PROGRAMME

Building the future of sustainable worm control in grazing ruminants

04 DECEMBER 2026 **09:00–16:00** **BRUSSELS, BELGIUM**

Hendrik Conscience Building · Koning Albert II-laan, 15

Morning session | 09:00–12:30

Auditorium

TIME	TOPIC & SPEAKERS
08:30–09:00	**Registration**
09:00–09:10	**Welcome and introduction** Prof. Georg von Samson-Himmelstjerna | Freie Universität Berlin
09:10–09:30	**An EU Strategy for Livestock** Brigitte Misonne | Head of Unit AGRI E3, DG AGRI, European Commission
09:30–09:50	**Irish Presidency to the EU and parasite control** Rebecca Fitzpatrick | Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, IE
09:50–10:10	**Policy recommendations from SPARC** Johannes Charlier | Kreavet, BE
10:10–10:30	**Sustainable worm control:** **SPARC tools and lessons learned** Prof. Laura Rinaldi | University of Naples Federico II, IT
10:30–11:00	**Coffee break**
11:00–11:20	**SPARC Ambassadors share experiences from the field** Marieke De Louw | De Louw Veterinair Advies, NL Bruce Thompson | Dairy farmer, IE Ruggero Amato | Veterinarian, IT
11:20–11:35	**European Communities of Practice and anthelmintic resistance:** **Fireside chat with the SPARC coordinator** Leen Lietaer | ILVO, BE
11:35–12:25	**Panel discussion:** **Q&A session moderated by Prof. Georg von Samson-Himmelstjerna** Kevin Harrison | Farm manager and Chair of SCOPS | UK Gustavo Sabatini | Boehringer Ingelheim Suzanne Keeling | Beef + Lamb, NZ Nancy De Briyne | Federation of Veterinarians of Europe (FVE)
12:25–12:30	**Close of morning programme** Prof. Georg von Samson-Himmelstjerna

PROGRAMME & PRACTICAL INFORMATION

An afternoon of exchange

Lunch break | 12:30–13:30

Offered by Livestock Helminth Research Alliance (LiHRA) and Boehringer Ingelheim.

Afternoon session | Parallel programme

13:35–16:00 | LiHRA market: sustainable control practices

Pierre and Marie Curie Room, first floor (1B15)

Chair: Evelien Cronin | ILVO

Meet SPARC Ambassadors, discover sustainable worm control approaches, sponsors and initiatives and network over local European specialties.

SPARC partners and sponsors showcase initiatives at individual stands.
Confirmed stands: SPARC consortium members, LiHRA, LIFE MiCliFEED, INDICAL Bioscience, CAMSENS.

13:35–14:35 | LIFE MiCliFEED workshop

Auditorium

In this workshop we will discuss the potential to use parasite control as a tool for climate mitigation. Outcomes of the LIFE MiCliFEED project will be presented and we will discuss funding routes after SPARC.

Mitigating climate impact of small ruminants through parasite control and innovative feeding approaches
Smaro Sotiraki | Hellenic Agricultural Organisation (ELGO) - DIMITRA, Greece

Making Impact Last: Sustainable Communities of Practice and EU funding pathways.
Elias Demian | Senior Consultant, Prospect C&S (Brussels) | Head of Environmental Economics Unit, Foundation for Economic and Industrial Research – IOBE (Athens)

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Registration and travel

REGISTRATION

Participation is free, but registration is required before 15 November. **Register here: The event registration form ↗**

VENUE AND ACCOMODATION

To help you prepare your trip, you can find information how to reach the venue or suggested hotels **here.**

VISITOR INFORMATION

Look for the event signs inside the building. **Venue directions ↗**

MEDIA INFORMATION

Project website: **www.wormsparc.com**

We look forward to welcoming you in Brussels.

MEET THE SPEAKERS

About the speakers



Prof. Georg von Samson-Himmelstjerna

Freie Universität Berlin, Germany

Georg is Full Professor of Parasitology and Managing Director at the Institute of Parasitology and Tropical Veterinary Medicine at Freie Universität Berlin, Germany. Prior to his current position, he was Professor of Molecular Parasitology at the University of Veterinary Medicine Hannover (TiHo), where he also obtained his degree in veterinary medicine, his doctorate, and his habilitation in veterinary parasitology. From 1996 to 2000, he worked at Bayer AG as head of the Laboratory for Molecular Helminthology and was involved in the development of several new antiparasitic drugs. His research focuses on the molecular investigation of the mode of action of anthelmintics and the mechanisms of resistance to antiparasitic drugs. In particular, he has conducted numerous basic research and field studies on the issue of anthelmintic resistance in gastrointestinal parasites of grazing animals.



