

Press Release

Current information on anthelmintic resistance in ruminants

Website for the PARASOL-Project online: www.parasol-project.org

In February 2006, PARASOL, an international research project designed to investigate the potential for using Targeted Selective Treatments (TST) to develop sustainable, low-input methods for internal parasite control in ruminants was launched. A new website containing information on the project and the project partners as well as current information on anthelmintics and the state of anthelmintic resistance has been developed and is available online, along with a list of publications and a recent progress report from the project.

The project “Novel solutions for the sustainable control of nematodes in ruminants” is more widely known under its acronym PARASOL (Parasite Solutions). PARASOL is coordinated by Professor Jozef Vercruyse of the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, University of Gent and has been funded for a period of three years. It involves 12 academic partners and 5 business ventures from 7 EU countries as well as Africa and is funded by the European Union Framework 6 Program (2.9 Million Euro). One of the key aims for PARASOL is the development of sustainable, low-input methods for internal parasite control in ruminants, based upon the use of targeted selective treatments (TST) in which only those animals at greatest risk of disease and/or implicated in its transmission are treated. TST strategies will not only minimise the rate of development of anthelmintic resistance by maintaining an untreated parasite population (*in refugia*) they will also reduce the risk of residues in food and the environment. “By the end of the project, PARASOL will provide farmers, veterinarians and advisors with clear guidance and protocols for sustainable, low-input, user and consumer-friendly nematode control”, said Professor Vercruyse. These protocols and other results of the research project will be published in veterinary and agricultural journals and made available on the project website.

March 2007, 1.884 characters (including blanks)

Further information:

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Notes for the editor:

1. European Framework 6 Program (FP6): The Framework Program (FP) is the European Union’s main instrument for funding research in Europe. Six Framework Programs (FPs) have been implemented since 1984, each covering a period of five years with the last year of one FP and the first year of the following FP overlapping. The current sixth FP (FP6) aims to contribute to the creation of a true “European Research Area” (ERA). ERA is a vision for the future of research in Europe, an internal market for science and technology. It fosters scientific excellence, competitiveness and innovation through the promotion of better co-operation and coordination between relevant actors at all levels. The biggest part of FP budget will be spent on fo-

cussing and integrating future research activities on seven thematic priority areas such as Food Quality and Safety.

2. Gent University, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, Laboratory of Parasitology, Merelbeke, Belgium

The Laboratory of Parasitology of the Gent University, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, employs a total of about 22 veterinarians, biotechnologists and laboratory technicians with expertise ranging from parasite epidemiology and immunology to helminth molecular biology. The research group has extensive experience with the epidemiology and control of gastrointestinal nematode infections in cattle and small ruminants in Belgium and the tropics and strong expertise in a broad range of biochemical and molecular techniques including anthelmintic resistance. Laboratory techniques such as ELISA, (Real-Time) PCR, polymorphism and proteomic techniques, recombinant protein production and chromatography are applied routinely.