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EDITORIAL

EDITORIAL BY THE SECRETARY GENERAL

Evidence and Slogans

It happens often, scrolling through the comments under a post reporting the results of a study on reducing enteric methane through feed additives, to run into a phrase that recurs almost word for word, from one author to the next, "we all know livestock farming is destroying the planet." Whoever writes this has, in the vast majority of cases, never opened a life cycle assessment, does not know the difference between a global figure and one referring to a specific production system, confuses biogenic methane with fossil methane, and yet delivers this verdict with certainty.

Animal science has long lived a particular version of the anti-scientific climate running through contemporary society more broadly. This is not simply climate denial applied to livestock farming, but rather its mirror image. Where elsewhere evidence is denied, here it is flattened into a slogan, reducing decades of research on animal science to a single moral equation in which meat is guilt and plants are redemption. The complexity of livestock systems disappears behind one single figure, repeated without context and without the methodological details.

The same pattern repeats when the subject is genetic selection, branded as unnatural manipulation by those who have no idea how much population-level work, how much genomics sits behind a selection index. Or when the subject is precision livestock farming, often portrayed as a cold, algorithmic policing of animals, when anyone who actually works with it knows that sensors exist above all to detect, early, the distress of a single animal within a herd of hundreds, something no human eye, however experienced, could do with the same consistency.

Access to information does not amount to knowledge. Scientific journals in the field, conference proceedings, genetic databases are now a click away for anyone, and yet public debate about livestock farming feeds increasingly on polarized narratives, little interested in the evidence produced by those who work on these questions every day, and far more drawn to the rhetorical force of an image or a slogan able to travel across social media better than any data table ever could.

It is not the job of animal science research to convince those who refuse to listen. It is its job, however, to keep producing, rigorously, the data that allow those who genuinely want to understand to do so, and to defend that data publicly when it is misrepresented. The patience of the scientific method, once again, remains the only credible bulwark against the shortcut of certainty.

Andrea Rosati

News from EAAP

Join Us in Hamburg! Only Two Months Until the 77th EAAP Annual Meeting

The countdown has officially begun! In exactly two months, the global scientific community will gather in Germany for the 77th EAAP Annual Meeting, taking place in the beautiful city of Hamburg from September 7th to 11th, 2026. We are anticipating an outstanding turnout this year, with a very large participation of researchers, technicians, industry professionals, and students from all over the world. This event represents the premier platform to share scientific updates, foster international collaborations, and discuss the future of animal science. If you have not done so already, there is still time to secure your place! Registration remains open, giving you full access to the entire scientific program featuring nearly 100 dedicated scientific sessions. Don't miss out the technical tours for a limited number of places are still available to experience regional agricultural innovations and advanced research facilities firsthand. And of course, the unmissable Social Events to connect and network with peers, colleagues, and global experts during our carefully curated social program, designed to showcase the best of Hamburg's culture and hospitality. We look forward to welcoming you to Hamburg for an unforgettable week of scientific excellence and discussions! Register now and find all the details [on the website!](#)

Great success for the 2nd AI4AS Conference – In Sweden next year!

EAAP, in collaboration with ILVO, KU Leuven and Ghent university, organized in Ghent the 2nd AI4AS (Artificial Intelligence for Animal Science) conference. The 2-day conference offered a unique opportunity to showcase and discuss the newest developments in the field of AI for animal science. The aim of the conference was to bring together researchers in AI for animal science, but also animal scientists, industry stakeholders and livestock sector partners with an interest in the future potential of AI in livestock farming. Focus was on raising awareness of the importance and practical applications, but also challenges, of AI in animal husbandry. During the conference, 7 parallel sessions were organized (Advancements in Data Collection,

processing, standardization and integration, Emerging AI Applications in Precision Livestock Farming, Farm and Industry Adoption of AI in Animal Science, AI for Science, Datasets and benchmarks, Advancing Digital Biomarkers and Phenotypes with AI, Ethical, environmental and social implications of AI) along with the plenary session, which hosted four outstanding speakers: Ioannis Athanasiadis (AI Foundation models for agricultural sciences - Challenges and opportunities), Pooya Hekmati (Bridging Fragmented Agricultural Data with AI-Driven Semantic Translation), Alex Bach (Applications of AI in animal feeding and management) and Sam Leroux (From Pixels to Insight: Challenges and opportunities for computer vision in animal monitoring). Through the parallel scientific sessions and the plenary session, participants were able to discuss and deepen their fundamental and applied knowledge and skills.

