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## News Release

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### **Bayer drives awareness and scientific discussion around lungworm**

- Greater need to better understand the prevalence of lungworm in European countries
- Scientific experts discuss prevention, infection, and persistence of lungworm

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**Monheim/Copenhagen, October 5, 2017** – Snails can explore the length of an average British garden in a single night, reaching a top speed of one meter per hour. They may seem like harmless creatures at first sight, but snails and slugs are quickly becoming a strong threat to the health and well-being of dogs. More and more dog owners have recently become aware of a disease which has been diagnosed more frequently over the last years throughout many European countries – *Angiostrongylus vasorum* (Lungworm/French Heartworm).

Lungworm, or French Heartworm, is a disease spread by parasitic nematodes that can cause *angiostrongylosis*, a serious illness in dogs and other canine species. The parasite can be carried by slugs and snails and infect animals. The disease has not been shown to transmit to humans and is not considered a zoonotic disease. However, it was a topic of intense discussion and debate at the 42<sup>nd</sup> World Small Animal Veterinary Association (WSAVA) Congress in Copenhagen, Denmark.

The WSAVA hosts a veterinary congress once a year for companion animal veterinarians from across the globe. It is an internationally recognized veterinary congress with a scientific program.

Bayer Animal Health organized a continuing professional development for veterinarians and key opinion leaders entitled “New updates on *Angiostrongylus vasorum* in Europe”. A panel of veterinary parasitology experts shared some insights on this topic.

- **Dr. Eric Morgan**, MA, VetMB, PhD, BA, MRCVS UK, University of Bristol, Veterinary Parasitology and Ecology  
 “Lungworm infection used to be a rare disease in few European countries. However, we have had more cases recently in many European countries so it is on the increase. For the UK and Germany there is now evidence that it is spreading. Spread of the disease is likely through infected dogs and foxes and via slugs and snails.”
- **Dr. Roland Schaper**, Dr. med. vet, Bayer Animal Health GmbH, Global Veterinary Scientific Affairs Manager, Germany  
 “Treatment of an existing *A. vasorum* infection should be the last resort, due to the severity of the disease. Prevention of this potentially fatal disease with regular treatment is a good approach. But the best approach to avoid any parasite development completely is true infection prevention.”

While the lungworm is recognized as a major threat in the United Kingdom and the Nordics, it still seems to be underestimated in other European countries such as France, Germany and the Benelux. For the United Kingdom and Germany there is new evidence that it is spreading.

“This also demonstrates the importance of continuous training for veterinarians,” says Dr. Markus Edingloh, Global Head of Veterinary Scientific Affairs at Bayer Animal Health. “Therefore, Bayer Animal Health is proud to support veterinarians with continuing professional development about the latest information and techniques. We want to emphasize the importance of fighting *Angiostrongylus vasorum* and draw attention to the fact that prevention plays an essential role in keeping our animals healthy.”

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