

Topics and Descriptions by Category

Category: Animal Welfare

Topic: "humane slaughter" of livestock and poultry

Description:

There is growing tension in the United States regarding the use of livestock and poultry for food consumption. Some critics even characterize humane slaughter as an oxymoron. The veterinary profession needs to debate these welfare issues internally and share our consensus views with the public. Humane slaughter stems from a perspective that humans are responsible for the welfare of animals raised for food. It is a concept that is larger than the approved methods for dispatching animals. It is likely it will continue to grow in importance among the public. AVMA can be a leader in the public discussions on livestock welfare issues. The veterinary profession needs to emphasize our role as strong advocates for animal welfare. We need to bridge the growing chasm between factions that think there is too much or too little attention paid to livestock welfare. To do this well, we need integrity in our methods and message. We need the courage to ask ourselves the tough questions. We need to be honest about the differences of opinion within our profession, but steadfast in our pursuit of a consensus.

Topic: abuse

Description:

abuse can be subtle but still significant. When does neglect due to financial constraints become abuse? Where do you go when you THINK someone is abusive but have no proof, when you KNOW someone is abusive and have no first hand proof. Uncontrolled pet populations, economic stress, domestic violence, are all building and making it appear to increase levels of pain/abuse/neglect inflicted on pets. Our county has no physical shelter, no spay neuter funded programs and a lower than regional annual salary. Animals pay the price

Topic: Addressing Consumer concerns relative to animal welfare and product safety

Description:

America's consumers are being swayed by organizations such as HSUS and PETA to believe animal agriculture is a horrible beast of an institution in America. AVMA needs to take a more active role in this issue and help to educate consumers. Veterinarians are a trusted profession and AVMA needs to have a voice in this issue. We need to stand up to organizations like HSUS and PETA and get consumers to see their real agenda - to get us all to be vegans!

Topic: advocacy versus service

Description:

The veterinary professional is under pressure to become an advocate of animal welfare and animal health without regard to the first and foremost need to provide service to the public that walks in the door. Although primarily directed toward the general practitioner, there is also mounting pressure on the industrial and academic veterinarian to use unsubstantiated guidelines and promulgations that have not had data to confirm their applicability, rather emotion is the rule of the day. As trained professionals the voice of reason has to have some sway such that issues are decided on thorough discussion, evaluation, and practicality. My issue concerns here revolve around passing laws that change an animal's status from pet to human equivalency, laws that make some surgeries illegal even though they have practical relevancy, and taking an industry such as pet breeders either illegal or under direct governmental supervision.

Topic: Animal "Rights"

Description:

Agriculture practices are under attack by radical groups; research groups are under attack by radical groups; government entities that might defend against such attacks are themselves under attack by radical groups.

I am concerned with the concept of people being guardians and animals having innate rights, like humans. U.S. administrators, such as Cass Sunstein, wanting to give pets lawyers gravely disturbs me about the future.

Topic: Animal behavior affecting animal welfare

Description:

Unwanted behavior is# 1 cause of removal of companion animals from home and family to shelters /death
Fearful and anxious behavior of pet -- cause of reluctance of owners to take pets to visit a veterinary hospital == particularly cats
#Vet students need more education in behavior of animals and people

Topic: Animal Care & Welfare

Description:

We will continue to see activist groups push this agenda and leverage the naivety of the consuming public regarding food production. States currently seem to be avoiding attack by passing their version of the "Welfare Standards Boards", but this will be a temporary fix only.

Topic: Animal guardianship

Description:

The AVMA must continue to push for animal ownership, rather than guardianship. We are stewards of animals, but we must keep distinct the lines between being a steward (owner) and a guardian-- which more properly belongs with the role afforded children. The use of this term for animals further blurs the lines between humans and animals.

Topic: Animal regulation advocates

Description:

As more laws are written about pet and wild animals, Veterinarians need to be involved to ensure the best legislation to protect the animals and the environment, without unduly limiting the rights of animal owners.

Topic: Animal Research Protocols

Description:

Limitations should be placed on animal research the same as that used for human patients. If we would not do it to a human, then how can we justify doing it to any other sentient being?

Topic: Animal right activities

Description:

Diligence and proactivity is necessary so the radical voices don't force us into changes that are not in the best interest of animal production and animal welfare.

Topic: Animal Rights

Description:

The AVMA needs to stand up on the side of compassion for animals. It is embarrassing to be represented by an organization that shows more regard for the livestock industry than animal welfare.

Can we maintain our status as the true experts of animal welfare or will we lose out the ASPCA/Humane Society?

Topic: Animal rights activists

Description:

Animal rights activist organizations demanding we stop using lab animals for research and protesting some surgical procedures.

Topic: animal rights agenda

Description:

While I see the true animal rights movement as still on the fringe, in some aspects, I see it gaining ground slowly. I hope the impact from these groups does not continue to grow in the future.