The conference closed with the Award Ceremony for the best presentation, Effrosyni Kritsi - Paired Computed Tomography and Standard X-ray Workflow for Artificial Intelligence-Assisted Post-Mortem Broiler Carcass Health Assessment and Ahmad Abu Dayeh - Overcoming Data Silos in Bovine Reproduction: The Minimum Information Model for Bull Fertility Data (MI-BFD) for Data-Driven, Multi-Centre AI Applications.

Considering the success of this edition, it was finally decided to organize next AI4AS at SLU in Uppsala (Sweden) during the second week of June 2027.

EAAP People Portrait

Sarah Morgan



Dr. Sarah Morgan is a grazing livestock systems researcher and lecturer at Harper Adams University in Shropshire, UK. Born and raised on an upland sheep farm on the western edge of the Bannau Brycheiniog

(Brecon Beacons) in south Wales, her passion for livestock farming developed at an early age. This, combined with a keen interest in biology, led her to study for a BSc (Hons) in Animal Science at Aberystwyth University, followed by a PhD at the same institution. Her doctoral research focused on the lipid composition of perennial ryegrass as a route to enhancing dietary energy density for grazing ruminants and improving the nutritional quality of meat for human health. [Read the complete profile here.](#)

Science and Innovation

The role of gut permeability in livestock: methods to study the effects of stress on gut permeability and energy consumption

Gastrointestinal permeability is vital for livestock health and productivity, as the intestinal barrier regulates nutrient absorption and protects against pathogens. Stressors like heat, dietary changes, or infections compromise this barrier, increasing permeability (the "leaky gut" phenomenon) and altering energy metabolism. For instance, during heat waves, animals can lose up to 30% of feed efficiency due to both reduced appetite and intestinal damage. Managing gut health is therefore an economic and welfare imperative. Since no single tool exists to measure barrier function, future research focuses on innovations like organoids and AI-driven sensors. Understanding these mechanisms is crucial for developing nutritional strategies that enhance animal resilience, balance productivity with animal welfare, and meet the global demand for animal protein sustainably. [Read the full article on Animal Frontiers.](#)

Reaction norm modelling of heat stress for milk production in three dairy cattle breeds

Climate change is increasing extreme weather events and high temperatures, causing heat stress in dairy cattle when ambient conditions exceed their thermoneutral zone. This study analysed heat stress effects on milk yield in three German breeds (Holstein Friesian, Fleckvieh, and Brown Swiss) using data from 5,182 cows across 46 farms in Baden-Württemberg between June 2022 and December 2024. Milk yield was modelled against the temperature-humidity index (THI). Results showed that additive genetic variance was nearly linear, while permanent environmental variance followed a U-shaped curve across the THI trajectory for all breeds. Small or negative genetic correlations between milk yields at different THI levels indicate that animals vary genetically in their response to heat. Consequently, breeding for improved heat tolerance and overall thermal resilience is becoming a crucial objective to mitigate productivity losses from rising heat extremes. [Read the full article on Animal.](#)



The effects of feed intake and fibre type on apparent ileal and total tract digestibility and hindgut disappearance of energy and nutrients in growing pigs

