



“UNDERSTANDING THE EUROPEAN INSTITUTIONS AND LOBBYING”

YOUNG EUROPEAN MEAT COMMITTEE – SPRING STUDY VISIT IN THE BRUSSELS AREA

14th & 15th March 2017

REF.10820

MONDAY 13th MARCH 2017

Welcome dinner for Friends of YEMCo

On Monday evening, a dinner was organised in the very centre of Brussels at the restaurant 'Amadeo', located on the lively

rue Sainte-Catherine. The spot is renowned for its all-you-can-eat spare ribs, unavoidably served with a baked potato, as well as

its unique decoration. The participants were able to get acquainted with one another while enjoying a generous meal.



Tuesday 14th March 2017

Morning Session – European Commission, Charlemagne Building

On Tuesday, the group met at 8:30am in front of the Charlemagne building in the heart of the European Quarter. The Charlemagne building houses the Department for Communication (COMM), the Directorate-General for Economic and Financial Affairs (ECFIN), the European External Action Service (EEAS), the Internal Audit Service of the Commission (IAS), the Secretariat General (SG), the Directorate-General for Trade (TRADE). The morning session was dedicated to understanding the functioning of the European Commission and the legislative procedure.

9am - The European Commission: the political executive of the European Union

Simon PASCOE, Member of the speakers' team, [D-G COMM](#)

The delegates were welcomed by Simon Pascoe, who first presented a timeline retracing the European Commissions in office from the Monnet Authority (1952-55) to the Juncker Commission (2014-19).

Then in [his intervention](#) he explained the working principles of the European Commission.

The EC is the executive body of the European Union. The 28 members, one from each country, act as a college: all votes are equal. It promotes the general interest of the Union.

The competences of the EC are of three types: exclusive (e.g. on trade and competition), shared (e.g. on agriculture), and supporting (e.g. on tourism).

This having been said, Mr. Pascoe detailed the 4 roles of the Commission i.e.:

- 1) Initiating laws and policies,
- 2) Implementing policies and budget,
- 3) Guardian of the Treaties, and
- 4) Representing the EU in the world.



Mr. Pascoe went back to the election process leading to the Juncker Commission (2014-19). The election process started in the summer of 2012. In March 2014 Jean-Claude Juncker was designated EPP's candidate in case of victory at the European elections. This happened with the EPP winning 221 seats out of 751. Mr. Juncker's candidacy was proposed on 27th June 2014 by the European Council (formed by the Heads of State) to the European Parliament. He was elected following the state-of-the-union speech and the vote of confidence of the EP on 15th July 2014.

Mr. Pascoe reminded of the first priority of the Juncker term: deal with competitiveness to create growth. This priority is reflected by the 324 projects which had been financed by [European Fund for Strategic Investment](#) (EFSI) of the European Investment Bank as of 2016. In [a November 2014 video](#) about this investment initiative, Jyrki Katainen, Vice-President, Jobs,

Growth, Investments and Competitiveness, explained that Europe is experiencing a deficit in investment and details the 3 lines of the investment plan proposed: mobilisation of financial resources, identification of viable projects, and improvement of investment conditions. In particular, support should be provided to small local business and to installing broadband in low population density areas.

[A second video was shown focusing on the Better Regulation Package](#). 74% of the Europeans believe that the EU generates too many regulatory burdens. The package aims at allowing greater transparency around decision-making, wider public consultation, improved impact assessments, and a new approach to reviewing the stock of EU legislation. The video explains the initiatives of the Commission at the different stages of the legislative process. Before the EU takes action, the Commission examines potential consequences through impact assessments. Since 2015, following implementation, the Commission has been examining all suggestions from stakeholders to make EU laws more efficient through [REFIT](#).

