WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Francesco Tirelli
President of IZSLER

HISTORY

The “Istituto Zooprofilattico Sperimentale della Lombardia e dell’Emilia Romagna” came into being through the initiative of Pietro Stazzi, a well-known University Professor and research worker, who, in Milan in 1907, set up the first “Experimental Centre for infectious diseases in animals” in Italy.

This event was the forerunner of similar initiatives, which were set up throughout the country. In the early Twenties, the Brescian stockbreeders, always to the fore today as in the past, had the idea of setting up their own Diagnostic Centre and, in 1921, they built the now famous farm called “forca di cane” on the immediate outskirts of Brescia. Despite having to overcome several drawbacks, the Brescian enterprise was extremely successful, thanks to the receptiveness of the stock breeders, local authorities and Bankers, not to mention the capacity of the men who at that time dedicated much of their energy to the development of the newly created Institute.

Bruno Ubertini, a talented young man of those times, over the years became a maestro of the Italian veterinary school working through the Brescia Institution. Very quickly, his laboratory became the focal point of veterinary ideas capable of gaining the attention of a wide audience: from the veterinary surgeon, who saw in it the necessary completion of his clinical studies, to the large or small scale stock breeder who relied on Ubertini’s consultancy to find the right way of resolving often difficult sanitary problems. He was a gifted research worker who tackled the
problems connected with animal health with both intelligence and intuition. Thanks to his spirit and enormous capacity as an organiser he can be considered the founder of the Brescia Institute and the person responsible for its enormous development. By finding important sources of self-finance, within reliable and high-tech production activities, organised by a team of capable and dedicated research workers astutely managed, the Institute has been able to give itself a solid base and proper objectives that have extended far beyond the local area.

The merger of the Brescia Centre with that of Milan took place in 1947. The resulting Institute took the name of “Istituto Zooprofilattico delle Provincie Lombarde”. As its activities spread into some of the provinces of Emilia, the Lombardy Institute in 1959 became “of Lombardia and Emilia”, which is its present title and area of jurisdiction. This was sanctioned by an Act of Parliament. The institutional structure of the Institute underwent radical legal transformation in 1970. From an institution which up to that time had been a private enterprise, (even though some of its functions were public services), it was transformed by law 503/70 into a Public Health Body.

Apart from defining and dividing ministerial from regional responsibilities in the field of veterinary public health, Decree 270/93 also introduced into the Experimental Zooprophylactic Institutes a new organisational system, by establishing the figure of the General Director and modifying the responsibilities of the Council Board of Administrators.

**STAKEHOLDERS**
IZSLER works for:

- Health Ministry
- Lombardia and Emilia Romagna
- Istituto Superiore di Sanità
- Official Veterinary Authorities
- Other official organisations (UE, MiPAF, NAS, ...)
- Farmers and Producers of food of animal origin
- Public and Private Associations and Organizations
- Consumers
FINANCING SOURCES

The law of 30.06.1993, n.270 provides for the management costs of the Institutes by:
- the annual contribution from the Ministry of Health;
- voluntary contributions from public and private bodies interested in the expansion, improvement and health protection of livestock;
- revenue from the original patrimony;
- profits deriving from production activities and from paid services.

Management of the Institute is mainly financed by annual funding from the Ministry of Health. This makes up over 60% of the organisation’s income. There are also other important contributions from the Ministry of Health, the European Union and other public and private organisations linked to specific research projects and prophylaxis plans.

The income deriving from commercial activities represents a significant source of self-financing for the Institute. In recent years, there has been an increase in revenue from analysis work, whilst the production of serums and vaccines has played an increasingly minor role. The commercial activity represents about a fifth of the Institute’s income.

Table 1: The budget of IZSLER on 2008

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institutional incomes (State and regions)</th>
<th>55,827,079</th>
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<tr>
<td>- Incomes for Research</td>
<td>2,596,229</td>
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<tr>
<td>Income from other sources</td>
<td>726,251</td>
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<td>Typical activities and credits</td>
<td>203,890</td>
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<tr>
<td>Capitalized Costs</td>
<td>514,071</td>
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<tr>
<td>Commercial income (products and services)</td>
<td>8,408,221</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>65,679,512</strong></td>
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These short hints to the history of our institute help us grasp the strict connection with its territory and husbandry stakeholders. An indissoluble bond pointing at our future path: the continuous scientific and planning support of IZSLER to agricultural and farming activities.

To this purpose, we have to be linked to the whole scientific community, and not only at our national level. In this respect, I understand that contacts have been already established between prominent IZSLER scientists and international research institutes, and that our representatives are stable members of the European scientific community.
In my view, however, such a leap beyond national borders should be set among IZSLER priorities, i.e. an unavoidable action of IZSLER management to be pursued by a renewal of its internal organization as well, and clearly not only in age-related terms.
IZSLER Council Board has the statutory duty to plan both institutional services and research activities, as well as to check their paths: this is the reason why STC was not meant as just a part of the General Director’s staff, but also as a prominent consulting body to support future important choices of IZSLER.
Welcome.