



Annual report - President EE

„The greatness and the moral progress of a nation can be judged by how it treats its animals“. Mahatma Gandhi, 1869 – 1949

However true this quote may be, it should always be considered which values prevail in the individual countries and from which perspective you look at it. Probably small animal breeders and extreme animal rights activists will not judge the "moral progress of a nation" in the same way. But later I will come back on this.

Dear delegates, just like last year, our Secretary General will report on the operational activities of the board and so I will look mainly forward in my report.

In my last year's report I wrote: *"The most important goal is to keep small animal breeding and showing alive in Europe. When we see what is happening in different countries in terms of animal welfare, we should really be worried. We are talking about breed prohibitions, directives for the exhibition cages and even show and breeding bans are an issue. This worries us and we should fight with full strength against this."* Nothing has changed!

In some countries, the aspirations of the (overenthusiastic) animal rights activists are getting bigger and stronger. In Switzerland, an extreme animal rights organization has now even begun to broadcast TV commercials with the slogan "vegan - anything else is animal cruelty". A new regulation requires that breeders of 'animals with extreme breed characteristics' summon a person with higher education who must then assess whether the animals can be bred or not. And of course, all at the expense of the breeder.

Although there are still countries that hardly have such problems or even not at all, we must assume that sooner or later this will also affect them. So we must be on guard and especially nurture contacts with important authorities so that we can act before we have to react. Besides the standard commissions, in particular the judges have their responsibilities. If they implement the standard requirements consistently, the 'extreme breed characteristics' will soon be pushed back. But also the breeders themselves share this responsibility. They are ultimately the ones who mate their animals and can thus avoid these extremes or repress them at least.

But there is also good news to report even from the board and the organization. As we will hear from Esther Huwiler, we start another attempt to keep the membership list up to date. Even more, it will be an electronic membership administration, which will allow you to make any changes directly via the Internet. This will be a great step forward and hopefully lead to an up to date membership list as it was previously. And soon a new website should be created that will be more modern and contain more information.

Of course the financial position of the organization will occupy us again and again. The liquidity plan will show that with the same income and expenditure as before, we are going broke in 2020. Potential savings hardly longer exist. We have renounced our daily allowance for this meeting and only take a modest mileage allowance of 30 euro cents. In addition, the accommodation and food were paid from the EE funds. So we will have to look for other sources of money. An increase in the membership fees which remained at the same level for many years will probably be unavoidable. There are however also ide-

as on how we could get additional revenues. We will inform you about these ideas when they will be fully worked out.

Of course we are looking forward to the major event of this year, the Europe Show here in Metz. In these buildings here, the Europe Show will take place. Preparations are in full swing. And I promise you, there will be mistakes but I am convinced that the organizers will do their very best to avoid them. But where work is done, mistakes are made. We all know that. I invite you therefore to be tolerant with the organization. Those of you who already organized shows, know how much work is behind it. Let us thank the French team and the French organizers, by promoting this show vigorously in our countries so that we will fill the complex and visitor numbers will far exceed all expectations.

Dear delegates, you see, we do not stand still. We are looking forward. Pessimism is the death of any innovation. Problems are there to be solved, that is the task of us all. So let's stand together and let our work not be obstructed by internal quarrels and disputes, as it happens over and over again in different countries. And let us always remember that we are breeding small animals as a hobby, and that hobbies are supposed to serve for rest and joy.

The conclusion of a report is always the thanks. That should be no different here. You, dear delegates, came here to participate in the prosperity and progress of our organization. Some of you drove hundreds of kilometers and partially pay the conference fee out of your pocket. Also in your countries you contribute a huge amount of work for small animal breeding. This deserves my respect and my sincere thanks.

And I must also thank my fellow board members very much. We have it well on the board and if you have it well, you can also work productively. So together, all of us want to work further for the future of EE. I close my report therefore with a quote from Mike Bernd, who once said: *"The future is not what someone gives us, but what we make of it"*.

F-Metz, 16.05.2015

Gion P.- Gross
President EE