

# *FEDFA 1990 - 2000*

*FEDERATION OF EUROPEAN DEER FARMERS ASSOCIATIONS*

## *A 10th Anniversary Report for Deer Farmers*

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Constitution

# FEDFA Office Holders

## *President*

Dr Paul Audenaerde (Benelux)

Dr Audenaerde is a Senior Partner in a large veterinary practice near Bruges in Belgium. He started deer farming in 1989 and was the founding President of Association Benelux pour Éleveurs de Cervides (ABÉC), the Benelux Deer Farmers Association. He is FEDFA's observer on the EU Standing Veterinary Council in Brussels.

## *Vice-Presidents*

Karl Beckman (Sweden)

Karl Vilhelm Beckman (Msc. Agr.Ec.) represents Riksförbundet för Svensk Hjortavel (RSH). During the last five years he has been active in the Swedish catering business with marketing as a product manager at Servera R&S AB in Stockholm. He is currently Sales Manager at Procordia Food AB in Eslöv. Both companies are market leaders or big players on the Swedish food market, one as a wholesaler and the other in food production. Practical experience in deer farming comes from the family farm containing just above 120 does in stock 1997.

Johan Trygve Solheim (Norway)

Trygve Solheim is manager of Svanøy Foundation. The foundation is mainly concerned with rural development and restoring of old buildings at the island of Svanøy but has been deer farming since 1990, by running a small research farm with both Red and Fallow deer. He represents Norway on the FEDFA Management Committee and graduated at the Agricultural University of Norway, Department of Biology & Nature Conservation in 1987.

## *Treasurer*

A G Armitage (U.K.)

## *Secretary*

John Elliot M.A. (Agric.) Cantab.

5 The Boltons, Portarlington Close, Bournemouth, Dorset, BH4 8DA, U.K.

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## *Political Secretary*

Kamiel Konings

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## *Immediate Past President*

Bertie J Wall (Ireland)

Bertie Wall is immediate Past President of FEDFA 1998 - 2000. He was Chairman of the Organising Committee of the 2nd World Deer Farming Congress and is President of the Irish Deer Farmers Association and Secretary of the Irish Venison Industry Board. He has been Deputy Chairman of the Board of Governors of Limerick University and Director of four University Companies. He was a member of the Forum for the Shannon Region and chaired the TaskForce for Agribusiness, whose report became the blueprint for the development of national resources in the Mid-West of Ireland. He is a consultant to the Deer Industry and farms dairy cows and deer near Drumcollogher in County Limerick.

## *Past Presidents*

Professor Dr Günter Reinken (Germany)

Professor Reinken was President of FEDFA 1995 - 1998. He has had a distinguished career as Professor of Agriculture at Bonn University and Vice-Director of the Rhineland Chamber of Agriculture with responsibility for seven research stations. With 5 books and 260 publications to his name he has been consultant to European and overseas governments and lectured widely on deer farming. He founded the German Fallow Deer Farmers Association in 1975 and his book 'Deer Farming' is a standard work on fallow deer farming.

E B Herlevsen (Denmark)

Ejvind Herlevsen was President of FEDFA 1993 - 1995 and a founding member and past chairman of Landsforeningen af Danske Hjorteavlere (The Danish Deer Farmers Association). He was a member of the World Congress Organising Committee and represents Denmark in the FEDFA Management Committee.

He was trained as an officer in the Royal Danish Lifeguards and has been Battalion Commander in the UN peacekeeping operations in Cyprus and Assistant Chief of Staff for Intelligence and Security at NATO Headquarters of the Northern European Command in Norway. He retired to take over the family farm at Mariager, Denmark, where he has established a small fallow deer farm where the activity includes sale (and export) of breeding stock and conduct of a Sire Reference Scheme.

## A G Armitage (U.K.)

Tony Armitage was President of FEDFA 1990 - 1993 and is former Chairman of the British Deer Farmers Association. He was the FEDFA representative at the 1st World Deer Farming Congress in New Zealand in 1993 and a member of the Organising Committee for the 2nd World Deer Farming Congress in Limerick.

He qualified at Harper Adams Agricultural College and farms extensively in Scotland with over 1000 acres of arable and large sheep and beef units together with the deer, which he started farming in 1985. Mervinslaw Estate also includes a successful visitor attraction, the Jedforest Deer and Farm Park, which is run by his wife.

