

EVENTS



Anniversary celebration and international symposium

On 29 November 2017, the BfR will celebrate its 15th anniversary with an official ceremony. The event is for invited guests only and will take place at the Akademie der Künste in Berlin. From November 30th to December 1st 2017 a Joint International Symposium hosted by the BfR and its sister institutes in France (ANSES), Denmark (DTU) and South Korea (NIFDS) will take place. According to the motto “Past, Present and Future Challenges in Risk Assessment – Strengthening Consumer Health Protection”, attendees will look back on the last one and a half decades of risk assessment. In addition, current activities and future issues in consumer health protection on national and international levels such as microbiological agents, chemical substances, methodologies and harmonisation will be discussed.

PERSONNEL

Supporting young scientists

To support the new generation of scientists, the BfR sets up junior research groups on specific topics. In the autumn of 2017, another doctoral student will join the “Authenticity Along the Product Chain” junior research group, which was established in 2015.

Support in the protection of laboratory animals

The appointment of university professor Dr. Lars Lewejohann on 1 April 2017 reinforces the competence area “Reduction of severity and improvement of living conditions” at the German Centre for the Protection of Laboratory Animals (Bf3R). In addition to heading the “Animal Protection and Laboratory Animal Science” unit at the BfR, Lars Lewejohann will pass on his expertise and newly acquired knowledge to students and post-graduates in his capacity as professor for “Animal Welfare and Refinement” at the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine at the Freie Universität Berlin.



Alternative method to animal experiments: “Bone-on-a-chip”

A summer school on alternative methods to animal experiments for risk assessment took place in Ispra (Italy) at the Joint Research Centre (JRC) of the Directorate General of the European Commission in May 2017. There, Dr. Ing. Frank Schulze from the BfR unit “ZEBET – Alternative Methods to Animal Experiments” was awarded a poster prize (first place) for his presentation and the accompanying poster on the topic “A bone-on-a-chip for basic science and the identification of bone-harming substances”.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Expansion of international capacities

Cooperation with the partner institutions takes place through reciprocal visits, joint symposiums, the exchange of information, and the training of scientists at the BfR. Furthermore, thanks to Germany's endeavours, the EFSA Advisory Forum has established the Discussion Group on Capacity Building, which has already met in Berlin twice this year. The aim is to expand joint international capacity building activities of EFSA and food safety institutions in Europe through policy advice, scientific cooperation, exchange of information, joint scientific meetings and training activities.



Visitor groups to the BfR

The BfR currently has cooperation agreements with 47 partners in 28 countries. This year, for example a cooperation agreement was signed with Portugal and Russia. Moreover, the BfR

receives many visits from delegates from around the world who are interested in collaborative activities. In 2017, the BfR received visits from, among others, the Nepalese Ambassador, a delegation from the Ministry of Agriculture in Argentina and a representative of Nanyang University in Singapore.

Vice-President in Japan

In April, the Vice-President of the BfR, Professor Dr. Reiner Wittkowski, travelled to Japan within the context of a joint initiative of EFSA, BfR and ANSES on the topic of the future of international scientific cooperation in the field of food safety. During his visit, he also held a presentation on "Global Aspects of Risk Assessment in Food Safety".

EU-FORA

The scholarship initiative EU-FORA (The European Food Risk Assessment Fellowship Programme) operated by EFSA helps to develop the scientific assessment resources and the knowledge community of the EU. The BfR supports this initiative through its involvement in the programme committee. The programme was launched in September 2017, and the BfR hosts four EU-FORA fellows.



Expansion of cooperation with Africa

At the beginning of May 2017, the acting General Director of the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI) based in Nairobi, Kenya, Dr. Dr. h. c. Dieter Schillinger (Back row: second from left), visited the BfR. The two institutions entered into a cooperation agreement in November of last year. For over 20 years, the ILRI has been studying illnesses in livestock in developing countries and working on diagnostic methods and vaccines in order to increase the productivity of livestock and retain their genetic diversity. The ILRI's work also places a focus on improving food safety and on issues relating to antimicrobial resistance.