



## **PRESS INFORMATION**

### **WSAVA Endorses FVE/FECAVA Position Paper on Healthy Breeding**

**Global companion animal veterinary association warns of the health and welfare risks of extreme breeding**

The [World Small Animal Veterinary Association](#) (WSAVA) is the latest veterinary association to highlight concerns about the impact of extreme breeding in dogs by supporting a [Position Paper](#) launched in June 2018 by the Federation of Veterinarians of Europe (FVE) and the Federation of European Companion Animal Veterinary Associations (FECAVA).

The FVE/FECAVA Position Paper is a response to the explosion in popularity of dog breeds with exaggerated traits or genetic disorders and, in particular, those with extreme brachycephalic conformation, such as French and English bulldogs and pugs. While these breeds are increasingly popular with owners, they can suffer severe health and welfare issues. The Position Paper calls for health and welfare to be given priority over looks and offers detailed recommendations to address both the rising demand for these dogs and the increase in supply. They include:

#### **Measures to reduce demand**

- Addressing demand for brachycephalic and other affected breeds through educating owners about the health issues they face

- Working with influencers, such as media and celebrities, to encourage owners to choose a healthy, high welfare dog which is suitable for their life style.

### **Measures to reduce supply**

- Introducing the mandatory registration of breeders, pre-breeding screening programs and the sharing of data on conformation-altering surgeries and caesarean sections
- Educating stakeholders and revising breeding standards and practices to put the health and welfare of dogs first.

FVE and FECAVA have also produced an infographic explaining the causes and consequences of extreme breeding and listing a number of recommendations.

“Extreme breeding is a global concern with our members seeing the results of brachycephalic conformation in practice on a regular basis. The suffering it causes is beyond dispute,” said Dr Walt Ingwersen, President of the WSAVA.

“Following detailed review by our Hereditary Disease Committee, our Animal Wellness and Welfare Committee and the WSAVA’s Executive Board, we are delighted to endorse the joint FVE/FECAVA Position Paper and congratulate both associations on highlighting the issue and setting out a clear strategy to tackle it. It builds on momentum established by the Brachycephalic Working Group (BWG), an initiative which brings together all of the major stakeholders in dog welfare in the UK to improve the welfare of brachycephalic dogs.”

Dr Ingwersen continued: “Lasting change requires commitment and collaboration between veterinarians, breeder associations and other stakeholders on a global basis. We are ready to play our part and look forward to working with our colleagues in the FVE and FECAVA and our member associations to deliver on the recommendations made in the Position Paper.”

Dr Wolfgang Dohne, FECAVA President, commented: “We’re delighted that the WSAVA has offered its support to the joint FVE/FECAVA Position Paper. It is important for veterinarians to speak up on this important welfare issue and together we are stronger.”

The WSAVA aims to advance the health and welfare of companion animals worldwide through creating an educated, committed and collaborative global community of veterinary peers. It represents more than 200,000 veterinarians through 104 member associations. Its annual World Congress brings together globally respected experts to offer cutting edge thinking on all aspects of companion animal veterinary care.

**Notes to editors:**

**The Federation of Veterinarians of Europe (FVE)** is an umbrella organisation of 44 veterinary organisations from 38 European countries, representing a total of around 240 000 veterinarians. The FVE strives to promote animal health, animal welfare and public health across Europe.

**The Federation of European Companion Animal Veterinary Associations (FECAVA)** is the platform for the promotion of the professional development and representation of companion animal veterinarians in Europe. Founded in 1990, it currently has 40 national member associations and 13 associate member associations. FECAVA represents over 25,000 companion animal practitioners throughout Europe.

**For further information, please contact:**

Rebecca George, George PR; Tel: 01449 737281/07974 161108/ email: [rebecca@georgepr.com](mailto:rebecca@georgepr.com)