## *Founding Chairman*

## Gerald B Walker (U.K.)

Gerald Walker was founding Chairman of FEDFA, which was established in 1990 at a meeting in London initiated by the BDFA, of which he was Chairman. He is Managing Director of Maplehurst Deer, a farmer of many years standing who has specialised in livestock and arable farming. As a natural development from the more traditional livestock enterprises he became involved in deer farming during the early 1980's.

His consultancy service includes the designing and development of handling units, selection of the best quality breeding stock and planning and set-up of complete deer enterprises. He is a large scale exporter of deer breeding stock to Europe.



## Introduction

FEDFA was established, in June 1990, at a meeting held in London at the invitation of Gerald Walker, Chairman of the British Deer Farmers Association. Founder members were Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, Netherlands, Spain and the UK.

### **The Constitution and Objectives**

The resulting Constitution established the following objectives:

- To safeguard the interests of the industry within the EEC and with third countries;
- To promote the science and practice of deer farming;
- To coordinate research and exchange of knowledge;
- To coordinate transport, welfare and disease control measures;
- To establish a register of member countries;
- Membership open to all EU national deer farmers associations. Subsequently non-EU members were offered membership by agreement of Management Committee. The full constitution is included in this folder at annex.

## Management

The Federation is managed by a President, two Vice-Presidents, a Treasurer and Secretary. The President's appointments are for two years and rotate between member countries. Business is conducted in the English language. FEDFA is included in the influential Directory of non-profit making Interest Groups published by the Commission.

## Membership

There are now 16 members, including non-EU countries, and FEDFA represents nearly 10,000 European deer farmers from the following countries: Austria, Benelux (including Holland and Luxembourg), Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the UK. With an expanded Europe, membership has become attractive to associations in the former mid and eastern Europe. The fact that FEDFA now represents 18 individual countries indicates the perceived benefits of the Federation. A note about deer farming in most member countries is included in this report.

FEDFA provides a focus for all European deer farmers and a contact point for those in authority for all matters concerning deer farming; it can provide a number of services for member associations and advice and support in connection with their relationship with their own governments. The policy of subsidiarity means that implementation of much legislation is at the discretion of member state governments and local contact is essential; FEDFA can provide support here.

## Early Work

The UK held the Chairmanship (Presidency) for the first two years when the political work was closely allied with work done by the BDFA. These were critical years for deer farming covering consultation on the Game Meat Directive, which came into force in 1992. This Directive laid the ground rules for deer farming in the EU that still apply. FEDFA was instrumental in obtaining EU agreement to the following aspects that were particularly important for deer farmers:

- Agreement that farmed venison should be classified as red meat and not game for hygiene and marketing purposes with all year round slaughter;
- Permission to slaughter in the field;
- Concession on time from slaughter to dressing from 45 minutes to 1 hour or 3 hours using chilled vehicle.

During the first 3 or 4 years a lot of time was spent in agreeing a constitution and a definition of deer farming that suited a range of cultural and geographical differences as well as how to fund an organisation that could represent the interests of so many different nations.

It soon became evident that these interests were in fact dictated by the EU and trying to establish contact and rapport with those in power was not easy. FEDFA also learned that progress was often painfully slow due to the overriding bureaucracy and the need for the EU to reconcile so many different points of view.

## Politics and Achievements for Deer Farming

Continuous monitoring of all new EU legislation and making sure that the needs of deer farmers was made clear to those in authority has been the major task of FEDFA and remains so. Unfortunately, official interest is often concentrated on the conventional livestock enterprises and it can be difficult to persuade others of the importance of such a relatively small group of farmers.

However, there has been a growing list of successes apart from the original work on the Game Meat Directive mentioned above. These have included changes to the Balai Directive that would have imposed 30 day isolation for all stock before movements within countries, difficulties with some governments in allowing slaughter all year round and ensuring agreement to the continuation of field slaughter under the current simplification of the vertical directives.

FEDFA draw attention to the need for common standards for TB testing, which is yet to be implemented, and has fought for over 5 years to get fair treatment on tariffs for imported farmed venison, which has often had a disastrous effect on European prices. This aspect is being followed up actively at the 2000 Agricultural Negotiations at W.T.O.

We have consistently put the case for farmed deer to be included with other domestic animals, such as sheep and cattle, in all legislation and market support measures. We have the active support of COPA.

In 1996 FEDFA Limited was established to enable FEDFA to have a legal identity with the ability to go to court if an approach to the European Court on tariff matters or equal treatment with cattle and sheep became necessary. FEDFA recommended that it would be wise for all member associations to become limited companies. FEDFA were active with the Commission when the BSE outbreaks in cattle occurred and were successful in removing deer from inclusion with a decision on the exclusion of specific risk material for all ruminants was proposed, a very important point for marketing farmed venison.

