

tuberculosis and brucellosis, are communicable to man. Veterinary service and counsel on animal health problems is supplied mainly by the farm animal practitioner.

Veterinarians are currently responsible for the health of 108.5 million cattle, 51 million hogs, 24 million sheep, 435 million poultry, and 31 million horses. The combined inventory and production value of the Nation's livestock was 41 billion dollars as of January 1, 1967 (U.S.D.A. estimate).

Pets and Recreational Animals

The veterinarian who concerns himself with the diseases of pets and pleasure animals enhances the emotional well-being of their owners. Moreover, he protects man against diseases transmissible from pet animals, such as rabies, leptospirosis, bacterial diarrhea, ringworm, staphylococcosis, and psittacosis. The steadily increasing number of pet animals attests to their popularity and to the pleasure they provide. The maintenance of their health is a vital part of the profession's contribution to society.

2. GOVERNMENT SERVICE

U.S. Department of Agriculture

Veterinarians are necessary to carry out many functions of state and federal government agencies in the United States. Veterinarians have been engaged in the eradication of livestock diseases including those communicable to man, since 1884 when the Bureau of Animal Industry became a part of the United States Department of Agriculture.

Two diseases of particular public health significance, both of which are targets of a joint eradication effort by U.S.D.A. and the individual states, are tuberculosis and brucellosis in cattle. Brucellosis in swine is another eradication target, because it is a major source of human brucellosis. Successful elimination of brucellosis in cattle and swine will not only largely remove the major sources of human illness, but will also reduce losses of animals through abortions caused by the disease.

Veterinarians working either as members of federal and state government agencies, or as private practitioners, have been responsible for reducing losses to farmers from brucellosis from \$90 million in 1947 to \$12.5 million in 1967. As a result, reported cases of human brucellosis have dropped by 94 percent since 1947.

In 1917, tuberculosis affected 1 out of 20 cattle; the disease affected only 1 in 3,000 in 1967. The death rate for tuberculosis in man in 1917 was 125 per 100,000. In 1965, it was 4.1 per 100,000. Although the reduction of tuberculosis in cattle is not solely responsible for the decline of the disease in man, it has played a major role. The joint efforts of government veterinarians and veterinary practitioners have been responsible for the near elimination of human extrapulmonary and pulmonary tuberculosis of bovine origin from most of North America.

The goal is to eradicate these two diseases completely in animals because until this is accomplished, people will continue to be victims of these diseases through contact with infected animals.

Food Hygiene

Veterinarians direct meat and poultry inspection programs for federal, state and local governments. This country enjoys the highest per capita consumption of meat and poultry in the world; approximately 200 pounds of meat are consumed by the average person each year.

In response to the nationwide demand for consumer protection, Congress passed the Wholesome Meat Act in 1967 (Public Law 90-201) and Congress is now considering bills pertaining to inspection of poultry and poultry meat products. The above legislation requires hundreds of veterinarians to implement the new program.

Veterinarians participate in food hygiene research and advise and assist in the development and maintenance of recommended ordinances regarding milk sanitation, poultry inspection, and sanitation of food service establishments. Animal diseases are of public health significance because some are transmissible to man through milk, meat, poultry and other animal food products. Food products may also serve as vehicles of human infections, namely, typhoid fever, diphtheria, scarlet fever, and streptococcal infections.