Topic: Animal Rights agenda creeping into curriculums

Description:

Animal welfare should be the primary mission, but politics is driving the animal rights agenda into vet school curriculum. New grads are not prepared to help clients of limited financial means navigate diagnostic and treatment plan options. This is contributing to the relinquishment of pets that belong to clients with limited financial

Topic: Animal rights and welfare

Description:

Very emotional and hot - button issue for many people and the veterinary profession often seems to fall on the side of status quo or support of industry/business. I got an e-mail today urging me to support a petition to eliminate all animal testing. Surely people don't understand the ramifications of such a broad edict on medical research, product safety, etc. but it's an easy concept to support in the general public. We need to be temperate but current in our stance and be able to simply, clearly explain why that option (i.e. no animal research) could be done, but with a significant price to society.

Topic: animal rights as related to production agriculture

Description:

The swarm of misinformation in the mainstream media often is extremely unbalanced and seeks only to sensationalize the issues. Unfortunately, many consumers subscribe to the idea that the minority of producers' poor decision making that are the subject of a media expose' represents the entire industry involved. It is imperative that AVMA, along with producer groups, lead the way in informing the public that American production animal agriculture is not only feeding a large portion of the world, but doing so in a spirit of good stewardship of all resources involved.

Topic: Animal Rights extremists

Description:

all of animal stewardship is under attack by AR extremists
vet medicine must unite and reach out to as many animal industry entities as possible, review all cultural practices, educate our selves and our clients, make an honest effort to correct bad conduct at the individual as well as the institutional level. Join together and pool resources to retain a PR company to counter AR's very effective media assault .

Topic: Animal rights groups

Description:

Animal rights groups such as PETA and HSUS have developed sophisticated systems to manipulate the media and the general public, even the educated ones, are easily duped by half-truths because the vast majority have no knowledge of agriculture or its importance in our economy.

Topic: Animal Rights issues (property vs. companions)

Description:

This ties in with litigation and monetary rewards for lawsuits.

Topic: Animal rights laws

Description:

Agricultural practices should come into the 21st century. If we can do better, we should (a chicken should be able to flap its wings), but veterinarians should take a leadership role. We should talk to the beef producers, pork producers, egg producers, etc and ask them how they can raise healthy, safe food while allowing the animals to live somewhat closely to the way they were intended to live (ie: not in excessive confinement).

Topic: animal rights legislations

Description:

It seems that every time I read a journal there is another city or state that is trying to legislate whether or not medical or surgical procedures will be legal. I feel that many of these cases are being pushed by animal rights activists promoting their agenda through those that create the laws. I would like to see our profession be more proactive in preventing those activities, rather than simply reacting when something comes up.

Topic: Animal rights versus animal welfare

Description:

Legal issues such as considering pets on par with humans. Laws being passed dictating what veterinarians can do or not do.

Topic: animal rights' whackos

Description:

putting me out of business and keeping me from eating hamburgers and bacon and eggs

Topic: Animal rights/over regulation

Description:

We are standing on the tip of the regulatory iceberg. It doesn't take much to foresee the future of non-science based regulatory burden and restriction. AVMA needs a unified, strong voice that can stand up to the numerous allegations and claims against the profession. More importantly, the org needs to promote welfare advocacy at all levels and support scientifically based investigation/evaluation in current practices. Tradition has dictated ignorance as a control method. Using CA prop 2 as an example, this will fail every time. We can no longer rely on tradition or our own expertise with respect to the changing regulatory climate. A strong, public legal and regulatory position will help guide lawmakers and advocates in their attempts to balance AR lobbying with the collective wisdom of the vet society.

Topic: Animal rights/welfare in the food animal industry

Description:

Demand is becoming stronger from consumers to know where their food comes from and how it was raised. Organic food has become wildly popular, and it is changing the way people consume and contemplate the food-producing machine. I think we must become transparent about the facts and keep an open dialogue. Hiding things or just keeping quiet on our end will not do. American consumers tend to listen to whomever is loudest, and lately that has been PETA, HSUS, and the proponents of the organic food movement. If we have points to make, we must put them out there loud and clear. Otherwise, the others will win. Just look at the horse slaughter industry. Despite the fact that the AAEP and most horse owners were pro-slaughter, the non-horse-owning public managed to get the slaughterhouses shut down and the horses in this country are paying the price. We did not speak up loudly enough or soon enough. We cannot make the mistake of keeping quiet again. We must provide thoughtful, factual information to the consumers and the general public to ensure that they can make informed decisions.

Topic: animal rights/welfare issues

Description:

Animal rights groups are having huge impact on the profession at all levels. The education of our students, the production of food, research at many levels, and the care of our companion animals. Some of this boils back down to the previous point of public education where people without enough information instead make decisions based on emotional reactions, but the impact on our profession is vast.