It became clear that deer farming was only likely to gain financial support for schemes to do with the environment and a strategy paper including recommendations for ecological and consumer friendly production was drawn up in 1997 and suitable letters provided for members to contact their own governments.

Political lobbying has continued with formal reports on all relevant directives and legislation to all members every March and October. The emphasis has been on Agenda 2000 that could see support for deer for the first time under environmental and disadvantaged area schemes. Members were asked to support FEDFA efforts by writing to their own governments, who would be more influential in the future under subsidiarity arrangements in CAP reforms.

The importance of farmed deer in organic livestock farming has also been emphasised and a draft letter was given to members for lobbying purposes. Although deer are not specifically mentioned in the new directive proposals, FEDFA has gained assurance that they are included. First steps at drawing up organic standards for deer have been made by FEDFA in conjunction with BDFA.

## 2nd World Deer Farming Congress

1998 was dominated by the 2nd World Deer Farming Congress jointly organised by FEDFA Ltd. and IDFA Ltd. at Limerick in June.

Preparation for this major international event and assisting at the Congress put a severe strain on FEDFA's limited resources in terms of time and money. However, judging by the reports received from individuals and seen in the press worldwide, Congress was a great success. The main criticism was too little time for discussion after the sessions, which some blamed on the superb but high volume Irish entertainment in the evenings!

Regrettably, the Congress made a financial loss following the experience of the first Congress in New Zealand. This was mainly due to lack of numbers, which did not reach the realistic estimates that had to be prepared two years ahead. As it was, over 400 delegates and speakers attended in what turned out to be a disastrous year for deer farmers' profitability everywhere. The position would have been far worse but for the generous sponsorship raised in Ireland, the UK and USA. The main sponsor was Solidlock, the International Fencing company who provided about £20,000 in cash and kind.

'A Tribute to World Deer Farming', produced by FEDFA, is a 250 page volume of Proceedings of the 2nd World Deer Farming Congress, which has become a recognised work of reference, by leading international specialists, on deer farming. A few copies are still available through national associations at £20 each.

The principal contents are listed here:

The First New Domesticant for 5000 years?  
Overview of World Deer Farming - Europe  
Deer Farming in the USA  
The Farming of Deer in Canada  
Overview of World Deer Farming - an Australian Perspective  
Overview of World Deer Farming - New Zealand  
Deer Farming in Asia  
Market Potential in Western Europe  
Deer Farming in Eastern and Central Europe  
The Potential Market for Venison in North America  
The World Market Potential - Australia / New Zealand  
Asian Markets for Deer Products  
New Zealand Perspective on Achieving Market Potential  
Factors Influencing Costs and Returns of Venison Production Worldwide  
Trophy Hunting as an Additional Source of Income for Deer Farmers  
Velvet and Chinese Pharmacology  
Additional Sources of Income - Deerskins  
Deer Farming and Tourism  
Feeding the Pregnant Hind  
Management of Grazed Pastures and Forages for Optimum Deer Production  
Artificial Breeding Technologies for Farmed Deer  
An Ecological Approach to Pasture Management  
Farm Gate Sales  
Venison from the Valley of the Huisne  
Feeding and Management of the deer calf from Weaning to Slaughter  
Animal Health  
Carcass and Meat Quality Characteristics: Venison in a Competitive Market  
Government Funding of Research and Development  
for Emerging Livestock Industries in Australia  
Global Deer Farming: Past Performance and Future Promise  
Welcome to the United States and the North American Deer Farmers Association

Dr T J Fletcher  
Professor Dr Gunter Reinke  
Dr Raleigh Buckmaster  
J C Haigh and I Thorleifson  
Henry Shapiro  
John Spiers  
Dr K R Drew  
Karl Wilhelm Beckman  
Valdas Danilevicius  
T R Douglas Harpur  
Colin Ward  
Dr J M Suttie & M J Loza  
Richard Riddiford  
Russell Marchant  
Johan Trygve Solheim  
Dr J M Suttie & S R Haines  
Jeremy Law  
Didier Roques-Rogery  
Dennis Chapple & Mervyn Davies  
T M Barry, P R Wilson & P D Kemp  
Dr Geoff Asher  
Dr Pierre Ernst & Dr Wilhelm Zahres  
Dr Julian Ridge  
Dominique Yade  
F Vigh-Larsen & M H Davies  
Dr J C Haigh  
Alan V Fisher, Jacqueline A Bayntun & Michael Enser  
Professor Emeritus John C Thozard  
Dr K R Drew  
Jill Bryar-Wood

## Code of Ethics

Following a decision taken at the Congress, FEDFA agreed to cooperate with USA, Australia and New Zealand in the production of a Code of Ethics for Deer Farming, which has been published by the North American Deer Farmers' Association.

