

**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Federation of European Deer Farmers'  
Associations held on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2009 at the Manhattan Hotel, Brussels.**

Those present were as follows: **Hanspeter Danzer** (HPD) (Switzerland), **Marie Kelly** (MK)(Ireland), **Patrick van Aubel** (PvA)(France), **Tomas Landete Castillejos** (TLC)( Spain), **Franz Vogelmayr** (FV)( Austria), **Dainis Paeglitis** (DP)(Latvia), **Gediminas Vaitiekunas** (GV)( Lithuania), **Peter Timmerman** (PT)(Netherlands), **Radim Kortrba** (RK)(Czech Republic), **Asger Andersen** (AA) (Denmark,FEDFA treasurer), **Andreas Svensson** (AS) (Sweden), **John Fletcher** (JF) ( UK and FEDFA secretary), **Rolf Eriksson** (RE) (Sweden and FEDFA President).

**1. Apologies for absence.** Apologies were received from Paul Audenaerde(Benelux), Johan Trygve Solheim (Norway), Janos Nagy (Hungary), Stefan Voll (Germany). (The latter has been ill with meningitis but Germany has indicated its wish to join FEDFA and has paid its annual subscription.)

**2. Matters arising from minutes of the meeting of March 26<sup>th</sup> 2008.** The Minutes were taken as read and accepted unanimously.

**3. Approval of new members.** **Tomas Landete Castillejos** (TLC)( Spain), **Gediminas Vaitiekunas** (GV) (Lithuania) were welcomed as new members of FEDFA and **Silvo Novak** who had e-mailed JF requesting that he represent Slovenia was mentioned; JF agreed to try to encourage him to attend the autumn meeting in Slovakia.

**4. The Financial report** was presented by Asger Anderson. It was agreed there were sufficient reserves to avoid the need to increase the subscription from its present 165 euros. The Treasurer agreed to contact those countries which had not paid their subscription and JF agreed to speak to the UK deer farmers to seek payment and also to Norwegian deer farmers who are visiting Scotland in the near future. It was agreed that any countries not paying by the end of June would cease to be members. The Treasurer agreed to e-mail bank details to permit direct transfer of subscriptions.

**5. Communications.** JF agreed to ensure that the new members from Spain and Lithuania be entered on the FEDFA yahoo group as well as Marie Kelly from Ireland and Silvo Novak from Slovenia.

There was discussion as to who should run the website as Trygve had indicated that he wished to retire. The President agreed to undertake this from March 2010 assuming Trygve can be persuaded to continue until then. This was welcomed.

There was a proposal from Spain (TLC) that he would undertake to co-ordinate an e-mail newsletter to all members. Members within individual countries could provide their

e-mail addresses and receive the newsletter free of charge and in addition national associations could distribute the e-mail themselves to their members. The newsletters would be placed on the website and all deer farmers should be encouraged to look at the website and provide their e-mail details. The initial objective would be to provide 6 newsletters per annum. It was proposed that the e-mail should be delivered in English, French and German and any other languages that members could translate into. FV agreed to assist with the German and PvA with the French. This initiative was warmly welcomed.

**6. National Reports of the associations.** To speed things up only new developments were requested and these centred around fencing regulations and the public perceptions of deer enclosures.

**France:** A Ministerial requirement to increase the height of fences and require that woodland be incorporated in deer farms had been narrowly averted by Didier Rogues-Rogery's intervention. The proposal seemed to have come from the French government rather than any particular hunting lobby group.

**Sweden:** A requirement to increase fence heights to 2.4 m had been proposed but defeated. There are three government bodies working to develop regulations for deer farms.

**Latvia:** Perimeter fences were required to be 2.4 m but there was a requirement that woodland be excluded! The Latvian deer farmers' association was working with the Latvian authorities to draft regulations for new deer farms. They have established deer farms on which fallow deer are being selectively bred.

**Austria:** It was accepted in Austria that escapes might occur but that these were more often due to gates being left open or trees falling on fencelines. The approval of game meat handling facilities was progressing but a long way behind schedule.

**Switzerland:** Each canton can dictate the height of the fences and often these were irrational. There was also now discussion of the introduction of training for deer farmers entailing 40 hours of theory and three months of practical; the Swiss deer farmers hope to moderate this – no such training is required for sheep or cattle farmers and the rationale seems to be that deer are 'wild'.

**Denmark:** Fence heights had to be 2 metres and there was a 3 day training course required if more than 5 deer were being kept.

**Netherlands:** The association had been involved in trying to defuse damaging publicity associated with someone who had bought deer from a farm and illegally released them on an island in the North Sea.

**Czech Republic:** Now that deer can be shot on farm there are moves to develop ways of transforming the carcass into value added products and the Czechs requested help on this.

**UK:** There was a discussion of the increasing amount of tuberculosis in wild deer and the recurring problems of bluetongue which had caused some exports to be abandoned.

**Spain:** There was an encouraging belief in Spain that hunting enclosures were valuable to the conservation of the habitat and that deer were therefore good. The situation with regard to hunting in enclosures was very different to that in Netherlands and Switzerland where hunting within enclosures is illegal.

There was a general discussion as to whether the emphasis on 'farming' deer was always the angle which FEDFA should be taking. In many countries within Europe deer were enclosed for many reasons other than venison production and it was felt that FEDFA might benefit from broadening itself to represent all those who had deer within enclosures. It was agreed to take no action on this for the time being but to keep the matter under review.

**7. Confirmation and approval of office holders for 2009.** It was noted that JF wished to cease being secretary although he agreed to act until after the Slovakian meeting. It was agreed that FV would become President in 2010 and that RK would as the other vice president be expected to succeed him. **The veterinary committee** which would continue to lobby over the removal of the requirement to have vets present when farmed deer are bled would be made up of RE, JF, PA and Professor Ludek Bartos. A **communication committee** was also formed to organise the e-mail newsletter, its translation and distribution comprising RE, TLC, PvA, and Johan Trygve.

**8. The date of the next meeting** was confirmed as 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> March 2010 in Brussels to run from lunch on the 23<sup>rd</sup> to lunch on the 24<sup>th</sup>.

Paul Audenaerde was thanked for locating a venue and the President was thanked for all his valuable work against a background of ill-health.