# PRESS RELEASE

## The EU-PLF Project presented its main results and achievements during its final conference in Brussels

**Leuven, Belgium (11 October 2016)** - One hundred and thirty two people from 17 countries attended the EU-PLF final project conference, including farmers, research institutions, industry, other stakeholders from the livestock production chains, PLF providers, decision makers and NGOs. The project demonstrated and final conference highlighted that laboratory-developed PLF tools can be fully operational on farms and shared with the delegates how the Precision Livestock Farming (PLF) can bring value to the farmers and other stakeholders in the production chains.

The European Union project EU-PLF (Value Creation through Precision Livestock Farming) held its final conference in Brussels on 29th September at the prestigious *Residence Palace*. The conference was co-organised by the EU-PLF consortium together with Animal Task Force (www.animaltaskforce.eu).

PLF is to develop management tools based upon continuously and automatically monitoring animal welfare, health, environmental impact and production in real-time.

For broilers, PLF tools based on camera observations have the capacity to deliver early warnings to the farmers in case of unexpected changes in the livestock house. More than 95 % of occurring problems had an influence on the behaviour of the broiler and were consequently alarmed by the eYenamic camera system. It also has the potential to automate welfare monitoring, particularly regarding leg problems and the quality of the relationship between human and animals. The real-time monitoring of sound can provide early warnings of the risk of growth retardation. There is hope that PLF tools can also help in reducing the emission of dust and ammonia but this needs further research.

Camera-based tools have the capacity to monitor the weight of pigs, their drinking behaviour and their activity. Sound monitoring is very effective in detecting incoming respiratory problems 2 to 12 days before the farmer notices the problem in pigs and calves. This is very valuable in order to avoid full development of the disease in the barn. Even more, the technology can help to test the efficiency of vaccine treatment.

The EU-PLF project also demonstrated that positioning tools can provide more information than just the localisation of dairy cows in the shed and heat detection. They have the potential to bring valuable help in monitoring animal welfare through feeding management, early warning of health problems and surveillance of resting behaviour.

Models to calculate or assess tangible, semi tangible and intangible benefits brought by PLF technology to the farmers or the whole production chains have been developed within the EU-PLF project. They will assist farmers in making decisions to purchase PLF tools. Conversely they will also help PLF providers to assess the extent to which their product can bring added value to the farmer.

During the conference, farmers who tested the PLF tools on their farms during the project gave their testimonies on the advantages they received from the PLF technologies; they also gave precious insights on the limits of the technology in its current stage of development and the progress that has still to be achieved.

The EU-PLF project was also instrumental in creating awareness on PLF technologies through Smart Farming Innovation days, coaching SME teams and prototypes. An important achievement of the project was the help it provided in the creation of 4 spin-off companies that are now in the PLF market. All four companies gave their testimonies during the final conference.

The biggest result of the project is the awareness that PLF technology will be applied globally and is envisaged as a trend that will be part of the world-wide livestock market. Five years ago many people still perceived the PLF technology as utopian; these days, however, a paradigm shift has occurred and people now see the potential.

To know more on the results and achievements of the EU-PLF project, please visit the project website at www.eu-plf.eu.

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