Two experiments tested the interactive effects of feed intake and fibre type on digestibility in growing pigs. Results showed no interaction between feed intake and fiber type regarding energy or nutrient digestibility. However, reducing feed intake prolonged digesta passage time and significantly increased the apparent total tract digestibility (ATTD) of energy, dry matter, organic matter, and fibre fractions (NDF and ADF). Regarding fiber types, sugar beet pulp (SBP)—which is rich in soluble dietary fibre—showed significantly greater ATTD, hindgut disappearance, and overall ingredient digestibility for energy, crude protein, and fiber compared to corn cobs, which consist mostly of insoluble dietary fibre. In conclusion, lower feed intake improves fiber digestibility, and soluble fibre sources like SBP are more digestible than insoluble ones like corn cobs, with no interactive effects between the two factors. [Read the full article on Journal of Animal Science.](#)

AI-based pigmentation fingerprinting for individual shrimp re-identification: Advancing precision aquaculture

Individual identification in crustacean aquaculture is hindered by moulting, which alters external features and usually requires stressful physical tagging. This study evaluates AI-based pigmentation fingerprinting as a non-invasive, welfare-focused alternative for the Pacific white shrimp (*Penaeus vannamei*). Six advanced deep-learning feature matching algorithms were benchmarked against a classical computer vision baseline to re-identify individual shrimp across sequential moulting events. The results demonstrate that abdominal chromatophore pigmentation patterns are geometrically stable enough to serve as biometric identifiers, with top models achieving 100% cross-moult re-identification accuracy despite non-rigid bodily deformations. The graph-based LightGlue architecture was optimal for high-precision applications, balancing perfect accuracy with moderate computational demands (~1.16 s per pair). For real-time edge deployment, the lightweight D2-Net framework offered a rapid alternative (0.04 s per pair) with 76.32% accuracy, establishing non-invasive individual tracking as viable for precision monitoring. [Read the full article on Aquaculture.](#)





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News From EU

Save the Date INTAQT Final Conference!

INTAQT final conference “Combining Sustainable Farming with High-Quality and Authentic Chicken and Cattle Products – Insights from the INTAQT Project” will be held on 11 September 2026 from 10:00 to 13:00 at the Congress Centre in Hamburg, Germany. This event will present key results and insights from the project, highlighting innovative approaches to support both sustainability and product quality in chicken and cattle production. Participants can attend in person or online. The conference is free of charge. To register [click here!](#)



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Job Offers

Scholarship for post-doc student at SLU, Umeå, Sweden

A scholarship for post-doc student “Investigating a new strategy for reducing methane emissions in dairy

cows in Northern Sweden” is available at the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU), [Department of Applied Animal Science and Welfare](#). A completed doctoral degree and excellent written and spoken English skills are required. Knowledge of Swedish or another Nordic language is considered a strong merit. Deadline: **15 of August 2026**. For more information [read the job vacancy](#).

Publications

• Animal consortium (EAAP, INRAE, BSAS) – Elsevier
[Animal: Volume 20 - Issue 6 – June 2026](#)

Animal Science Podcasts

The Poultry Podcast Show: “[Artificial intelligence in Poultry production](#)”, speaker Guoming Li.

