

IFAH Statement on 250 years of the veterinary profession: Where does IFAH see the future challenges for the profession?

13 October 2011 – Cape Town - The future challenges for the veterinary profession have been highlighted at a number of recent international events, all of which have been reflected at this 30th World Veterinary Conference celebrating the 250th anniversary of the veterinary profession.

Barbara Freischem, IFAH's Executive Director, commented on the topic of food security in terms of veterinarians' role: "FAO has long highlighted the need to feed a growing population with the finite resources of our world. We need to use every bit of human ingenuity to achieve this task. Much of the food will be of animal origin, land-based as well as aquatic, as also highlighted by the FAO. Veterinarians will continue to be needed to keep livestock healthy and, in doing so, they support the economic security of livestock keepers in poorer parts of the world."

Regarding the One Health concept and environmental impact, she added: "The end of last year saw the Climate Change Summit, and at the beginning of 2011 the first One Health conference took place. The latter took up the challenge presented by the OIE-FAO-WHO tripartite declaration on One Health and built on information-sharing between the human and veterinary medicines sectors which was started at conferences like IMED. The challenge to veterinarians will lie in dealing with changing disease patterns, new disease challenges through changing climate patterns, as well as diseases emerging through closer proximity between humans, their animals and wildlife. Environmental sustainability of food production will become ever more important, and veterinarians have a role to play in ensuring efficient use of valuable resources with reduced environmental impact.

In addition, companion animals play an important role in our lives. Increasing parts of society enjoy the comfort and joy that companion animals can bring to people, and the veterinarians' challenge here will be to ensure the health of these treasured companions.

Veterinarians have many future challenges mapped out for them and I am sure surprises will arise along the way. The Animal Health Industry will do its best to support the veterinary profession with innovative products in rising to these challenges."

Notes for editors

IFAH

The International Federation for Animal Health (IFAH) is an organisation representing manufacturers of veterinary medicines, vaccines and other animal health products in both developed and developing countries across five continents. The mission of IFAH is to foster a greater understanding of animal health matters and promote a predictable, science-based regulatory environment that facilitates the supply of innovative and quality animal medicines, vaccines and other animal health products into a competitive market place. These products contribute to a healthy and safe food supply as well as a high standard of health and welfare for animals and people.

For further information on IFAH, please visit www.ifahsec.org

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