Further documents were made available to the group:

- [White paper on the future of Europe](#)
- [the Juncker Commission](#)
- [Publication update](#)
- [Juncker Commission publications](#)
- [State of the Union](#)

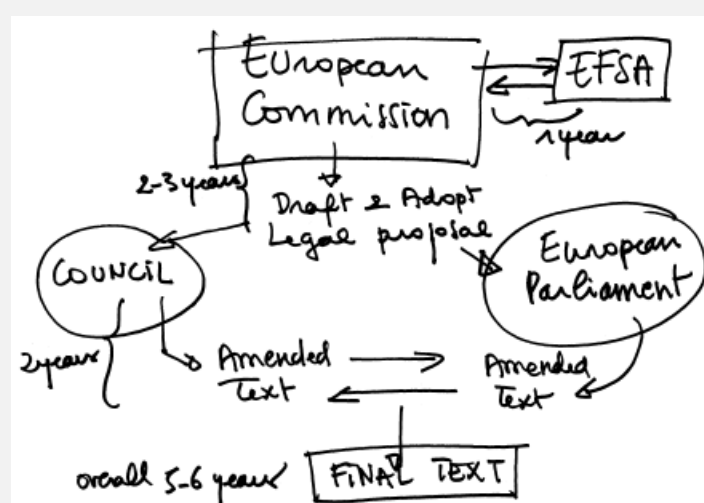
10.45am - How the EU legislation is produced: a case study on animal welfare

Denis SIMONIN, [D-G SANTE](#), Head of Sector - Animal Welfare Sector

Denis Simonin took over the session following a coffee break. His [intervention](#) was a case study on animal welfare.

Mr. Simonin explained, by way of introduction, that the Directorate-General Health and Food Safety has historically been a core business. However, legislation today is no longer the only way to achieve policy objectives.

The 3 key players for legislation are the European Commission, the European Parliament (since Lisbon Treaty), and the Council. The EC makes proposals for basic acts while the two other institutions act as co-legislators. Mr. Simonin presented a diagram explaining the ordinary legislative procedure.



He further detailed the work of the Commission:

- While drafting the proposal, the Commission turns to the [European Food Security Agency](#) (EFSA) for scientific advice. EFSA has been performing risk assessments since it provided its first opinion in 2004. EFSA's work relies on gathering scientific information based on peer review journals.
- The EC also carries out an Impact Assessment (IA). IA is a formal internal process to check that legislation is justified and fit for purpose. IA always accompanies the legal proposal, and all submissions and comments are publicly available. It is first submitted to a regulatory scrutiny board.
- Finally, the EC often requests a socio-economic study from an external contractor.

This step is part of the IA process. The study allows collecting information on current practices, socio-economic information, and the views of stakeholders on the possible scenarios.

In the case of animal welfare, the proposal is first drafted at DG SANTE level. It must be approved by the Commissioners and then by the Vice-Presidents of the Commission. Following inter-service consultation, the legal proposal is sent to the College for adoption.



The legal proposal is subsequently sent to the Council of Ministers and to the European Parliament for adoption.

Mr. Simonin later detailed the operating principles of the legal process at the Council and the European Parliament:

- The Council represents national governments of all Member States. The vote takes place by qualified majority. The presidency is rotating every six months (Malta until July 2017). Preparatory work is provided by Expert Working Groups for technical issues. Then it goes to the Attachés meetings which are more horizontal and political. Finally, the COREPER (level of Ambassadors) solve the issues not yet solved.

- At the European Parliament, the committees are the first steps to examine the proposal initiated by the European Commission. In the case of animal welfare, the reference committees are AGRI and ENVI. There are always a lead committee and an associated committee. Discussions in the committees are led by their rapporteurs. Shadow rapporteurs are MEPs designed to follow a proposal for European parties different from that of the rapporteur. After amendments have been voted in the committees, the proposal is sent for vote in plenary.

Mr. Simonin mentioned when lobby actions are possible. He underlined the role of EU associations such as UECBV in the consultation process. He encouraged the participants to be attentive to UECBV work so that they can have their say via the association.

He concluded by laying focus on the transparency of the Commission's work. The validation process narrows the points of discussion. It is important to ensure regular vigilance and provide active propositions.

