**Title:**

**Veepieleer: an epidemiologic and support program at the service of the farmer and vet in Belgium**

**Authors/co-Authors**

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**Introduction:**

The program Veepieleer was founded in 2006 upon the request of the agricultural sector in Belgium. One of the program’s purposes is to promote a closer contact between science (university/labs) and the field (farmers/vets).

**Objectives:**

The main goal of Veepieleer is to keep an eye on and to actively monitor the health situation of Belgian cattle. At the same time, Veepieleer tries to closely monitor health trends, and emerging and re-emerging diseases in cattle.

**Operating funds:**

Veepieleer is financially supported by the sector itself. In Belgium every farmer is paying a contribution per animal he keeps. These contributions are collected in a so-called ‘sanitation fund’, which can also be used to finance the control measurements in case of an outbreak of a disease, such as the outbreak of botulism on several farms in 2009.

**Methods:**

The first pillar is giving diagnostic and financial support, guidance and advice concerning farm-related problems.

**Results:**

Veepieleer’s second pillar consists in trying to collect as much data as possible concerning the evolution of diseases. This happens in close cooperation with the vets in the field. When there is a need, Veepieleer organises meetings with vets in practice to discuss the problems they see on the farms. On the other hand, Veepieleer keeps close contacts with other partners, such as universities, several labs and farmer organisations. Out of these meetings ‘subprojects’ are born, that investigate a particular problem brought up by people in the field. The result or conclusion of such a ‘subproject’ must make a positive contribution to the management on the farms.

Examples of subprojects performed by Veepieleer:

1. Selenium survey on dairy farms in Belgium/Flanders. Looking at the possibility to evaluate the selenium status on a dairy farm by analyzing bulk milk.
2. Relation between BVD infection and somatic cell count on dairy farms
7. Sarre C., De Bleecker K., Deprez P., Leveecke B., Charlier J., Verzyeuze J., Claerebout E. Risk factors for Pseudotipes ovis scabies on Belgian/Blue farms in Northern Belgium. 6th European congress of bovine health management: abstracts, Liege, Belgium, 7-9 September 2011, 68

**Three main pillars of Veepieleer**

- **Pilar 1**
  - The first pillar is giving diagnostic and financial support, guidance and advice concerning farm-related problems.

- **Pilar 2**
  - Veepieleer’s second pillar consists in trying to collect as much data as possible concerning the evolution of diseases. This happens in close cooperation with the vets in the field. When there is a need, Veepieleer organises meetings with vets in practice to discuss the problems they see on the farms. On the other hand, Veepieleer keeps close contacts with other partners, such as universities, several labs and farmer organisations. Out of these meetings ‘subprojects’ are born, that investigate a particular problem brought up by people in the field. The result or conclusion of such a ‘subproject’ must make a positive contribution to the management on the farms.

- **Pilar 3**
  - The third pillar concerns communication with the field.
    - Articles in agricultural magazines in Flanders
    - Presentations all over the country for farmers and veterinarians in practice regarding several subjects.
    - Website: www.dgz.be

**Funds:**

Veepieleer sets up numerous and high-quality relations with vets, farmers and other partners. In relation to second-line veterinary care, Veepieleer per-

**Publications 2011:**


**DGZ:**

- Laboratory
- Animal registration
- Services (supporting vets)

**Universities:**

- labs, professors, etc.

**Pharma industry**

**Agricultural organisations**

- Other organisations