

## Research project IZS VE 12/11

**Prevalence of methicillin-resistant coagulase-positive Staphylococci in livestock (farrowing swine-, dairy cattle-, veal calf-farms) and companion animals of Triveneto regions**

**Project coordinator: Michela Corrò**

Methicillin-resistant coagulase-positive Staphylococci (MRcp-Staphylococci) [i.e. *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA), *Staphylococcus pseudintermedius* (MRSP), *Staphylococcus intermedius* (MRSI), etc.] are an emerging problem in human and veterinary health. Recent data on MRSP positivity in dog kennels of northern Italy, reported prevalence of 8% on samples and 10% on kennels. The EFSA Report (2008) indicates a prevalence in Italy of MRSA positive pig farms by 34.9%. In dairy cow farms it was reported a prevalence of 13% in milk samples collected for mastitis diagnosis, but no MRSA strains have been isolated from similar samples by IZSVE Diagnostic Laboratories in the last five years (data not published). Completely unknown is the situation concerning the veal calves in Italy; a Dutch study (2010) reports a prevalence in their veal calf farms by 28%.

Information on the spread of MRcp-Staphylococci in the animal population is important for animal health (spread of resistant strains and ineffectiveness of drug treatments) and human health, due to food contamination (milk, meat, etc.) or to infection from contact with MRcp-Staphylococci positive animals.

The objectives of the research are:

- assessment of MRcp-Staphylococci prevalence in livestock (farrowing pig farms, dairy cow farms, veal calf farms) and companion animals in the Triveneto regions;
- survey on operators of positive farms and animal owners (pet), and analysis of data for the identification of possible risk factors.