

FEFANA 50th Anniversary

Interview with FEFANA President Marco Bruni

INTERVIEW

Can you please illustrate the connotations of FEFANA and the motivations which led to the creation of this association and the various stages of development that have occurred during the last 50 years?

FEFANA is the EU Association of Specialty Feed Ingredients and their Mixtures. Since 1963 it has been the organization that represents the interests of the speciality feed ingredient industry, ingredients which enter the food chain via animal feed, whether they are produced in Europe or imported from third countries.

Their member companies are manufacturers and distributors of



feed additives, functional feed ingredients, premixes and other mixtures of speciality feed ingredients.

FEFANA has built a solid base from which it serves the industry it represents in political, regulatory, and scientific fields. Over the years, it has gained a positive reputation not only across Europe among key decision-makers including the European Commission, the European Parliament, the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), and the Member States' authorities, but also worldwide.

FEFANA also interacts with the other key players of the feed and food chain, as it is our aim to ensure that all stakeholders are correctly informed about the use, safety and benefits of speciality feed ingredients.

The Association - founded initially by the feed additive industry associations of five Member States namely Belgium, France, Germany, Italy and the Netherlands, to which the others from Finland, Norway, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland joined over the years - has changed over time, opening up to direct companies affiliation since 2004.

Today the association has more than 100 members over 28 European countries, representing not only major multinationals, but also small companies, all with equal voting rights.

The main headquarters is based in Brussels, coordinated by Didier Jans (Secretary General) and his staff, supported by several National Platforms that act and coordinate the work of the association at local level.

Since 50 years our industry has adapted to the ever better understanding of animal production systems and has provided products that were aimed to accompany the feed suppliers in order to match evolving animal production, either from a quantitative or from a qualitative point of view.

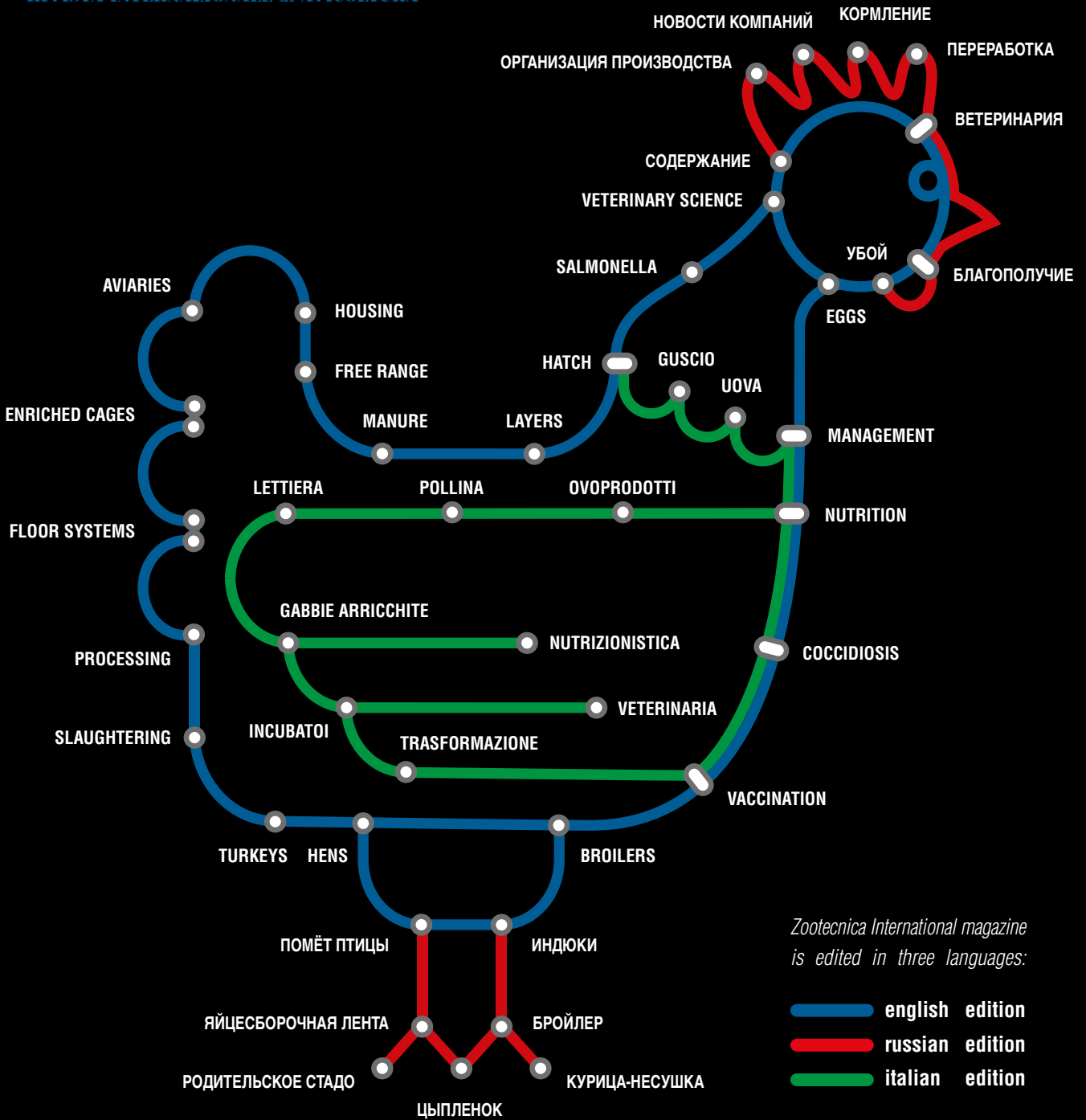
WHAT HAVE BEEN THE MAIN CHALLENGES OF FEFANA IN THE LAST YEARS?

