

## **Editorial foreword**

*On behalf of both the organising committee and the scientific committee, I am pleased to welcome you in this wonderful place of St Malo, to take part in the “in-between congress” of the International Society for Animal Hygiene.*

*The ISAH was founded in 1970 by a group of European scientists at veterinary research institutes and universities. It was the result of a demand for new information mainly regarding farm animal keeping in relation to animal/human health concerns as well as environmental protection. The vocable “Animal Hygiene” was given to gather all those aspects of animal health and welfare maintenance and of veterinary public health. Hence the word “hygiene” was here used in its etymological acceptance, much broader than the current usual interpretation.*

*The ISAH has a main congress every third year and in the mean time there is usually a so-called “in-between congress” with the same scientific standard as the main congress. The current St Malo meeting is focused on the European situation of animal production sector in connexion to animal hygiene. Needless to mention here the crises we had to face in Europe during the recent years. Among these, BSE was certainly the most detrimental but avian flu also had locally a severe impact. In addition to these temporarily acute problems, several other issues are daily concerns to the livestock sector: animal welfare, environmental pollution, foodborne infections, drug resistance... Those crises and endemic problems point out the increasing need to take care of the food chain in a holistic-integrated way. The preharvest stage looks essential in this respect. An important part of these items relates to veterinary public health and fall completely within the scope of the ISAH.*

*Within the scientific committee we had a deep reflection on those critical points and we decided to build up scientific sessions accordingly. The objective was to try to bring in the updated knowledge which was available in the scientific community, trying to overcome the difficulties encountered in the food chain and taking advantage of the lessons learnt from the past.*

*On the first day entitled “animal production and society”, we will have a group of lectures about key-issues among which EU regulations and their impact. Then parallel sessions will focus on certain aspects of welfare in farm animals and on the integration of production systems in the environment. The second day has animal health as main topic. The presentations will give us key-points for disease prevention and health maintenance. Both infectious and not primarily infectious problems will be given consideration. A specific attention will be paid to the role of animal hygiene in a situation of crisis. Veterinary public health will be a major item of the congress and several sessions are scheduled on the purpose. Obviously food safety will have a place of choice in the programme but other aspects like environmental preservation and non-foodborne zoonoses won't be kept aside.*

*All-in-all the programme of the congress illustrates the broad spectrum of the scientific field of the ISAH. It clearly shows how critical most of the subjects are and not only to the animal production sector per se, but, at least for some, to our fellow citizens as well.*

*We cannot end this edito without mentioning the wonderful job made by the scientific and the organising committees. A special thank goes to the ladies of ISPAIA Ploufragan Zoopole for their dedication and their very professional contribution. We must also acknowledge the companies and the different organisations which gave us financial support. Needless to remind that they provided us with the means to organise our congress in an agreeable place while keeping the attendees' cost affordable. We sincerely thank these sponsors for their commitment to animal hygiene.*

*Finally we must thank you all, participants, contributors, chairpersons, for your considerable input.*

*We wish you all a pleasant and interesting congress.*

*F Madec  
Chairman*