

## PRESS RELEASE

### EU-FP7 Project: EU-PLF

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#### EU project EU-PLF meets with farmers

On 26 of August, the partners of the EU-PLF project met with ten farmers who are currently using PLF technology on their farms. The meeting allowed the project partners to have a better understanding of the needs and expectations of the farmers and where the equipment and tools could be improved. It was an invaluable interaction for the partners of the project.

The meeting was led-off by a presentation by one of the farmers in the UK, David Speller, who uses equipment and technology provided by Fancom. David bought a 1960's broiler chicken farm in 2004 and when in the earlier years he had to renovate due to some difficulties, David chose to completely redo the barns, even fitting them with a heated floor. Nowadays, David takes care of over 180.000 chickens in four houses. Efficiency/productivity and the welfare of his birds were the most important reasons for the initial investment in PLF. David strongly believes that technology can significantly improve animal welfare as well as return on investment. In 2009, he was named the 'Poultry Farmer of the year'.

After David's presentation, each farmer met with different partners of the project to have a frank discussion about PLF and what it meant to them. When asked if animal welfare was important in their choice to use PLF, Tina Dahl answered, "You take care of your animals and they will take care of you."

The meeting with farmers came after a day of a Joint EU-PLF/EAAP scientific sessions held at the EAAP Annual Meeting held in Copenhagen, Denmark. The EAAP meeting brought together over 1000 scientists from 60 countries. This allowed EU-PLF to share projects results to a wide audience but also articulate how PLF can help in the area of animal welfare, animal health and production as well as the management of farms.

Initially the Joint Session had been envisioned for one session dedicated to PLF but after receiving numerous great abstracts for the topic, it was given a full-day, including parallel sessions. Over 110 scientists from around the world attended the opening session chaired by Ilan Halachmi. The project coordinator Daniel Berckmans and Jeffrey Bewley were the keynote speakers: addressing the European and American perspective (respectively) towards the adoption of PLF. Research presented, of which only four were from EU-PLF project partners, were being conducted in countries of Europe, Israel and the USA which clearly indicated the popularity and relevance of PLF in the field of animal science around the world.

The proceedings of the meeting with the 10 farmers will be published in December 2014 by Katholieke Universiteit Leuven.

The proceedings from the Joint EAAP/EU-PLF sessions of the EAAP Annual Meeting in Copenhagen will be published in March 2015 by Wageningen Academic Publishers.

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