Brigitte MISONNE

AGRI E ‘Markets’ and AGRI E3 ‘Animal Products’ European Commission

Brigitte is Acting Director for Markets and Head of Unit for Animal Products in DG AGRI, European Commission. She has the overall responsibility for monitoring agricultural market developments, analysing economic trends, building-up market knowledge and designing EU market support measures in agricultural sectors, as well as keeping EU market policy fit for purpose. She is responsible for the livestock workstream to provide a diagnosis of the sector’s challenges, propose appropriate tools to accompany the sector, seek ways to address its climate/environment footprint, foster investments, technological development and innovation, and enhance the development of sustainable production models. This has led to the Commission‘s EU Strategy on Livestock.

MEET THE SPEAKERS

About the speakers



Rebecca Fitzpatrick

Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Ireland

Rebecca Fitzpatrick is a Superintending Veterinary Inspector working in the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine since 2021. Prior to this role, she worked in Veterinary Public Health, Food Safety, Pig and Poultry Health division. Rebecca holds a B.Sc(Hons) in Zoology (2004) and a degree in Veterinary Medicine (2013), both from University College Dublin (UCD). Rebecca worked as a veterinary practitioner in two first opinion small animal clinics in Dublin. She also worked as a TVI in a cattle/sheep plant and taught veterinary students in the clinical skills laboratory in UCD. She holds a Post Graduate Certificate in Veterinary Public Health (2019) and a QQI certificate in Food Standards Auditing (2024). In her current role, she has responsibility for the oversight of the National Veterinary Prescription System (NVPS) and AMR.



Prof. Laura Rinaldi

University of Naples Federico II, Italy

Professor Rinaldi is a veterinary parasitologist with broad interests in the epidemiology (using geospatial tools), diagnosis (improving traditional and using innovative techniques) and control of protozoa, helminths and arthropoda of veterinary and medical importance. Her main research areas are focused on helminths (e.g. gastrointestinal nematodes and flukes) and anthelmintic resistance in ruminants. She also studies the cestode Echinococcus granulosus, as well as diagnosis, mapping and control of human soil-transmitted helminths, inclusive of zoonotic parasites.

MEET THE SPEAKERS

About the speakers



Johannes Charlier

Kreavet, Belgium

Johannes is a veterinary scientist, entrepreneur and internationally recognised expert in veterinary parasitology and epidemiology. Following 13 years as a researcher at Ghent University and two years as Scientific Director at Avia-GIS, he founded Kreavet in 2017 to bridge the gap between scientific innovation and practical livestock health solutions. An EBVS® European Veterinary Specialist in Parasitology, Johannes has received several scientific awards for his contributions to parasite control and animal health management. Through his research, publications and international collaborations, he has helped shape the current thinking on sustainable parasite management in livestock systems. As Coordinator of the SPARC project, he works closely with researchers, industry partners, policymakers and livestock stakeholders across Europe to advance sustainable approaches to parasite control and improve the resilience of livestock farming.



Marieke De Louw

De Louw Veterinair Advies, the Netherlands

Marieke is a veterinarian and founder of De Louw Veterinair Advies in the Netherlands. With extensive experience working alongside livestock farmers, she focuses on practical and sustainable approaches to animal health management. As a SPARC Ambassador, she has been actively involved in promoting sustainable worm control, helping farmers translate research and innovation into effective solutions on the farm

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About the speakers



Bruce Thompson

Dairy farmer, Ireland

Bruce is a dairy farmer from Ireland and a SPARC Ambassador. Passionate about sustainable livestock farming, he works to improve animal health through practical, evidence-based management approaches. Through SPARC, he shares his experiences of implementing sustainable worm control practices at farm level and encourages knowledge exchange among farmers across Europe.



Ruggero Amato

Veterinarian, Italy

Ruggero Amato has worked with both companion animals and livestock, with a more recent focus exclusively on livestock. He promotes the role of veterinarians not only as clinicians or specialists in farm reproduction, but also as consultants. This perspective motivated him to join the SPARC project. He strongly believes that the future of veterinary practice will increasingly focus on prevention rather than “rescue”, with veterinarians playing a greater role in livestock management. Through SPARC, he has had the opportunity to engage with a multicultural group of farmers and veterinarians and gain a better understanding of livestock farming systems across Europe, bringing valuable insights back to his work in Italy.

MEET THE SPEAKERS

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Leen Lietaer

ILVO, Belgium

Leen is a researcher at the Flanders Research Institute for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (ILVO), where her work focuses on sustainable livestock production, animal health and knowledge exchange between research and practice. Through her involvement in national and European projects, she works closely with farmers, veterinarians, researchers and policymakers to support the adoption of innovative and sustainable farming solutions. As Coordinator of the SPARC project, Leen has played a key role in building a European Community of Practice on sustainable worm control and strengthening collaboration between stakeholders across Europe.



