

Fast-Growing Global Demand for Poultry and Health of Flocks Highlights of Merial Global Avian Forum in Paris

500 participants from 68 countries convened to address key challenges facing poultry industry

Lyon, France – May 13, 2014 – Meeting the rapidly increasing demand for poultry and improving the health and care of flocks were two of the key industry issues discussed at the Third Global Avian Forum, hosted by Merial recently in Paris, France. Merial, a world leader in animal health, convened customers, industry experts, leading academics, and international regulatory bodies from around the globe to share critical intelligence about maintaining the health and wellbeing of the world's poultry supply.

Forum attendees discussed these issues and more, reaching broad consensus that industry, government, regulators, veterinarians, farmers and other stakeholders must embrace greater, multidisciplinary coordination and collaboration to prevent and control avian pathogens and diseases.

By 2050, 70 percent more food will be required to feed the world's population¹. By 2020, chicken will overtake pork as the global animal protein of choice and the poultry industry will play an even more crucial role in ensuring food for future global populations². Merial recognizes that careful oversight of the world's poultry flocks – from employing sophisticated vaccination programs from hatchery to field, providing high-quality veterinary care, introduction of new products, novel equipment and services, to improving immunity and controlling new disease strains, – is imperative to managing the world's poultry supply.

“We realize that the most effective way to control infectious diseases is to prevent them from even entering the flock, utilizing key measures such as improved biosecurity, robust monitoring and surveillance, in addition to a well-executed vaccination program to reduce host susceptibility to infection”, says Michel Bublot, Merial's Avian Research Program Leader. *“A continued and broad education, and exchange of information, will also contribute to better controlling disease and enhance productivity at the farms”,* added Bublot.

Attendees agreed the growing global demand for poultry is not without challenges, especially with a broad variety of complex pathogens and diseases that can infect flocks. The impact can be significant, leading to crushing economic cost, loss of public confidence and less-than-optimum quality in production.

Speakers also focused on methods to control specific viruses – such as Infectious Bronchitis Virus and Newcastle Disease – and particularly Infectious Bursal Disease, one of the most immunosuppressive diseases affecting flocks globally, as well as the role of vaccines and technologies in improving overall immune system health of poultry and thus helping to reduce immunosuppression.

Also of note, Avian Influenza (AI) has not receded for the poultry industry and is still a concern for the public at large. There remains no one control strategy for AI in poultry, but it was noted that best-practice sharing between endemic and non-endemic countries will help ensure that global vaccination programs can help manage the disease.



Underscoring its commitment to improving industry vaccination standards, Merial unveiled the Ovo-Jector™, which enables the *in ovo* administration of its Vaxxitek® HVT + IBD vaccine³. The Ovo-Jector™, which has the capacity to treat up to 35,000 eggs per hour, has already been launched in Brazil and will be rolled out in all regions around the world, this and next year; the Ovo-Jector completes the existing global offer of Merial VTS (Vaccination Technology and Services) with vaccination equipment supported by dedicated teams of field experts who travel quickly to farms around the world managing flocks and developing equipment fine-tuned to customer needs.

The Forum also included a roundtable with representatives from the top-10 leading poultry companies in the world, who all agreed that maintaining a high level of poultry health while maintaining cost control were two key challenges for the future of the industry. It's these early adopters who help set the standards and create positive change in the poultry marketplace.

Merial executives emphasized that the company will continue to invest in developing vaccines, technologies and services to support poultry production growth.

References

1. How to Feed the World in 2050. FAO Rome 12-13 October 2009. High Level Expert Forum, pg. 2
2. Rabobank. Crossroads for Growth. The International Poultry Sector Towards 2020. Nan-Dirk Mulder, pg. 3
3. The Merial Vaxxitek® HVT + IBD vaccine protects chickens against Marek's disease (HVT) and infectious bursal disease (IBD), two of the most widely recognized diseases affecting chickens globally, and a major cause of immunosuppression. Vaxxitek® HVT-IBD allows for early vaccination in the hatchery *in ovo* or at one day of age for the baby chicks.

About Merial

Merial is a world-leading, innovation-driven animal health company, providing a comprehensive range of products to enhance the health, well-being and performance of a wide range of animals. Merial employs 6,200 people and operates in more than 150 countries worldwide with close to €2 billion of sales in 2013. Merial is a Sanofi company. More info on www.merial.com

Notes to Editors

For more information about the 3rd Global Avian Forum including event presentations, please visit <http://avianforum.merial.com>.

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