

South Arica – Italy collaboration: New impetus to Reproductive studies of the Faculty of Veterinary Science and the University of Naples

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Prof Bianca Gasparrini

A visit to the Faculty by Prof Bianca Gasparrini from the Federico II University of Naples' Department of Veterinary Medicine and Animal Productions that will take place from 5 to 13 November is seen by the Section of Reproduction as a crucial opportunity for possible future cooperation between the two institutions. Prof Gasparrini who will also lead a PAS (Production Animal Studies) Research Forum discussion on 9 November, is very involved in reproduction work on cattle and mediterranean water buffaloes in Italy, among other things, *in vitro* technology. Her visit has been made possible thanks to NRF funding obtained by Dr Giulia Esposito from the Department of Production Animal Studies for collaboration between the two countries. The professor's visit serves as an opportunity to introduce herself and her work to the department.

Thanks to this collaboration, Mr Mario Smuts, first technical assistant from the Section of Reproduction will join Prof Gasparrini's Laboratory of Biotechnologies Applied to Animal Breeding in Naples from 11 January 2016 to 10 March 2016 where an experiment for the project "Conjugated Linoleic Acid: effects on spermatogenesis, sperm quality and freezability in bovines" will be carried out. During the above-mentioned period, Mario will receive specific training in procedures to be used in this project. In addition he will conduct another project, "Effect of Bovine cumulus cell co-culture on *in vitro* embryo production after intracytoplasmic sperm injection in cattle" under the supervision of Prof Gasparrini. Mario will also assist in training students in Italy in techniques of intracytoplasmic sperm injection. It is furthermore expected that the collaboration on the above mentioned projects will reflect in co-authorship of the possible scientific papers that will be produced. This could be beneficial for both the Faculty and the hosting lab in Italy and would certainly go a long way to strengthen collaboration within the executive

programme of scientific and technological cooperation between the two countries for the years 2014 to 2016.

- Author CvB