

20th March 2007

To: All members of the Management Committee

Cc: The President

From: The Secretary

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting **Brussels - 15th March 2007.**

1. Apologies:-
Trygve Solheim...N
Greg Potterton...IRL
Hanspeter Daenzer...CH

Members present:-
John Fletcher (JF)...GB
Asger Andersen (AA)...DK
Tony Armitage (AGA)...GB
Petr Janovsky (PJ)...CZ
Radim Kotrba (RK)...CZ
Franz Vogelmayr (FV)...A
Dainis Paeglitis (DP)...LT
Andreas Svensson (AS)...S
Rolf Eriksson (RE)...S
Paul Audenaerde (PA)...B
Bartek Dmuchowski (BD)...PL

2. Minutes of the last AGM.
The minutes of the last meeting held in Brussels at Novotel 15th. March 06 were agreed and taken as read.

3. Financial Report.
AA distributed the accounts, and it was noted that at 31/12/06, the capital and reserves stood at 5835.68 euros. AA drew the attention of members to the fact that last year a small loss of 90 euros was made. He suggested that a small increase in subscriptions be made to 165 euros for 2007. Comments were invited.

It was agreed that in future, the dinner costs of the Spring meeting and the cost of the meeting room be met by FEDFA funds. This was agreed.

Discussion took place as to whether FEDFA could afford to pay for travel and Hotel costs also, reluctantly it was agreed that these costs could not be met out of current subscriptions. This was a national problem.

AA reminded delegates, that subscriptions should be made in cash (euros), or using the IBAN number, DK 1250350001311019

Finally, JF thanked AA for all the work he put into the keeping of the accounts and presenting them at the AGM.

4. National Reports.

PT....nl

PT started his report by saying that deer farm numbers since 2001 had increased from 8- 50, however last year 10 had left the industry. Average herd size was about 65 hinds. The meat market was good for direct sales, but to sell to abattoir, only 1euro/live kg. was being paid. He estimated that perhaps in 10 years time only 25 farmers left selling direct to a niche market. Only about 4 farms slaughtered using a free bullet.

BD....pl

BD started by saying that the industry in Poland was growing fast, now have 160+ farmers with 8-10,000 Fallow deer, and 2000 Red deer. The industry was growing due to the grants currently available from EU and good prices for breeding animals. Marketing is beginning to become a problem. Export so far is difficult as a lot of the farmers are still small, and it is difficult to put together the large numbers that are required for export. Just a few farmers try to sell venison, most of the farmers are (or try to) selling live animals – for breeding or introduction into the forest (fallow). Small farmers prefer to kill deer on the field using “free bullet”, but usually with problems from official veterinary. Some bigger farmers kill animals on farm in crush, and processing in abattoir. There are now some bigger investors in Poland, who are thinking seriously about deer industry, which should help to develop the market and deer industry in our country.

AA....dk

AA reported that the Danish industry was the same as last year. There are about 200 members, but there are about 500 farmers that farm deer. Many are small farms as land is expensive and good arable land, so most is down to cereals and sugar beet. All deer are abattoir slaughtered with 3 euros/kg being the wholesale price, but the consumer will be paying 11-12 euros/kg.

RK....cz

RK said that there were about 150 members with an average? 4-500 deer per farm?. They had a big problem with slaughter due to a lot of official inspections/paper-work. Currently trying to get subsidies for deer farming as in Poland. But not a large market for farmed venison as there is a lot of game meat on the market, the distribution of which is well organised. The larger farmers are trying to market their own venison to local shops and restaurants and even export sales to Switzerland. All deer are field shot.

PA....b

There are 1500 deer owners, but only 45 members of the association. 10-11 euros/kg to local consumers and niche markets, but only 1-3 euros into the wholesale trade. The local authorities have great difficulty in differentiation between large and small. Trying to get agreement on EU laws so that all the regulations are recognised by central government.

JF....gb

Since last year, not a lot has changed, some farmers have left, but more have joined, so currently there are about 90 members of the BDFA, with 2-300 farmers or deer keepers not members. The BDFA is currently having a membership drive especially among the Park owners. About half the farmers sell locally and at farmer's markets. Some also sell occasional surplus cull hinds to game dealers. The other 50% of farmers sell to wholesalers and have their deer killed in abattoirs. Currently the price paid is £3.25/kg (4.55 €) dead dressed carcass weight, but this varies from £2.90 - £3.50 (4 – 5 €) according to season. 50% have their animals slaughtered in an abattoir, the majority of this meat being sold through supermarkets.

FV....a

FV said that there were about 1800 deer farmers in Austria, some very small, but only 650 in the association. Each Spring farmers have to apply for subsidies, this is the first year when Red and Fallow deer may be included. There are a lot of slaughter houses, but many are very small, and can only issue a round stamp, so the meat can only be sold locally. Majority of deer are shot in field and 90% is sold to local consumers. The game dealers will only pay 1.50 euros/kg with skin on.

DP....lv

DP reported that there were 50 members, 80% were intensive deer farmers, and 10% were only very small with less than 30ha. 80% have Red deer. There are 4-5000 animals farmed. The income is from hunting, tourism and venison production. Prices are £1/kg (1.4€) for carcasses minus feet and head, but up to £5.30 (7.4 €) for processed venison for local sales. All deer are field shot, recently all hygiene has been upgraded and approved. 3-4 slaughter houses can handle deer carcasses. £250,000 has recently been awarded to the deer industry to help with a breeding programme to import stock and do the paperwork. There are 5-8 new farms this last year, receiving 40% grants on fencing and housing. The industry is looking to build a new processing plant for 2-3m. euros.

RE....s

Numbers since the peak of 1990 have dropped. Now 375 farmers, 80% Fallow, with an average herd size of 65 hinds/does. New entrants are aiming to be much larger, however 25-30 will go out of deer farming shortly due to TB finalization plan where all deer farms must be TB free. Red deer numbers are increasing more than Fallow, as are hunting parks. There are now 30 certified abattoirs able to handle deer carcasses. 100% being killed on the farm, most with a free bullet. Prices vary from 3-4euros/kg for wholesale to 8-9 euros/kg for local sales(cut and packed). There is big competition with game, as 1000 (??) moose, wild boar and wild red are shot each year.

5. Confirmation of Office Holders for 2007/8.

Discussion took place over the future President for 2008/9. It was agreed that as both Greg Potterton and Rolf Eriksson were eligible, RE would contact GP and seek out his views. RE reluctantly agreed to the Presidency if GP agreed, on the condition that help would be given to procure contacts within the EU. This was promised.

The other office holders will stay in position for a second year.

6. Working Committees

The vet. committee agreed to stay in place and consists of JF, PA, and RE.

Trygve Solheim had agreed to stay with communications, and AGA will act as liason between BDFA magazine and FEDFA.

7. National Representation.

No changes were noted.

8. AOB

A short discussion took place on future funding, and it was agreed we should actively seek grant aiding from the EU.

Also the withdrawal period for immobilization drugs was discussed. In GB, once drugs like immobilon had been used, the meat from the animal was not allowed into the food chain. However, B has a different set of rules. If the drug does not have a specific license for use on deer, the withdrawal period is 2 months, while in S it is 90 days.

The "Slaughter by free bullet" document will be sent to the Secretary for circulation with the minutes and publication by the BDFA Magazine, only when agreed by JF,RE,PAand PT after the SANCO meeting.

9. Date and venue of next AGM.

It was agree to hold the next AGM in Brussels on 26/27 March 08. Arrangements will be made by PA.