11.30am - Hygiene rules in slaughterhouses

Aidan CAHILL, DG SANTE, Unit G4 - Food Hygiene

In his intervention, Mr. Cahill first reminded of a few historical facts regarding food safety regulation. He told that, back in Antiquity, laws on food hygiene already existed in some cities. He mentioned two books i.e. Friedrich Accum's "Culinary Poisons" (1820) which marked the beginning of a need for food safety, and Upton Sinclair's "The Jungle" (1906) which both highlighted the appalling conditions of meat

workers and exposed unhygienic practices in slaughterhouses.

In 1996, the BSE crisis led to the introduction of a stringent legal framework, reappraised by subsequent crises in the 1990s – Dioxin, Salmonella.

But such a framework was spread across many legal instruments with some inconsistencies, gaps and overlaps.

In January 2002, the EU adopted the framework Regulation [No 178/2002](#) (General Food Law). It enacted the following general principles: risk-based analysis and scientific basis, precautionary principle, protections of consumers' interest, and principle of transparency. It encompasses all foodstuffs and stages ("from farm to fork"). Regulation No 178/2002 set up the European Food Safety Agency, the Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health (SCoFCAH), the Standing Committee on Plants, Animals, Food and Feed (SCoPAFF), and the Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF). In 2004, the General Food Law was supplemented by Regulations No 882/2002 and No 854/2002 relating to competent authorities, and Regulations No 852/2002 and No 853/2002 relating to food operators, also known as "The Hygiene Package":

- Regulation No 852/2002 aims at ensuring the hygiene of food at all stages of the production process. It defines a set of food safety objectives that firms must meet. It covers areas such as food premises and equipment, transport conditions, food waste, wrapping and packaging.
- Regulation No 853/2002 lays down specific hygiene rules for food of animal origin for food business operators. It covers areas such as Meat, Live bivalve molluscs, Fishery products, Raw milk and milk products, Eggs and egg products.
- Regulation No 854/2002 puts in place a Community framework of official controls (checks) on food intended for human consumption. It covers areas such as approving premises of food businesses, audits of good

hygiene practice, controls on HACCP (Hazard analysis & critical control points) procedures, import rules.

Mr. Cahill further detailed selected parts of the hygiene package relevant to slaughterhouse rules. He then addressed the main possible revisions, including a more risk-based approach to control imported composite products and a more risk-based meat inspection.



Lastly, Mr. Cahill took the example of the temperature conditions during transport and storage of meat to illustrate the policy-making and legislative process and the action of EFSA. The EC in fact requested EFSA's opinion after the publication of studies questioning the necessity to chill carcasses of domestic ungulates below 7°C immediately after post-mortem inspection, as required by current legislation (853/2004). EFSA confirmed that it is possible to commence carcass transport before core temperature of 7°C is reached without extra risk. Therefore a legislative proposal was submitted in the form of a Commission Regulation amending Annex III of Regulation (EC) No 853/2004, providing for derogations from the current chilling requirements.

Mr. Cahill ultimately tackled the general issues to be considered in making policy and legislation: Will the proposed legislation answer the expressed need? Might it present practical problems on the

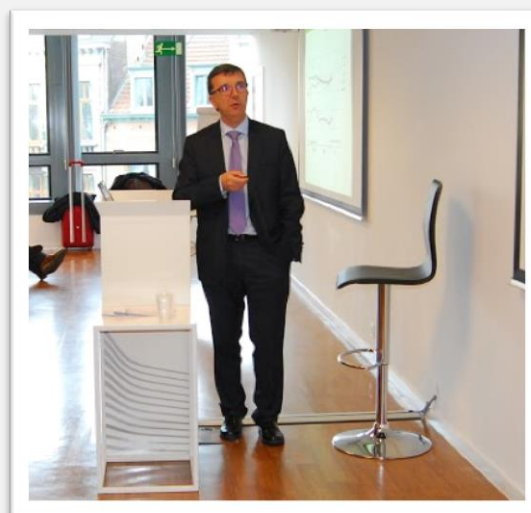
ground for industry? Will it imply any other unintended consequences? Will it be future proof? Is it acceptable to consumers? Will it offer the required level of safety? Several exchanges of views already took place with UECBV on this issue, in particular through the working group on veterinary issues.