The work of FEFANA in the last decade has certainly been dominated by the establishment and implementation of the Feed Additive Regulation (EC) No 1831/2003. Since the earliest steps towards the recasting of Directive 70/524/EEC, FEFANA offered its expertise to the regulators in order to maintain a level playing field for our industry, striving for innovation in a predictable regu-



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latory environment. Many changes for feed additives were introduced within this new legislative framework. For instance premixes were included in the scope, while we saw the authorizations for the use of antibiotic growth promoter as feed additives were phased out.

The change in legislation was also characterised by the progressive disappearance of the Rapporteur system, which was replaced with a centralised risk assessment carried out by EFSA.

FEFANA was successful in bringing more transparency and predictability to the authorisation process, in particular through the establishment of legal guidelines for the presentation and assessment of application dossiers.

The new feed additive regulations also triggered the setting up of the European Union Reference Laboratory (EURL) within which FEFANA became one of the recognised industry players.

FEFANA's scope, membership and workload have evolved along with these major regulatory changes. The EU regulatory process and regulatory compliance was clearly no longer a matter for producers only, but for all operators in the feed additives marketplace. Direct affiliation at European level for all our member companies was a positive step in order to help FEFANA membership and its SMEs cope with the legislation requirements and to take active participation in the legislative process. National networking was reinforced allowing FEFANA

to be fully effective across the EU and thereby avoiding duplication of effort within individual countries.

The re-authorisation process can certainly be seen as a milestone during which FEFANA and its members showed a high level of self-responsibility. In the disturbed times around the year 2000, it became clear that feed legislation required a revamping. Our industry acknowledged the need for a review of the feed additive authorisation process applying a proportionate and a resource-conscious approach".

The Consortia – a major milestone for FEFANA

The setting up of Consortia to deal with the re-authorisation process has definitely been a FEFANA success story, during which our industry pooled resources to provide the authorities with first class information and know-how on feed additives. Between 2007 and 2009, ten different Consortia were established to streamline and help with the re-authorisation process. The submissions by the Consortia covered over 1000 individual additives thus enabling the products concerned to remain on the market for the foreseeable future.

The participation in these Consortia offered many advantages to the operators and to the authorities, including cost reduction, coherence of dossiers and the sharing of expertise.

We made the choice to allow non-members to participate in this huge effort. Consortia are currently

still active ensuring the follow-up of the post-submission phase, i.e. reply to requests from the EFSA and the EURL, and in discussions with the Commission on the Implementing Regulations and Annex entries. In the course of the process it is also important for all stakeholders not to lose sight of the purpose and limits of the process in which we engaged".

IS FEFANA ENGAGED IN INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES BEYOND THE EU?

Fostering the awareness of European standards and harmonising these with non EU countries is a major goal among others of equal importance such as matters related to the concept of quality and safety.

FEFANA is an active member of IFIF – the International Feed Industry Federation – through which it is cooperating with associations and regulators of different regions of the world towards better understanding and convergence between the regulations.

The SFIS (Special Feeding Ingredient Sustainability) project – jointly with IFIF - is one of the tasks which the association is focusing on as it is closely linked to the principles of sustainability. In a context where animal production is subject to increasing environmentally-related attention, one is more and more recognising the mitigation potential of SFIs. Some techniques (e.g. precise feeding) are already of widespread use, and significant innovation can be further expected on this side".

CONSIDERING THE LAST DEVELOPMENTS ON GENETICS AND BREEDING, ACCORDING TO YOU IN WHICH DIRECTION WILL ANIMAL NUTRITION GO IN THE FUTURE?

“Our industry is a very innovative and adaptive industry. Since 50 years, we have demonstrated our capacity to adapt to the tremendous changes in animal production systems and to provide products that could support the feed industry to expand and the farmers to produce more efficiently. We will therefore adapt to the development in genetics and breeding of animals. Regarding particularly the breeding of animals, the evolution towards criteria like animal welfare, resource efficiency and sustainability may modify the feed formulation (e.g. from grains towards more by-products based production) and hence will require adapted types of additives”.

WHAT IS FAMI-QS?

In 2004 FEFANA created a quality system – FAMI-QS – for Specialty Feed Ingredients and their Mixtures, whose certification is based on the community guide to good practices of Feed Hygiene approved by the European Commission. FAMI-QS code was designed to be internationally implemented and its network of certification bodies allows that more than 800 certificates are spread in 49 countries.

If you are an exporter, knowledge of the marketplace and the rules in the EU can work in your

favour. Having differing legislation can create obstacles. FEFANA and FAMI-QS play an active role in striving to minimize/overcome such obstacles”.

WHAT ARE THE SHORT AND MEDIUM-TERM OBJECTIVES OF THE ASSOCIATION FOR THE FUTURE?

“Our association aims at keeping existing products on the EU market under fair conditions. In particular we intend to:

- Fair re-authorisation process to maintain a level-playing-field for our industry;

- Effective implementation of regulations: we work to improve the regulatory framework, and increase predictability and product safety ; and
- Establish clear principles for labeling and claims of feed additives.

We also want to contribute to a more informed society, communicating true and scientifically sound messages about our products: for this reason we are in the process of producing and publishing a series of booklets on several categories of products. The booklet on premixtures, published this year, is freely available on our website”. ■

