

Constitution of The European Forage Association (EFA)

European Forage Association (EFA)

Braillelaan 9
2289 CL Rijswijk
The Netherlands

1. Creation

This Association has been formed from organisations representing the straw and fodder trade within the participating countries. It has no stated lifetime and is named: The European Forage Association.

2. Objectives

- a.) To facilitate the international exchange of straw, fodder, and derivatives.
- b.) To defend, on an international level, the common interests of member organisations regarding the 'product', the 'professions' of dealers in straw, fodder, and derivatives, and the 'commercial function' in general.
- c.) To represent the profession within and around official international organisations.

Through these objectives, the association seeks to attain:

- a.) The study of all commercial questions relating to straw, fodder and derivatives.
- b.) The permanent improvement in contact between member organisations.
- c.) The improvement of international trading conditions, arbitration rules and practices.
- d.) In general terms, all other appropriate measures.

3. Constitution

The Association has been formed from national organisations representing straw, fodder, and derivatives trade.

As a concession to the first paragraph of this article, an enterprise may be admitted to the Association as an 'associate member', as long as there is no existing association, syndicate or federation representing the EFA in the home country of the enterprise.

Once an association, syndicate or federation representing the straw, fodder and derivatives trade in the home country of an 'associate member' is admitted to the EFA, the membership of the 'associate member' will cease.

4. Membership

Requests for membership must be addressed to the Secretary of the Association in the form of a letter.

A country is declared to be a member once the request from the representative organisation has been accepted by the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Association.

A three-quarter majority is required before the Board members can be accepted, also possible by e-mail.

5. Loss of membership status

The status of member of the Association will cease:

- a.) Through resignation by the member who, must advise the Secretary at least 3 months before the end of the current financial year (31 December). The resignation will be effective from the start of the following financial year.
- b.) Through the expulsion declared by the AGM, for which a three-quarters majority is required.

6. Headquarters

The Headquarters of the Association is Rijswijk Netherlands. This location may be changed to any other place or country by decision of the AGM.

7. Structure

The structure of the Association comprises the following:

- a.) Annual General Meeting (AGM)
- b.) Board members
- c.) General members

Annual General Meeting (AGM)

The AGM is the governing body of the Association. It has extensive powers to act in the name of the Association. It can delegate powers to the board members.

The AGM:

- a. Decides on the admissions of new member organisations and ratifies 'associate members'.
- b. Discusses items noted in the AGM agenda and decides upon any questions therein. In particular, it reviews the budget put forward by the Treasurer, showing anticipated expenditure and receipts, and sets the membership fee for the following financial year. The budget forecast must be distributed to members 1 week before the AGM.
- c. Approves the accounts
- d. Establishes and accepts rules relevant to the Association and to the internal running of the Association.
- e. Decides on the setting and transfer of the Associations headquarters.
- f. Elects, for the forthcoming year, the President, Secretary, and Treasurer of the Association.
- g. Extraordinary sessions are organised by the Board members of the Associations, within three month maximum from the date that the request is delivered.

The AGM meets every year ordinarily. The meeting place for the AGM rotates around countries of the participating members.

Extraordinary sessions may be called by members from at least 3 different member countries, through a request addressed to the President, stating the matters requiring examination. Extraordinary sessions are organised by the Board members of the Association, within one month maximum from the date that the request is delivered.

A quorum of at least three-quarters of member countries is required for decisions of the AGM to be valid. If the quorum is not met, a new meeting will take place one month later. This meeting will make valid decisions, by relevant majority, on the same agenda items. Decisions are made by majority vote, with the exception of membership fees, expulsion of members, changes to the constitution of the Association, for which a three-quarters majority is required. Any proposal which receives an equal split vote must be subjected to further debate. If, after a new vote, the result is still equal, the proposal is deemed to have been rejected.

Each member organisation has one vote at the AGM. Any persons accompanying the official spokesperson will have no vote.

'Associate members' may participate in the AGM. These are consulted but have no vote. For services rendered to the Association and the professions represented by it, the AGM can confer Honorary Membership to former members of the Board of the Association, once they have retired from the profession. Honorary membership is for life.

Board members of the Association

The Board comprises:

A President

Vice President

A General Secretary

A Treasurer

At least one member from every participating country.

The President, the Vice President, the Secretary, and the Treasurer are chosen from different member countries, so that each member country is represented within the Board mem-

bers of the Association.

Members of the office must be actively involved in trading straw, fodder and derivatives. All elections are decided by a majority of members and elected in the Annual General Meeting (AGM).

In the event of a major impediment, the Board can permit one of its Members to be replaced by a deputy.

Members of the Board may be assisted by an expert of their choosing to participate in discussions, but may not confer voting rights.

The Board represents the Association in all acts regarding third-parties and all administrative bodies.

The Board is responsible for all revenues and for paying all debts. It has the power to act in the name of the Association.

It must submit accounts to the AGM.

The Board decides on the admission of 'associate members' that must be submitted for ratification to the earliest AGM.

If deemed necessary, the Board may invite 'associate members' to assist in its meetings, or to prepare a report of its choosing.

The General Secretary is the custodian of all minutes of all discussions. He/she may be replaced by one of the members of the Board.

The Treasurer runs the accounts as directed by the Board. He/she completes the financial year end as at 31st December and, within 8 weeks, submits the completed accounts to the commission responsible for their verification.

8. Finances

The resources of the Association comprise:

- a.) Membership Fees paid by member-organisations: the amount is set each year by a three-quarters majority at the AGM.
- b.) In January, the Treasurer will ask for a payment on account of fees due.
- c.) Membership fees paid by 'associate members': the amount is set for each case by the Board and is due as soon as 'associate member' status is granted.
- d.) Fees for services rendered within terms set by the AGM.

9. Official Language

The official language of the Association is English.

If a specific member country arranges a special meeting and or visit that will be in a different language, then at least one months' notice must be given to other member countries. Each member country will be responsible for its own interpretation costs.

10. Changes and Dissolution

The current constitution can be modified only by the AGM and requires a three-quarter majority as defined earlier.

In the event of the liquidation of the Association, the AGM will inform the majority of members of the distribution of assets, according to the law of the land in which the headquarters are based.