12.15am - The EU Meat Sector and the future CAP 2020

Joaquim ORDEIG VILA, Directorate-General Agriculture and Rural Development Unit G3 - Animal products

Mr. Ordeig Vila [shared a state of play](#) of the different meat sectors.

For the **beef and veal sector**, 2015-2016 was a difficult year, as supply has been higher than demand. We observed a high increase in the number of heifers and cows slaughtered. The prices of carcasses have slightly decreased compared with the previous year – although a recovery was observed in late 2016, except for females. In 2016 exports of beef and live animals increased by 18% compared to 2015, thanks to Turkey, Israel, Hong Kong and Lebanon. This is the highest level of exports over the last 3 years. Imports also experienced an increase, with Brazil, Uruguay and Argentina being the main importers to the EU.



For the **pig meat sector**, the number of heads slaughtered in 2017 should decrease by 1% compared to 2016, based on GIP and experts estimations. The Russian ban is an important factor to explain this evolution. The prices of pig carcasses experienced a strong growth in 2016, up to +35% for piglets. Exports of pig products rose by 23% in 2016, while imports fell by 1% compared with the previous year.

For what regards the **ovine and caprine sector**, sheep slaughtering experienced a 1.8% fall, while goat slaughtering also decreased by 0.8% in the EU for the same period. In the first week of March 2017, the prices of heavy lamb decreased by 12.3% compared with a year earlier. Sheep and goat imports are stable in volume but have therefore declined in value. Exports are increasing both in volume and in value.

Mr. Ordeig Vila then detailed the Commission's work programme for 2017 as regards with modernising and simplifying the CAP. *"The Commission will take forward work and consult widely on simplification and modernisation of the Common Agricultural Policy to maximise its contribution to the Commission's ten priorities and to the Sustainable Development Goals. This will focus on specific policy priorities for the future, taking account of the opinion of the REFIT Platform, and*

without prejudice to the Commission proposal to revise the Multiannual Financial Framework.” After 2013, there has been growing awareness that the final legislation was widely unsatisfactory and a need for simplification emerged. Besides, CAP modernisation was made necessary by the changes in the environment surrounding the EU agriculture – both trade and environmental.

The EC promotes three lines to address the future challenges of EU agriculture: foster a smart and resilient agricultural sector, enhance environmental sustainability, and strengthen the socio-economic fabric of rural areas. The consultation process will result in defining the problems, objectives and policy options. It will be followed by an inception impact assessment.

Afternoon Session – Copa-Cogeca premises



After a lunch in Charlemagne building, the YEMCo delegation attended a session dedicated to EU lobbying in COPA-COGECA premises.

2.15pm - Dialogue with Athenora consulting

Stéphane Desselas, President and Founder

The session began with a dialogue with Stéphane Desselas, head of Athenora Consulting, a lobbying firm specialised in EU policies.

Mr. Desselas explained that the aim of lobbying is to change part of the legislation – technical or political issues. It is to influence the drafting of the legislation.

The first task is to target which people to meet. One door is the technical level; a second door is the political level.

The European Commission (EC) – organised by Directorates General – is the institution proposing new legislation. The EC is both technical and political. The technical side is embodied in the EU Commission by civil servants in units in DGs who deal with detailed issues. The political side is the Commissioners and their Cabinets whom you meet for “big” issues. You end up with 10-15 persons. It is why EU associations are important. They are specialised and able to operate with the two sides. They can also be consulted by Commission services.