### THE WORLD DEER FARMING CODE OF ETHICS

#### I ACKNOWLEDGE:

That I have an obligation to the deer farming industry to promote the highest standards of husbandry and health of the animals under my care, minimise their distress, enhance their natural protection from predators, parasites and diseases, provide them adequate feed, shelter and water and respect the environment at all times.

That these standards call for an adequate and well-formulated health care program. Procedures, which induce severe pain or distress, will only be performed under the direct supervision of a veterinarian, using anaesthetics or analgesics when appropriate.

That transportation of my deer will be done humanely, using measures appropriate to the species.

The need to further my own knowledge of deer farming and will support participation by both myself and my employees in programs for continuing education and communication with other deer farmers.

That I have an obligation to all deer farmers to truthfully share the non-proprietary lessons of my experience; keep all existing laws, ordinances and quality standards; respect confidentiality and be responsible and accountable in all business transactions. I shall adhere to a policy of truth in business transactions and shall promise only that which can be fulfilled.

That I have an obligation to ensure that animals sold are honestly represented. I will offer prospective buyers the right to inspect my farm and livestock and I will deliver to the buyer upon requirement or request a veterinarian's statement of the health of the animals at the time of sale.

Accepting these obligations as a member of the World Deer Farming Industry, I shall ensure that my business reflects the highest standards of ethical conduct respecting the international community and in dealing with my customers, employees and regulatory agencies. I pledge observance and furtherance of the letter and spirit of the above World Deer Farmers Code of Ethics.

# The Internet

## **FEDFA Web Site**

Vice-Presidents Karl Beckman and Trygve Solheim have worked together to establish a FEDFA Web site:

**[www.fedfa.com](http://www.fedfa.com)**

The page structure will include:

1. FEDFA MAIN PAGE (\*) - maximum 500 words about FEDFA (sponsor presentation by logo)
2. FEDFA MEMBER COUNTRIES (\*) - maximum 250 words per country
3. DEER FARMING (\*) - facts about deer farming in Europe
4. CODE OF ETHICS (\*) - simple rules for each farming member to follow
5. VENISON (\*) - facts about venison
6. QUALITY ASSURANCE (\*) - about the Quality Assurance Scheme List of members who are accepted by this system.
7. RECIPES (\*) - recipes including venison from all around Europe. Each country has to contribute with a minimum of one recipe
8. GALLERIES - deer pictures
9. ADVERTISING - members and others can advertise their products here. This page is fully commercial (livestock, hunting, venison, handcraft, etc.)
10. LINKS - links to different private and associations web sites in Europe
11. ADDRESSES - list of members
12. E-MAIL (e-mail addresses where available)

(\*) This page can be printed out on a color printer, and each member can distribute to target groups. It should be available in all member country languages.

## Communication

Communication between members is of fundamental importance but often difficult to achieve as so many other similar organisations have discovered. However, since 1995 there have been regular Annual Reports and Midsummer Newsletters summarising activity and progress whenever possible.

These reports have highlighted the long running efforts to persuade New Zealand to join with FEDFA and its members to promote farmed venison against wild and to create a more beneficial marketing situation for all. FEDFA has excellent relationships with NZGIB and NZDFA, as well as NADeFA (USA) and DIAA (Australia).

## Research

FEDFA has been active in supporting research and with the help of Uppsala University (Sweden) in 1995 prepared a marketing project for Europe; but sadly funds were not granted. We have cooperated more recently with the de Montfort University (UK) in the production of a Guide to R & D in game farming and much time has been spent on assembling reliable European statistics, which were published in 1998 (Reinken).

## Marketing

FEDFA is not a marketing organisation but it is closely concerned with matters that may affect the market for farmed venison such as low priced imports and tariff levels and a positive approach to Quality Assurance, which is fast becoming mandatory in the present consumer conscious environment in which we work.

## Quality Assurance

FEDFA are actively considering with the help of the BDFA (UK), who have the most advanced scheme in Europe, how to arrange a European Quality Mark for farmed venison.

## P.R.

FEDFA is active in monitoring world wide press reports and where necessary attempting to correct situations where farmed venison is shown in a harmful way.

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