

Book review

Veterinary public health. *OIE Scientific and Technical Review*, volume 10, no. 4, December 1991. 336 pp., US\$32, ISBN 92-9044-298-0 and volume 11, no. 1, March 1992. 328 pp., US\$34, ISBN 92-9044-299-9.

The nature of the relationships between human and animal populations vary greatly between the different regions of the world. Similarly, there is a great global diversity in the techniques and strategies applied to combat the many dangers to human health resulting from contact with animals. Over the last half century, the concept of veterinary public health (VPH) has emerged as an indispensable tool in the control of these human/animal health risks. As the human population continues to increase worldwide, efficient management of the animal population forms an important part of growing ecological concerns. The decision to devote two volumes of the Review to the subject of VPH was made in response to the need for a wide range of information on the nature and management of human/animal health relationships across the world.

Part I of these two volumes outlines the importance of the development of the concept of international VPH within the World Health Organisation and details major recent achievements in this field.

Part II deals with various aspects of the history of VPH in different regions of the world, showing how VPH has emerged in relation to other areas of science, charting technical progress in the field and providing fascinating accounts of the development of VPH on five continents.

Part III is divided into two sections, the first of which deals with general aspects of the organisation of VPH, while the second tackles the subject of organization in individual regions and countries throughout the world, providing a variety of information related to particular VPH concerns and the organisational structures designed to deal with these

problems in the different geographical areas. The 12 papers presented here detail the strategies, programmes, regulations and resources applied to VPH in different countries of Africa, the Americas, Asia, Australasia and the Pacific, Europe and the Mediterranean region.

In Part IV, the authors highlight a number of specialized activities within VPH, including the specific questions of food protection, protection of the environment and the control of zoonoses.

As a counterpart to the historical section which opens the considerations in these two volumes, the penultimate section is devoted to future perspectives for VPH.

Finally, a brief concluding section provides an overview of the topics studied.

The two final sections are of particular interest; these have been compiled by the leading authorities within the major international organisations involved in VPH activities: the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations, the Office International des Epizooties, the Pan-American Health Organisation and the World Health Organisation.

This special double issue on VPH provides an extremely valuable account of the problems posed to human health by the animal environment throughout the world, and of the history and current state of the techniques and strategies which can be employed to counter the dangers. Together, the two volumes constitute a concise source of information vital to all those concerned with the management of veterinary public health matters on local, national and international levels.