The main difficulty for trade associations is to find a compromise between all members. Trade

associations can have information of legislation projects/issues, *before* it is written down on any paper. The lobbyist will inform its members. The association members will have to discuss the strategy – what will be the message or position. Then the association will present the key messages to the key technicians or politicians and will try to convince them.



The EC will agree, disagree or partly agree. The last is a good result because at this point we are still early in the legislative process. Experts and lobbyists will have to ally to convince the EC.

If lobbying fails and the EC legislates in opposition to your message or strategy, the second opportunity is to resort to the European Parliament.

At the European Parliament, the number of MEPs in a country varies according to the population. Lobbying must be organised taking into account the nationality of the MEPs. “MEPs are specific animals”. Meeting them is not very complicated but it is always more efficient to meet them in presence of a representative of the national association of the MEP’s Member State. The MEPs can propose amendments. A good lobbyist must know the specific MEPs members of the Committees dealing with the matters they are interested in (rapporteurs, shadow rapporteurs, etc.). The trade association will draft amendments and will try to

convince the “key MEPs” to table them. When amendments are voted at Committee level, it is also important to secure that they will be voted at plenary level.

The key factors of success are expertise and network. Network – knowing people – requires a long-term relationship between the EU official and the lobbyist.

If the lobbyist fails for the second time, there remains the Council of the European Union.

The Council is composed of ministers from the 28 Member States. Every Member State has a permanent presentation at the EU. They will check the legislation from the point view/ interest of the Member States. Coalitions of States are possible (i.e.: Visegrad group). As the Council votes by qualified majority, they need to form coalitions. The lobbyist’s work with the Council is complex. Each country has a tendency to specialise on subjects (i.e.: Luxembourg with financial services). The work of the European trade association needs to be completed by the work of its members at national level, a situation referred to as ‘two-stage level’. If the three options have failed, there is no appeal left.

3.30pm - Dialogue with the European Council of Young Farmers (CEJA)

Alessia Musumarra – Secretary General

Alessia Musumarra is the Secretary General of CEJA. CEJA defends, promotes and represents young farmer at EU level. CEJA was created in Roma in 1958. There were 22 million farmers in the EU in 2013, 6% of which were under 35. CEJA represents about 2 million people through 32 federations in 24 Member States.

CEJA is a democratic international organisation governed through a General Assembly, a Praesidium, and a Presidency (1 President and 4 VPs). It has an office in Brussels. The association

hosts a working group each month in Brussels and organises seminars around Europe.



Ms. Musumarra explained that the focus of CEJA's activities is on the main concerns of young farmers: access to land, access to credit, production rights, and education and training facilities. She explained that people join CEJA in order to gain representation and promotion in Brussels, gain support from the EU, receive quality information, advice and early warning and exchange view/expertise with other CEJA members.

A newsletter is sent to members on a weekly basis, including a 'best practices' section directly filled by members. Ms. Musumarra believes that no good lobbying activity is possible without good communication. It is a key part of CEJA work.

The generation breakdown of farmers in the EU is a big issue. With the growing concentration of land, we are witnessing the end of the family farm model.

For her presentation: [Click HERE](#)

4.30pm - Dialogue with the European Livestock and Meat Trades Union (U.E.C.B.V)

Jean-Luc Mériaux, Secretary General

To start with, Mr. Mériaux presented his background, saying that his first purpose was to become a farmer. He joined U.E.C.B.V. in the 1980s. U.E.C.B.V. represents 52 national associations from 24 Member States as well as associations from EFTA countries, EU candidate countries and EU trade partners, accounting for 20,000 companies and 230,000 jobs. U.E.C.B.V. also manages 3 European Associations i.e. [OCEAN](#), [ENSCA](#) and [AEMB](#).

U.E.C.B.V. supports the future of the meat sector by managing YEMCo – the Young European Meat Committee – an exchange of best practice platform dedicated to young executives and managers of European livestock and meat business firms. Eva Moser is the current YEMCo President.

