**Fact Sheet**

**Friedrich-Loeffler-Institut (FLI), Isle of Riems (Greifswald), Germany**

The institute on the Isle of Riems was founded by Friedrich Loeffler in 1910 as the worldwide first virological research institution. In 1898, based on an assignment of the Prussian Ministry of Culture, Friedrich Loeffler (1852-1915), professor of hygiene at the University of Greifswald, had described the causative agent of foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) as a filterable, but corpuscular, replicating agent.

In 1913, Friedrich Loeffler was appointed Director of the Robert-Koch-Institute in Berlin, which caused a reduction of his research activities on Riems. During the First World War work came to a complete standstill. In 1919, after the end of the war research work on the Isle of Riems was continued. Work still focused on FMD and on the production of a hyperimmune serum. The years until the beginning of the Second World War were dedicated to the development of a vaccine against FMD. In 1938 an FMD vaccine inactivated by formalin and heat and adsorbed to aluminium hydroxide was presented and came to use during the FMD epidemic of the years 1938-1940. In 1945, the major part of the equipment and furniture was removed as reparations.

As a reaction to the repeated FMD outbreaks in Europe, work on Riems was taken up again in 1946. In 1948, Heinz Röhrer was appointed head of the "Forschungsanstalt für Tierseuchen Insel Riems" (Research Institute for Animal Diseases, Isle of Riems), which after the foundation of East-Germany (the GDR) became a member of the German Academy of Agricultural Sciences.

In 1952 the institute was named after its founder (Friedrich-Loeffler-Institut Insel Riems). Over the following years and decades the activities of the institute focused on FMD, on research into Classical Swine Fever which had been started in the 1930s, on avian pathogens (Classical and Atypical Fowl Plague, Marek's Disease) and on other virus diseases of farmed animals. Thus, Riems became more and more important as production site for FMD vaccines and as research institution. After the German reunification in 1989, the Friedrich-Loeffler-Institutes on the Isle of Riems were refounded as part of the Federal Research Centre for Virus Diseases of Animals (BFAV). The Institutes of Molecular Biology, Diagnostic Virology and Infectology were established.

In 2001, in the course of the BSE crisis a fourth institute - the Institute of novel and emerging diseases - was added. In 1997, the Isle of Riems became the headquarter of the research institution, which in 2004 was renamed "Friedrich-Loeffler-Institute". At present, approximately 240 persons, among them approximately 50 scientists, are employed on the island.

By 2010, new laboratories and animal houses of safety levels L1 to L4 will be established on the Isle of Riems, representing a total investment of 150 million Euro. Thus, the most modern research institution for animal diseases in Europe will be established at a historic site. At the same time, the institutes in Tübingen and Wusterhausen will be transferred to the Isle of Riems.

For more details and historical pictures of the FLI see "history" at [www.fli.bund.de](http://www.fli.bund.de).