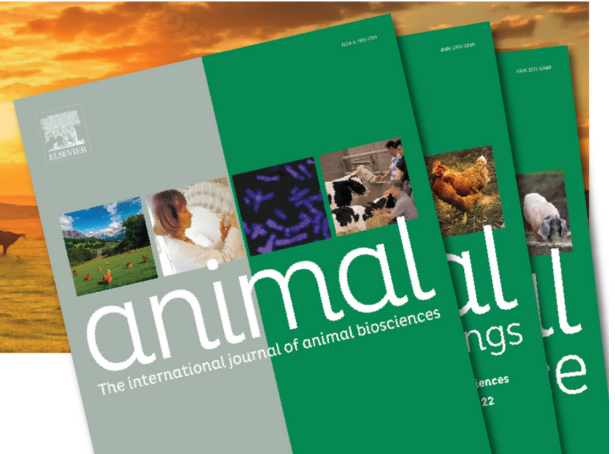
Other News

Meet the Italian Journal of Animal Science at EAAP 2026

The **Italian Journal of Animal Science (IJAS)**, the official journal of the **Animal Science and Production Association (ASPA)** published by **Taylor & Francis**, is an international, peer-reviewed, Gold Open Access journal dedicated to advancing research across the entire spectrum of animal science. According to the latest **Journal Citation Reports (Clarivate Analytics)**, IJAS is ranked in the **first quartile (Q1)** in both the **Agriculture, Dairy & Animal Science** and **Veterinary Sciences** categories, reflecting its growing scientific impact and international recognition. The journal

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provides a platform for high-quality research spanning animal nutrition, genetics and breeding, physiology, reproduction, health and welfare, precision livestock farming, sustainable production systems, product quality and safety, aquaculture, and companion and wild animals. IJAS welcomes Original Research Articles, Systematic Reviews and Metanalyses that contribute to scientific innovation and the sustainable development of animal production. The Editor-in-Chief **Prof. Paolo Trevisi** (University of Bologna, Italy), currently President of the EAAP Pig Commission, together with an international Editorial Board, is committed to fostering a rigorous, fair and timely peer-review process while continuously enhancing the journal's scientific quality, international visibility and impact. [Read the full article here.](#)



Editor-in-Chief Prof. Paolo Trevisi



Broiler Chickens and Transport: More Space Doesn't Improve Animal Welfare

When we talk about animal welfare, the first thing that usually comes to mind is space. Most people instinctively think that giving chickens more room to move will automatically make them less stressed, healthier, and less prone to injuries. It's a simple and intuitive idea: more space equals better welfare. This same reasoning has also shaped the [latest European guidelines](#) on the transport of broiler chickens. But, as is often the case, the reality is more complex than it seems. In practice, having more space doesn't necessarily translate into better welfare. [Read the full article here.](#)

Conferences & Workshops

EAAP invites you to check the validity of the dates for every single event **published below and in the Calendar of the website.**

EAAP Conferences and Webinars

Event	Date	Location	Information
77 th EAAP Annual Meeting	7 – 11 September 2026	Hamburg, Germany	Website

Other Conferences and Webinars

Event	Date	Location	Information
WCGALP 2026	12 – 17 July 2026	Madison, Wisconsin, USA	Website
ASAS/CSAS Annual Meeting 2026	19 – 23 July 2026	Madison, Wisconsin, USA	Website
14 th International Conference on Goats 2026	18 – 22 September 2026	Chongqing, China	Website
EU AgRI 2040 Conference – “Future-proofing EU Agri-Food through research and innovation”	24 – 25 September 2026	Brussels, Belgium	Website
IMAR – International Meeting on Animal Reproduction	26 – 30 October 2026	Viçosa, Brazil	Website
Future Grasslands 2026	11 – 12 November 2026	Telford, UK	Website

More conferences and workshops [are available on EAAP website.](#)



“Any man who does not think that what he has is more than ample, is an unhappy man, even if he is the master of the whole world.”

(Epicurus)

Become EAAP Members is easy!

Become EAAP individual member to receive the EAAP newsletter and discover the many other benefits!
Please also remember that individual membership is for free for residents in EAAP countries.

[Click here to check and register!](#)

Opportunities to advertise your company through the EAAP Newsletter in 2026!

Presently, the English version of the Newsletter reaches nearly 6700 animal scientists, boasting an average of certified readers ranging from 2200 to 2500 per issue. EAAP gives to industries a great opportunity to increase visibility and create a wider network!

[Learn more about the special opportunities here.](#)

The **Flash-e-News** is the Official EAAP Newsletter. This interesting update about activities of the European animal science community, presents information on leading research institutions in Europe and also informs on developments in the industry sector related to animal science and production. The Newsletter is sent to all EAAP Members and supporters. You are all invited to submit information for the newsletter. Please send information, news, text, photos and logo to: marlene@eaap.org.

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