



The Belgium Veal Calves Living Lab

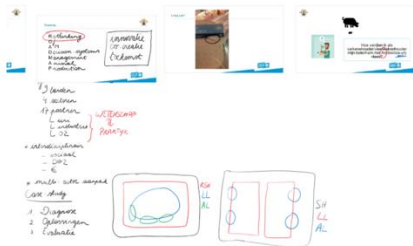
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Marginal Care

Cattle

Kick-off Meeting
9.10.2020



The Belgian Veal Calves Living Lab consisted of approximately 20 stakeholders coming from industry, government, NPO's and farmer & veterinary organizations which online joined during 4 sessions to develop a problem tree 'why AMU'.

From the beginning of the LL it was decided the case study would not include testing innovations at the farm level. A project proposal was written to address the issues that were encountered during the living labs.

The strategy tested in the Living Lab

For the Belgian veal calf industry, the following main causes for antibiotic use were identified ('the problem tree of 'why AMU'): a high cross contamination rate and a hampered immunity status of veal calves originating >100 of different supplier herds within each round, infrastructural problems (biosecurity, ventilation, compartmentalization), business blindness (focussing on animals instead of the environment), lack of preventive management (time, sensor data, costs of vaccines) and lack of incentives (no prospects on long term results, conflicting advice), animal welfare), financial risks taken by vet and integrator).

The roadmap to implementation

The main issue in the case study appeared to be the quality of the veal calves. Implementing solutions would require drastic changes, difficult to perform within the roadmap framework (within Belgium, it was decided to prioritise the pig living labs because of lack of resources). Participants were presented to write a common project proposal, initiated by the primary actors (veterinarians of veal calf integrators). Potential outcomes could be financial resources for follow-up and a strengthened common vision between research institutes, governmental institutes and the actor from the veal calf sector.



The impact created by the Living Lab

A common project proposal was written and a small group of participants discussed intensively content and layout of the proposal. Ultimately, several stakeholders decided not to submit the project because a more international approach was more desirable than a local one. This showcases that more investment by primary producers is challenging within an international market with few opportunities to sell at a higher price.



Challenges

- Solutions require efforts from the entire sector, including calf breeders
- a common viewpoint between breeding farms and calf rearers, finding the right incentives
- International markets within the veal calf industry

Successes

- High level of understanding and agreement between different stakeholders
- Motivating people
- Open discussions, common understanding of barriers
- Involvement of new stakeholders

A common understanding and motivating the entire (dairy) cattle chain

www.roadmap-h2020.eu



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