Kevin Harrison

Farm manager and Chair of SCOPS, UK

Kevin farms sheep and beef in Northumberland, UK, and serves as Chair of SCOPS (Sustainable Control of Parasites in Sheep). Having dealt with the day-to-day challenges of livestock farming throughout his career, he has a strong interest in practical and sustainable approaches to parasite control. Through his work with SCOPS, Kevin helps ensure that farmers' experiences and concerns are reflected in the guidance provided to the industry. He is particularly passionate about protecting the effectiveness of worm treatments for future generations while maintaining healthy, productive flocks and sustainable farming businesses.

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Gustavo Sabatini

Boehringer Ingelheim

Gustavo is a veterinarian and animal health executive at Boehringer Ingelheim Animal Health. He combines a strong technical background in antiparasitic solutions with expertise in research, development and business strategy. Throughout his career, he has worked closely with researchers, veterinarians and livestock producers to develop practical solutions that improve animal health and farm performance. He is particularly interested in turning scientific innovation into real-world impact and fostering collaboration across the animal health sector.



Suzanne Keeling

Beef + Lamb Limited, New Zealand

Suzanne is Head of Science and Research at Beef + Lamb New Zealand, where she leads research across animal health, forages, farm systems, sustainability and productivity. With more than 20 years of experience spanning animal, environmental and human health, she is passionate about translating science into practical, farmer-ready solutions. Sustainable parasite management is a key research priority for New Zealand sheep and beef farmers, and Suzi serves on the SPARC External Advisory Board, providing scientific leadership and strategic guidance on sustainable parasite control in grazing ruminants. She strongly believes that research delivers the greatest value when it is developed with farmers and adopted on-farm. Before joining Beef + Lamb New Zealand, she held senior scientific and biosecurity roles with the New Zealand Ministry for Primary Industries.

Funded by the European Union

MEET THE SPEAKERS

About the speakers



Nancy De Briyne

Federation of Veterinarians of Europe (FVE)

Nancy is a veterinarian and Executive Director of the Federation of Veterinarians of Europe (FVE). A graduate of Ghent University, she worked in veterinary practice in Belgium and the United Kingdom before joining FVE in 2000. Her expertise spans veterinary medicines, antimicrobial resistance and animal welfare. She is a diplomate of the European College of Animal Welfare and Behavioural Medicine, specialising in Animal Welfare Science, Ethics and Law. Nancy served on the Management Board of the European Medicines Agency from 2016 to 2022 and contributes to European initiatives on responsible medicine use and animal welfare.



Evelien Cronin

ILVO, Belgium

Evelien Cronin (ILVO, Belgium) is a researcher at ILVO within the Agriculture and Society research area. Her work focuses on multi-actor collaboration, co-innovation and innovation systems, with particular attention to bringing different actors together around agricultural challenges. She is involved in several European research initiatives, including SPARC, where she contributes as a researcher, as well as ClimateSmartAdvisors and PREMIERE, which address communities of practice, agricultural advisory systems and co-creative multi-actor approaches.

LIFE MICLIFEED WORKSHOP

About the speakers



Smaro Sotiraki

Veterinary Research Institute, Hellenic Agricultural Organisation (ELGO) - DIMITRA, Greece

Smaro is a veterinary parasitologist and senior researcher at the Veterinary Research Institute of the Hellenic Agricultural Organisation DIMITRA in Greece, where she leads research on parasitology and parasitic diseases. She trained in veterinary medicine and veterinary parasitology at Aristotle University of Thessaloniki and undertook postdoctoral research in Denmark. Her work focuses on the epidemiology of parasitic infections, integrated livestock health management and alternatives to conventional antiparasitic treatments. She has extensive experience coordinating European research collaborations and is the coordinator of LIFE MiCliFEED, which explores innovative feeding and parasite-control approaches to reduce the climate impact of small-ruminant farming.



Elias Demian

Senior Consultant, Prospect C&S (Brussels) | Head of Environmental Economics Unit, Foundation for Economic and Industrial Research – IOBE (Athens)

Elias Demian is an environmental economist and Head of the Environmental Economics Unit at IOBE (Foundation for Economic and Industrial Research) in Greece. He is also Regional Coordinator for the European Commission's LIFE Programme External Monitoring teams in South-East Europe and Benelux, working with the Belgian consultancy Prospect C&S, and serves as an external expert on the ESG Board of Moore Stephens Greece. He holds MSc degrees in Environmental Management and Policy from Lund University and Applied Economics and Finance from the Athens University of Economics and Business (AUEB), where he is currently a PhD candidate researching the macroeconomic impacts of climate change. He has worked extensively on the economic dimensions of environmental and climate policies, focusing on climate adaptation, the green transition, sustainable finance and the economic impacts of environmental investments. His work bridges economic research, environmental policymaking and the practical implementation of climate and sustainability solutions.