

# STRATEGIC PLAN

## **American Veterinary Medical Association**

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Adopted April 12, 2008





## Introduction

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“The future  
depends on  
what we do  
in the present.”

—GANDHI

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Veterinary medicine is at a crossroads. Although it remains one of the most highly respected professions, many challenges exist that will significantly impact the veterinary profession for years to come.

For instance, the continued strengthening of the human-animal bond increases public demand for high-quality diagnostics, services, and therapies. Approximately 60% of all U.S. households own pets, and about one-half of the U.S. pet-owning population consider their pets to be members of the family.<sup>1</sup> The changing social status of pets supports the veterinary profession by increasing veterinary expenditures and improving the quality of and access to veterinary health care. This change in perceptions of pets raises issues involving the legal status of animals and the potential for noneconomic damages.

Globalization strengthens our nation, but also increases its vulnerability to foreign animal disease invasion, bioterrorism, and agroterrorism. Approximately 75% of all emerging pathogens are zoonotic, underscoring the importance of a strong veterinary workforce to detect and control animal disease.

Due to numerous recent incidents of human illnesses and food recalls, public concern about the safety of the nation’s food supply has increased. A worsening shortage of rural and food supply veterinarians threatens to further compromise the health of the nation and its human and animal populations.

Veterinarians have traditionally been looked to as the experts on animal welfare, balancing humane treatment of animals and societal needs. That traditional position for veterinarians is being challenged.

Changing societal demands and professional roles, veterinary workforce demographics and professional attitudes are redefining the relevance of the AVMA to its members. These changes demand that the AVMA evolve with its membership.

Dedicated members, represented by volunteer leadership, remain the cornerstone of the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA). The Association’s policies are guided by science-based evaluation and the input of its membership.

The five major AVMA goals and their respective objectives, as listed in this plan, are formulated to take advantage of the Association’s core competencies while advancing the veterinary profession.

1. source: 2007 U.S. Pet Ownership & Demographics Sourcebook



# Guiding Values, Mission, and Purpose

**VALUES** are an association’s guiding principles. The AVMA values integrity, inclusiveness, unity, compassion, and science-based medicine. These values are strongly embraced throughout the Association, guide the Association, and are timeless.

The **PURPOSE** is the AVMA’s reason for existence.

## **AVMA PURPOSE**

The objective of the Association is to advance the science and art of veterinary medicine, including its relationship to public health, biological science, and agriculture.

The Association’s **MISSION** is a long-term view or long-term goal that guides the AVMA’s efforts.

## **AVMA MISSION STATEMENT**

Improving Animal and Human Health, Advancing the Veterinary Medical Profession

PURPOSE & MISSION



# CORE COMPETENCIES

## AVMA Core Competencies

A **CORE COMPETENCY** is something that an organization does well and that satisfies other criteria. In association terms, core competencies provide member benefits difficult for competitors to imitate, and that can be leveraged widely to many products or services. Core competencies provide an essential foundation for strategic planning and drive the development of tactics to achieve strategic goals. Based on these criteria, four basic core competencies have been identified.

### AVMA CORE COMPETENCIES

- Serving as the voice of, and information conduit to, the veterinary profession
- Setting and preserving professional standards
- Serving the needs of all veterinarians
- Maintaining the highest standards in association management

### CORE COMPETENCY:

Serving as the voice of, and information conduit to, the veterinary profession

This core competency is derived from efforts by all areas of staff and volunteer leadership. Examples of actions and services supporting this core competency include publishing two highly regarded scientific journals, the *Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association* and the *American Journal of Veterinary Research*; representing the Association at professional meetings and conventions; public outreach products and efforts (including client information brochures, Web site content and educational materials); media outreach activities; state and federal advocacy efforts; interacting with governmental and nongovernmental organizations regarding animal health and welfare and public health issues; facilitating interaction with and among state and other constituent veterinary medical associations. As the leading advocate for the veterinary profession, the AVMA serves its members at local, state, federal and global levels.



## **CORE COMPETENCY:**

### Setting and preserving professional standards

This core competency is preserved by the generation of AVMA professional policies. The AVMA is responsible for the profession's Principles of Veterinary Medical Ethics.

The AVMA also establishes and maintains policies regarding animal health and welfare and public health issues. Model legislation created by the AVMA and adopted through the Association's advocacy function impacts state and federal legislation and regulation affecting the profession.

The AVMA Council on Education continues to be the premier, international standard for veterinary educational accreditation, accepted by all states and used as a model for veterinary education accreditation in other countries. The AVMA Committee on Veterinary Technician Education and Activities sets the standard for the accreditation of veterinary technician education programs.

