role in disease control. This will strengthen their ability to develop effective animal and public health programs and provide technical support for the implementation of the National Medium and Long-Term Plan for Prevention and Control of Animal Epidemics (2012-2020).

Dr Huang Weizhong, Deputy Director General of the Veterinary Bureau of the MoA, Dr Jérôme Lepeintre, First Counsellor for Health and Consumer Affairs of the EU Delegation, representatives US CDC, RVC, China CDC, EU-China Trade Project (II), CAHEC, FAO RAP, and FAO ECTAD China attended the workshop. Participants had active discussion about the role of epidemiology in effectively controlling emerging infectious diseases and zoonotic diseases and about the use of one health approaches, and how to intensify the cooperation between the animal health and public health sectors. Participants indicated a high level of satisfaction and demonstrated commitment to support ongoing epidemiological activity in their provinces and workplaces.

The second cohort of China FETPV was launched in Beijing on 9 March. A total of 20 trainees from 12 provincial Animal CDCs, three municipality Animal CDCs, one university and CAHEC, were selected for the two-year training program. The formal training commenced on 11 March in Qingdao.



▲ Group photo.

### Upcoming activities:

1. The second cohort of the China FETPV training will be continued in Qingdao till 20 April 2013.
2. The Good Emergency Management Practice (GEMP) Training will be organized in Beijing from 15 to 17 May 2013.
3. Representatives from the MoA, China Animal Health and Epidemiology Center (CAHEC) and FAO ECTAD China will visit FAO Headquarters in Rome from 23 to 24 May 2013.