

14th March 2006

To: All members of the Management Committee

Cc: The President

From: The Secretary

**Minutes of the Management Committee Meeting**  
**Brussels - 14th March 2006.**

Present:	Johan Trygve Solheim (President)	Norway
	Tony Armitage (TA)	Great Britain
	John Fletcher (JF)	Great Britain
	Paul Audenaerde (PA)	Belgium
	Mogens Madsen (MM)	Denmark
	Asger Andersen (AA)	Denmark
	Hanspeter Danzer (HD)	Switzerland
	Rolf Eriksson (RE)	Sweden
	Andreas Svensson (AS)	Sweden
	Jacob Hogfeldt (JH)	Sweden
	Dainis Paeglitis (DP)	Latvia
	Greg Potterton (GP)	Ireland
	Franz Vogelmayr (FV)	Austria

Apologies were received from, Czech Rep., Hungary, Italy, France. Spain, Holland and Lithuania had not responded.

***1) The minutes of the last MCM held in Riga.***

TA read the minutes from last MCM in Riga September 24<sup>th</sup>. Any items dealt with as matters arising.

a) Financial issues

PA said that MP gave his apologies for not being present at the start of the meeting due to pressure of work, and that he felt he should resign as Treasurer; however he would try and attend the AGM. PA also said that MP had thought that one invoice was sufficient, and that member countries should pay on that.

JF apologised for the confusion over the UK's subscription, and, as agreed in 2005 they offered a free registration place at the World Conference to GP, the FEDFA representative, as part of the UK's subscription payment. This was accepted.

DP asked whether each Federation was registered, it is.

AM asked if the word "union" might be more appropriate than "association" as it carried more weight and conviction with the Polish authorities. It was generally felt that the name FEDFA was now known sufficiently well across Europe to be used.

#### b) Slaughtering

AM was still hopeful that the rules governing deer farming in Poland may change to come into line with the rest of the EU.

RE explained that there had been a few changes to the regulations concerning the slaughter of deer in Sweden: all farmers free of TB did not now need a post mortem inspection, as their deer were considered wild but whit in a fence. Also they did not now have to go to an authorized handling facility for post mortem, as "wild", there was no requirement for ante mortem inspection. FEDFA had been helpful to Sweden in achieving these changes.

#### c) Minutes approved

All approved the minutes.

## 2) *Communication.*

#### a) Website

TS had updated the website, and it was being shown online during the meeting through his computer. He felt that the way forward was not to change the whole website, but to use the existing skeleton and build upon this with more frequent updates. The "Webmaster", should be an elected post within FEDFA, and financed by the association. If this was accepted he would be able to do a professional job adding links to all association's websites with regular newsletters appearing, cookery suggestions/ recipes and links to commercial companies. The latter to be paid for.

#### b) Yahoo group

This was generally successful, having been used over 800 times since its inception. However some still found it difficult to be linked, and TS would do his best to sort out the problems. TS also undertook to open up the site to any member of a national association. Caution was expressed, so it was decided to give this idea a year's trial.

#### c) BDFFA Magazine

JF apologised for the problems surrounding the Magazine over the last year, but said it was the intention to publish 3x/ year with a "bumper" edition in July. He asked for

articles/news from every country, and he would print a synopsis of every article received in both French and German, in order to help give the Magazine a more European appeal. This idea was accepted with enthusiasm.

### **3) *EU and International projects.***

#### **a) Meetings with the EU Food Safety Committee (DG SANCO).**

Two meetings had been attended by TS, RE, PA and JF from FEDFA with the EU Food Safety Committee (SANCO). The first chaired by Sinead Diederich assisted by Koen van Dyck and Joaquim Ordeig Vila was concerned with the surveillance of CWD in farmed deer. They require the brains and retro-pharyngeal lymph nodes from 600 farmed deer over the next two years from each of the following countries in which farmed deer numbers exceed 10,000: Austria, Czech Rep., France, Germany, Ireland and the UK. This should provide a statistical sample of the farmed deer which would allow the EU to say that they had investigated the status of Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies and would allow them, all being well, to declare the EU clear of those diseases in deer..

The second meeting followed on from the first and involved the same FEDFA representatives but with Ron Dwinger and Thomas Golden from SANCO. This meeting had been called at the request of FEDFA so as to begin discussions of the Hygiene Regulations that will be renegotiated for 2009 and especially of the derogation that FEDFA had won to avoid the requirement for a vet to be present when field slaughtered farmed deer were being killed. The derogation we have been given means that we do not have to have a veterinary present when a deer is shot/bled on a farm. This derogation will last until 2009, but from later this year 2006, new rules are being planned and it is therefore vital that our requests, suggestions and ideas are well known to the veterinarians drafting the new regulations. FEDFA has now good contacts within this department. A draft briefing note prepared by JF was shown to the SANCO representatives but will be resubmitted after discussion within FEDFA. In this it was proposed that all deer that are field slaughtered should be categorised as wild for the purposes of meat hygiene.