U.E.C.B.V. specifically represents livestock traders (cattle, horses, sheep, pigs), meat traders (beef, horse meat, sheep meat, pig meat), and the meat industry (slaughterhouses, cutting plants, meat preparation plants). Its objective is to represent and defend the meat sector, promote EU and international trade, deepen the internal market, and combat distortions of competition.

This having been said, Mr. Mériaux detailed the composition of the U.E.C.B.V. secretariat and sections, as well as the 2017 work programme priorities:

1. Civil Society expectations (image of the meat)
2. Functioning of the Single Market (COOL/national schemes)
3. EU trade policy
4. Market access (TBT)
5. Promotion – EU co-financing – U.E.C.B.V. coordination
6. Animal health (biosecurity/AHL implementation)
7. Animal welfare
8. Hygiene in the meat industry
9. Functioning of the food chain

10. Brexit (huge impact, notably on Ireland's meat industry and on CAP).

Its network is indispensable in its day-to-day activities, as a parallel work must be performed at both EU and national levels. U.E.C.B.V. work cannot be successful without the parallel work of its members at national level.

Mr. Mériaux detailed the three phases of the EU legislative process: 1) Proposal by the EC (monopoly of initiative); 2) Adoption by EC and EP through the Ordinary Legislative Procedure; 3) Implementation of legislative acts. He underlined that a successful lobbying action at the initiative level may be defeated during the following steps of the procedure. Mr. Mériaux also focused on the EC internal process examining delegated acts and implementing acts, part of the comitology procedure.

During the subsequent Q&A session, Mr. Mériaux notably mentioned his support to CETA as it represents a chance for Europe in terms of trade opportunities.

For his presentation, click [HERE](#)

Overall, U.E.C.B.V. holds about 40 meetings every year, including regular meetings, Board specific meetings, enlarged meetings. U.E.C.B.V. also participates in external meetings (civil dialogue groups, advisory groups, EFSA consultative groups).

Evening activities – Visit to Cantillon Brewery and Dinner at Chez Léon

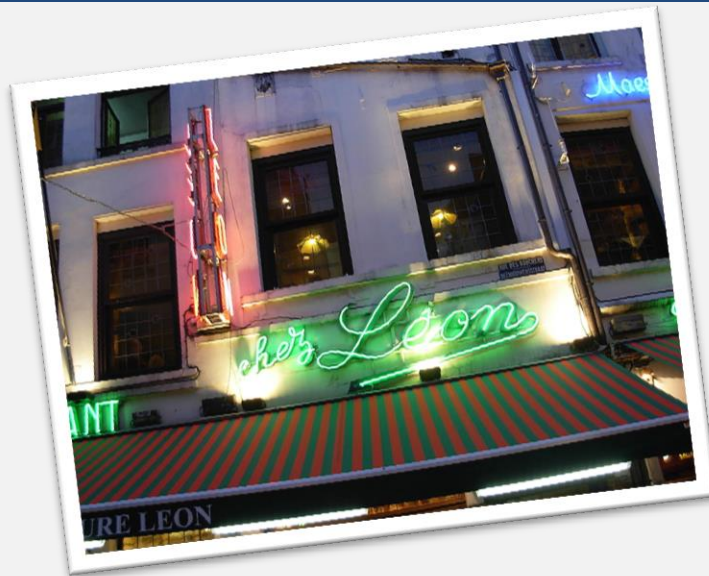
After that, the YEMCo delegation headed to the Commune of Anderlecht in order to visit the [Cantillon brewery](#). A host took the delegation for a tour in this family establishment where the beers, tools and processes have remained mostly unchanged since the foundation in 1900. At

the end of the tour, the group was able to taste different sorts of beers (Lambic, Gueuze) with large plates of deli meats and cheese.

Around 8 pm, the group made its way back to the centre of Brussels to have dinner at [Chez](#)

[Leon](#), Rue des Bouchers. Opened in 1893, the restaurant is notably famous for its moules-frites. It originally set up the international chain of restaurants Léon de Bruxelles. Today the restaurant extends to nine buildings and serves about 1,000 meals every day.





