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News Release

CVBD® World Forum predict future vector-borne disease threats

- The 13th CVBD® (Companion Vector-Borne Diseases) World Forum saw parasitologists, veterinary clinicians and epidemiology experts from around the world discuss vector-borne disease threats
- Veterinarians are encouraged to use the outcomes from the event to equip themselves in practice for the prevention of companion vector-borne diseases and to help raise awareness amongst pet owners

Monheim/Windsor, UK, April 11, 2018 – Over 40 global parasitologists, veterinary clinicians and epidemiology experts came together at the 13th CVBD® World Forum, held in Windsor, UK, to discuss the current and future companion vector-borne diseases (CVBDs).

A key outcome was the importance of the role of the veterinarian in the prevention of companion vector-borne diseases that are typically transmitted through bites of infected parasites such as fleas, ticks or mosquitos.

“An important challenge is to make the findings understandable and comprehensible for veterinarians and to emphasize the importance of CVBD prevention,” explains Dr. Markus Edingloh, Head of Global Veterinary Scientific Affairs at Bayer Animal Health.

The group of thought leaders discussed key trends likely to occur in the next five years; a primary concern for the group was the spread of CVBDs to non-endemic countries, through increased pet travel and climate change among other factors.

Gaetano Oliva, DVM PhD, Professor at the University of Naples, confirmed: “The VBD landscape will change drastically through climatic change and the increased travelling of pets.”

Barbara Kohn, DVM Dr. med. vet. PD Dipl. ECVIM-CA, Professor at the University of Berlin, spoke more specifically about the situation in Europe: “What we see is that climate change can affect vector competency, which means diseases we have previously only seen in the Mediterranean countries, for example heartworm, spread further north. Moreover, we have globalization, where numerous dogs are imported or travel – these dogs can bring the infectious agents into non-endemic areas.”

With these predictions of future CVBD spread, questions were raised about the link between the economic situation of pet owners and the regular use of preventive products. However, Prof. Oliva spoke of the positive impact that the correct selection and use of parasiticides will have: “Increasing prevention of external parasites and better compliance of pet owners will change the ongoing spread and prevalence of parasites for the better.”

Notable diseases discussed regarding prevalence and range of distribution included leishmaniosis, borreliosis, dirofilariosis and ehrlichiosis; all of significance to both human and animal health. Experts all agreed that veterinarians are essential in reducing the impact of these diseases and should be equipped with the latest knowledge on pathogen identification and local prevalence.

Part of the panel’s discussion included advice for veterinarians to help prevent the spread of CVBDs in their area. The top recommendations included refreshing their knowledge of the diseases and ensuring awareness of their local prevalence. It was also emphasized that currently non-endemic diseases should not be neglected as they may occur in travelling or imported animals or even be newly introduced.

The veterinarian’s role in educating pet owners was another key discussion topic, with pet owners often lacking in awareness of disease threats and the vectors that carry them. Particular importance was placed on educating owners about prophylactic treatments available.

Séverine Tasker, BSc BVSc (Hons) PhD DSAM Dipl. ECVIM-CA FHEA MRCVS, University of Bristol, advised: “Good communication is very important when vets talk to pet owners. They need to educate owners and make them aware of vectors such as ticks and the issues they cause. It is also important to make owners aware of the variety of parasite preventatives available, especially differentiating supermarket products vs.

products from a vet practice. Public education is very important to help them make informed choices.”

Veterinarians can view the latest knowledge on CVBDs by accessing one-minute educational guides on key topics from the event by visiting www.cvbd.org. As part of the CVBD awareness campaign ‘It Only Takes One’, Bayer has developed a range of resources to help veterinarians communicate the risk of CVBDs to owners. These are available for download at www.cvbd.org.

About CVBD[®] (Companion Vector-Borne Diseases) World Forum

Bayer Animal Health has continuously invested in raising awareness and education levels about Companion Vector-Borne Diseases (CVBDs) to protect dogs and cats around the world from harmful diseases. Every year, Bayer Animal Health brings together a global group of internationally renowned scientists to discuss latest findings and insights from research related to CVBDs.

About Companion Vector-Borne Diseases (CVBD[®])

Companion vector-borne diseases (CVBD) are a growing international public health threat. These diseases are transmitted by blood-feeding ectoparasites, including ticks (Lyme disease, babesiosis, ehrlichiosis, anaplasmosis, and hemoplasmosis), fleas (bartonellosis and rickettsiosis), and sand flies (leishmaniosis). They are a known health hazard to animal and people around the world

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