JF will circulate the note on this subject, but he has asked all FEDFA for guidance on topics such as what constituted an enclosed farm? Could some farms be classified as wild? There is as yet no satisfactory definition of wild or farmed deer. There could be a huge problem of veterinary intrusion, and at what cost to the farmer? All hygiene regulations will be reconsidered in 2006 and 2007 for inclusion in 2009.

DP said that in Latvia intensive or park farms depended on stocking rate. Over 1 deer/hectare meant intensive.

The comment was made that most deer in Europe were field shot, while in GB and IRL abattoir slaughter was more the norm.

AS said that in Sweden, once a deer is within a fence it can be shot all the year round.

DP said that from a welfare point of view deer field shot suffered less stress, however TS described the method in GB and was surprised at the lack of stress shown in deer slaughtered in a deer dedicated abattoir.

HD pointed out that the commission had double standards dealing with deer welfare, on the one hand they had caused a lot of local abattoirs to close through tough regulations, and on the other hand they did not want deer and indeed other stock to have to travel and were making it more difficult to field slaughter.

GP made the point that stags in velvet, though not allowed to be transported over any real distance were more likely to be careful among them selves. These issues are the same as those of the “Slow Food Movement” which is grant aided in Sweden.

TS, PA, JF and RA were given a week to put a paper together for discussion among other members on these particular hygiene/welfare points that had been discussed with the vets. earlier.

GP made the final point that he was very confused as to what the commission was trying to achieve, it was not compatible with his view on deer farming which was more akin to New Zealand methods.

#### b) Animal transport

The EU is supporting a “short transport” plan in Sweden to find appropriate ways of moving animals over shorter distances.

#### c) Stress associated with slaughter techniques

The BDFA in conjunction with ADAS (Rosemaund) are embarking on a government funded Link project to ascertain stress levels associated with field and abattoir slaughter. This project will also consider the shelf life and eating qualities of the different slaughter methods.

#### d) Market studies in Norway

Norway has recently completed a study on marketing issues and venison.

#### e) European Deer farming statistics

In Latvia an MSc student, Inese, has requested various statistics, forms were handed out for completion, within 2 weeks. The results will be published on the new FEDFA website and in the next BDFA magazine.

### **4) *Veterinary News.***

A FEDFA delegation had earlier this morning had a meeting with a group of EU vets. The first half of the meeting had discussed TSE in deer. They intend to test the brains from 600 deer over 2 years in deer aged 18 months and older. EU intend testing in

countries with more than 10000 deer on farms. These are A, Cz, F, D, GB. IRL was on list but GP pointed out that they did not have that number of farmed deer.

JF also gave a short report on the research being carried out at the Moredun Research Institute in Edinburgh, concerning work being carried out with deer and BSE. Results to date were very encouraging in that no experimental deer had shown any signs of any TSE despite having been fed and later intra-cerebrally injected with BSE infected material at high dose.

**5) *Future meeting with Commissioner.***

There had been no success in getting a meeting with the commissioner Kypriano and his office this time. Single Farm payment is still a worry for farmers in Scotland and Wales and Ireland. An explanation of the problems in Scotland was given by JF, and after discussion it was agreed a small sub committee be formed of GB and IRL to research further.

**6) *International Deer Biology Conference in Czechia 2006.***

TS gave a reminder about this important conference that was being organised by Ludek Bartos with help from other FEDFA members, and urged that the dates in August were a "MUST" for all serious deer farmers.

**7) *International Deer Farming Congress in Australia 2006.***

GP is now going to represent FEDFA and make a presentation on our behalf. A sub-committee of TS, JF, and GP was formed to put the presentation together.

**8) *Any other business.***

JF gave a short report on the fence cutting by animal liberation activists that was currently causing a lot of distress in GB. This meant the BDFA Magazine would have to censure advertisements that mentioned hunting and trophy shooting, and it could not accept articles on these subjects.

**9) *Date and venue of next meeting.***

AM gave a brief outline of the FEDFA meeting he and his Polish colleagues were organising for the autumn. The agreed dates will be September 15<sup>th</sup> -17<sup>th</sup> 2006. It will be organised in three parts:

- i) Official
- ii) Conference papers
- iii) Excursions.

As is now customary, this Meeting will be open to all members of the countries associations, and wives/partners are also very welcome. There will be a FEDFA MCM meeting during the weekend.