

NEWSLETTER 1/2015

Dear VERA stakeholder,

We are happy to announce that the multinational approach in verifying environmental technologies for agriculture continues. The transfer from Denmark has been successfully finished and the new secretariat is already deeply involved in continuing the work and efforts of the Danish predecessors in establishing and further strengthening the VERA idea.

International VERA Secretariat now located in Germany

With end of 2014, the German Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture has agreed to take over the responsibility of hosting and financing the International VERA Secretariat from Denmark for the next period until September 2018. For the next four year period, it is located in Gross-Umstadt near Frankfurt, which has been selected in an open tender process. Later the responsibility is planned to be rotated to the other VERA member states.

The International VERA Secretariat organizes, coordinates and implements the activities that the International VERA Board as steering committee chooses to launch. The secretariat is also responsible for launching, facilitating and monitoring the activities of the expert groups. In addition, the VERA Secretariat handles, amongst other things the international communication, dissemination and marketing of VERA and runs the VERA website. Furthermore, it advises the environmental technology manufacturers, test institutes and authorities and assesses applications for a VERA Verification Statement. Last, but not least, the VERA Secretariat issues the VERA Verification Statements and ensures that they are used as intended.

New VERA website released

With the now consummated transfer from Denmark to Germany the website www.veracert.eu was completely revised, while the general structure as well as the domain name remained familiar. All documents will be available on the new website as before and new information will be constantly added.

You are welcome to visit our new website www.veracert.eu.

Your new contacts at the VERA Secretariat

Head of the new International VERA Secretariat is **Iris Beckert**. The agricultural engineer was already member of the International VERA commission "Housing systems". Therefore, she witnessed parts of the VERA evolution before taking over the VERA Secretariat. In her studies of agricultural science at the University of Munich-Weihenstephan she specialized in animal husbandry and agricultural engineering. During her professional career Iris developed chemicals, like disinfectants and cleaners for the use in livestock production and other agricultural applications. Later she was in charge of testing agricultural machines and equipment mainly for pig and poultry husbandry systems and technology for hygiene purposes. In addition to focusing on technical parameters like energy efficacy, the target was to evaluate also animal welfare issues. Apart from that Iris has gained experiences in testing air scrubbers and in evaluating emissions. As head of the chemical lab of the DLG she is

familiar with test lab norms and accreditation processes. All these experiences will help her leading the VERA secretariat's activities in the next period and continue the work of the former VERA Secretariat.

For all organizational work within the International VERA Secretariat Iris is assisted by **Sabine Fornoff**. As an educated European Business Assistant she is familiar with international processes, global business and market conditions. During her professional career, Sabine gained broad experience in assisting managers in the international environment of various investment banks. Before joining the International VERA Secretariat, she worked in an international pharmaceutical company. Her fluent language skills of English, French and Spanish as well as her excellent work organization make her a very valuable contact person within the secretariat.

Contact details:

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We are happy to answer any questions regarding VERA you might have.

Best regards,

International VERA Secretariat

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About VERA

The VERA process is currently a multinational collaboration between Denmark, the Netherlands and Germany for testing and verifying environmental technologies within the agricultural sector. It includes test protocols for the following technologies:

- ✓ air cleaning technologies
- ✓ livestock housing and management systems

- ✓ slurry separation technologies
- ✓ technologies for reduction of gaseous emissions from land applied manure
- ✓ technologies for reduction of gaseous emissions from stored manure.

Beside farmers and authorities also manufacturers of such technologies benefit of this collaboration with regards to approval processes. Manufacturers get the possibility to have their technologies tested by a neutral and recognised test. The VERA test protocols were developed by well-known experts of the participating countries. They provide comparable and substantiated results with a high level of acceptance. A VERA verification statement confirms that the technology was tested by a competent test laboratory according to the specifications of the relevant VERA protocol. The results allow to derive efficiency levels which can be considered with regards to emission evaluations, e. g. in approval processes. The authorities receive secured data which at the same time supports the farmer when planning new investments. The manufacturer bears all costs for the test; costs for the evaluation and issuing of the verification statement will be covered by the responsible national ministries via the VERA secretariat.