## **CORE COMPETENCY:**

### Serving the needs of all veterinarians

The AVMA is a member-driven organization and is focused on providing high-quality services and benefits that fulfill the needs of the broadest possible number of veterinarians. The AVMA Group Health and Life Insurance Trust (GHLIT) and Professional Liability Insurance Trust (PLIT) are available only to members, and provide complete insurance protection tailored to the veterinary profession. Research into pet demographics, consumer attitudes, veterinary compensation, professional data, and veterinary business measures all help guide individual decisions of veterinarians. Member benefits through partnerships with other entities increase the value of AVMA membership.

Offering the broadest educational program in the veterinary profession, the AVMA Convention serves the dual purpose of helping veterinarians achieve the highest levels of professional knowledge and providing a diverse forum for veterinarians to share perspectives and learn from one another.

## **CORE COMPETENCY:**

### Maintaining the highest standards in association management

The AVMA recognizes and honors its professional and ethical responsibilities to its members. By interfacing with the larger association management community and regularly incorporating best practices in association management, the AVMA is seen as a leader. Accountability, responsibility and fiscal stability are paramount to maintaining the Association's value, credibility and role in the future of the veterinary profession.



# STRATEGIC GOALS

## Goals and Objectives

In June 2006, the AVMA Executive Board approved the following critical issues for the AVMA: animal welfare; veterinary workforce; economic viability; veterinary education; and veterinary services. Based on these critical issues, the Association's highest priority Strategic Goals were approved in June 2007.

The **STRATEGIC GOALS** provide guidance to the Association as it continues to evolve in response to the changing profession. Within each Strategic Goal, the **OBJECTIVES** define areas where the Association can target its resources to drive the Association and the veterinary profession in the direction of the goal. Within each Objective, tactics will be developed for new activities to help the Association achieve the Strategic Goals. Many of the Objectives also include ongoing activities and existing areas of focus.

This document is a result of an ongoing and dynamic process. It will change. The expansion or revision of the current Strategic Plan will occur through continual evaluation within the Strategic Planning Framework.

### **STRATEGIC GOAL: ADVOCACY**

AVMA, through its members and leaders, is committed to be a leading force and advocate on veterinary-related issues in local, state, federal, and international legislation and regulation.

#### **OBJECTIVES:**

1. Improve veterinary medicine's ability to lobby effectively at the state and federal level.
2. Educate stakeholders on key issue through the use of contemporary communications techniques.
3. Make AVMA policies more relevant and accessible to staff, leadership, AVMA members and the public.
4. Engage the broadest possible base of support in AVMA's governmental relations activities.
5. Increase size and optimally leverage AVMAPAC dollars to advance the Association's federal legislative and regulatory goals.



## **STRATEGIC GOAL: WORKFORCE**

Critical shortages in veterinary workforce, infrastructure, and resources are identified and solutions developed in collaboration with key stakeholders to ensure that national veterinary needs, including those with global implications, are met.

### **OBJECTIVES:**

1. Identify critical shortages in the veterinary workforce, infrastructure and/or resources.
2. Develop solutions to critical shortages in the veterinary workforce, infrastructure and/or resources.
3. Implement solutions in collaboration with key stakeholders.

## **STRATEGIC GOAL: EDUCATION**

The AVMA Council on Education (COE) accreditation process is the premier standard for veterinary medical education globally.

### **OBJECTIVES:**

1. Ensure continual improvement and best practices in AVMA's accreditation process.
2. Maintain COE leadership and visibility in international veterinary education.
3. Ensure AVMA's foreign graduate certification program remains rigorous and in step with accreditation standards.
4. Market and promote the value of AVMA's educational accreditation programs.
5. Develop direction for the future of veterinary medical education in collaboration with key stakeholders.

## **STRATEGIC GOAL: ANIMAL WELFARE**

AVMA is a leading advocate for, and an authoritative, science-based resource on animal welfare.

### **OBJECTIVES:**

1. Integrate and expand AVMA's science-based knowledge on animal welfare.
2. Engage AVMA leaders to empower AVMA to become a resource and advocate on animal welfare.
3. Strengthen AVMA's position as a primary resource for the veterinary profession and key stakeholders about animal welfare.
4. Engage the broadest possible base of stakeholders and advocate AVMA's positions on animal welfare.

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Leaders establish the vision for the future and set the strategy for getting there; they cause change. They motivate and inspire others to go in the right direction and they, along with everyone else, sacrifice to get there.

—JOHN KOTTER

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## **STRATEGIC GOAL: ECONOMIC VIABILITY**

The veterinary profession's economic viability and sustainability is evaluated and strengthened within all segments.

### **OBJECTIVES:**

1. Develop measures of economic viability and sustainability.
2. Expand the development and strategic use of veterinary economic data.
3. Strengthen the demand for veterinary services.
4. Increase productivity and efficiency in delivery of veterinary services.
5. Increase number of graduate veterinary technicians in the U.S. to meet veterinary service needs.
6. Eliminate nonmarket-based pay inequities in the profession.

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As for the Future,  
your task is not  
to foresee it,  
but to enable it.

—ANTOINE DE SAINT-EXUPÉRY

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