Wednesday 15th March 2017

Adriaens Slaughterhouse



9am - Introduction and visit of the slaughterhouse

The delegation was expected to be at 9am at the Adriaens slaughterhouse in Zottegem (East Flanders).

After the breakfast that had been offered by courtesy of the slaughterhouse, Adriaens officials made a short presentation on their activity.

Adriaens is a cattle slaughterhouse. It employs 85 persons and slaughters about 1,900 cows per week on an average. 60% of the production is destined for exports [EU (mainly Italy / The Netherlands / Denmark / Spain), and non-EU (China / Vietnam)]. Its businesses include Islamic ritual slaughter which accounts for 15-20% of total slaughtering.

Adriaens also has a stable that makes the storage of live animals possible for max. 24 hours; however, the animals usually stay in the stable for 2 to 10

hours. When the stable is full, trucks are redirected to a nearby farm.

The plant was destroyed by a fire in 2011 and had to be rebuilt. The slaughterhouse was bought off by Verbist from Covavee and Agri Investment Fund (50% shares each) in September 2016.

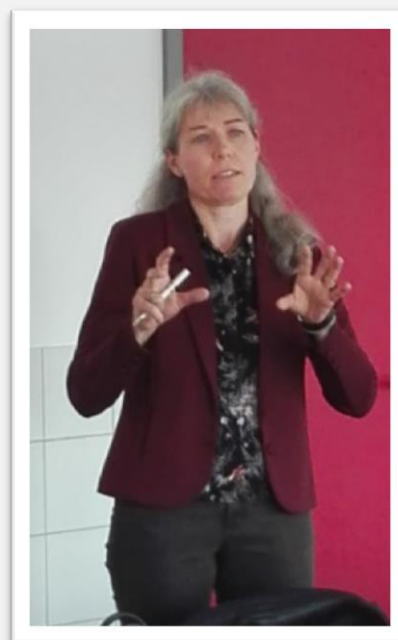
After everyone had put on the mandatory suit and hairnet, the delegation was split into two groups in order to visit the plant. The visit started in the chill rooms where the carcasses are stored, and ended with the removal of the skin.

11.30am - U.E.C.B.V. draft Guidelines on slaughter hygiene - What do you think?

Annette Dresling, Chairwoman of the U.E.C.B.V. Working Group on Veterinary Issues

Following the visit, Annette Dresling, [presented for discussion the UECBV draft Guidelines on slaughter hygiene.](#)

Ms. Dresling reminded that the working group on slaughter hygiene had been initiated in December 2014 as a subgroup of the Working Group on Veterinary Issues. The initiative was supported by the EC and CLITRAVI as improvements in hygiene are necessary. It gathers experts from 7 countries and held a total of 10 meetings between 2015 and 2016.



The scope is to develop EU guidelines on good practices for prevention of faecal contamination in slaughterhouses (including SMEs) of the red meat sector (bovine, porcine, ovine/caprine) with practical handling at slaughterhouse level. The aim is to raise the bottom level and provide practical interpretation of the hygiene package in order to align interpretations at local or national levels. The guidelines are only dealing with faecal and digestive tract content contamination. The guidelines had been in U.E.C.B.V. internal consultation until 10th March. The group will examine the comments and the external consultation should start in April until September. Then the guidelines will be transmitted to the EU Commission services for SCoPAFF validation.

Ms. Dresling provided a general presentation as well as recommendations. She defined faecal/ingesta contamination and general pre-requisites.

She then detailed species-specific recommendations related to pork, cattle and sheep slaughtering.

Finally, Ms. Dresling addressed the subject of contamination tracking.

YEMCo Friends were encouraged to comment. Those who did not receive the guidelines through the national associations will receive them directly as soon as the external consultation starts. Comments from companies are more than welcome since the aim will be to have the guidelines used on the slaughter lines by the workers themselves. When validated by the EC, the guidelines will be translated in several EU languages.