Topic: Animal supremacy (“rights”) replacing animal welfare

Description:

Generational shift in perception of animal welfare by both veterinarians & public: The emotionally based view of animal welfare and animal use and the increasingly anthropomorphic perception of animals threatens American agriculture and our professions role in it. Indeed the increased suburbanization, urbanization and feminization of the profession itself has to some extent contributed to this evolution. Low salaries in food animal practice and increased debt of all graduates has contributed to this phenomenon. There is little in the media that promotes or lauds American production agriculture. Instead we hear about the "factory farm" or the unethical use of animals in biomedical research. Its as if the nation has gotten so successful it feels it can afford to commit collective suicide by hamstringing production agriculture, medical research and use of animals for human purposes in general. A giant PR campaign is needed and a shift in public perception is needed more.

Topic: Animal Welfare

Description:

The public needs to start looking to veterinarians and not PETA for animal welfare and legislation guidance. More and more, the public is dissatisfied with cosmetic surgeries and there are websites devoted to defaming those that perform them. Vets who don't perform cosmetic surgeries feel a disconnect with the AVMA and are moving to the HSVMA. Clients may not be instructed in proper husbandry for their pets (don't chain your dogs outside all day, don't love your cat to death with food, don't ignore your parrot until he's pecked himself bald) because vets aren't trained, competent, or comfortable in addressing them. The profession is toting the human-animal bond but terrified of pets losing their legal status as property due to lawsuit threats. I say help guide legislation so it is favorable to the profession (for example, if owners will become guardians and pets more than property, hold owners liable for neglect if they refuse medical recommendations like a dental or weight loss). People need to know that pet stores acquire puppies from inhumane puppy mills. People want vets to improve the welfare of food animals after watching Food Inc. If we don't guide animal welfare as a profession, we will see more people making their own decisions like the CA declawing bans.

In regard to both companion and farm animals, animal welfare should be considered from the animal's perspective. That is, what is truly best for the animal should take precedence over the needs or desires of owners or those who stand to profit from their existence.

The AVMA needs to continue to provide animal welfare information that is scientific based.

Being the voice of animal welfare (instead of various organizations such as HSUS) and ensuring that animals - whether used for food, fiber or companionship, are treated humanely.

There are more younger people with a different attitude and I am glad to see the AVMA addressing this but we are still not looked at as the leaders in this...we are the followers.

This is an emotional topic in the public spotlight. The AVMA must be proactive if it wishes to be a relevant voice in this debate. The AVMA must evaluate and address each issue separately and scientifically and not be afraid to agree with or even work with HSUS or PETA when we share the same positions.

We know we must take the lead in animal welfare. Most of this has to do with farm animals, where I will direct my comments. I recently attended a two-day workshop (PVMA members were invited by Penn Ag and Operation Hometown Outreach) where we were trained to deliver presentations to community groups on modern animal agriculture. It's imperative that we inform first our small animal veterinarians and then the public that veterinarians are tending to the welfare of farm animals. A public that is barraged with so much information about 'factory farming' needs to know that modern animal raising methods can be both better for animal welfare and better for the environment.

Perhaps some publicity of research showing the benefits to animal health of modern farming would be helpful.

the attack on animal agriculture by extremists group such as HSUS

A large percentage of the US population is several generations removed from agriculture, and have no concept of animal production methods. Pseudo intellectuals wish to demean modern production methods and call for a return to smaller and more "natural" production units o not understand that such units as a whole are not economically sustainable. The public needs to look at the entire picture. At some point US citizens will need to decide if they wish to have reasonable priced safe food, or if they wish to return to smaller inefficient production units with questionable quality and food safety issues

The AVMA has been late in recognizing society's shifting viewpoint with regard to animal welfare, particularly with regard to farm animal welfare. It is not enough to view this subject in terms of science, the AVMA must also appreciate our ethical response to this issue.

We must continue to base our animal welfare policies on science while at the same time engaging in as many ways as possible in the emotionally rife public arena of "animal welfare/rights". We need to support pain relief for any painful procedure in all animals. We need to continue to identify unneeded procedures and push to discontinue their use.

veterinary medicine lags behind in promoting animal welfare and is too involved with animal industry to be seen as a credible and unbiased proponent on behalf of animal well- being

If we want to claim to be the "experts" in animal welfare, we need to start teaching this subject in veterinary school and offering it in CE to graduates. Many veterinarians i speak to do not understand the difference between animal health and animal welfare. One DVM actually told me he spent four years learning animal welfare in veterinary school! We are a profession of unconscious incompetence in this area and need to learn about the topic before we profess to be "experts" at it.

Our populace and their views on animal welfare have changed in recent years. There are very strong and avid proponents on both sides of the animal welfare debate. These issues will be coming forward and affecting our profession greatly in the coming years

I think that veterinarians should be the profession that takes on the animal welfare issue and applies scientific analysis and philosophical analysis to develop a working model to follow to ensure the best welfare system for livestock, wildlife, and pets.

United States culture increasingly embraces animals as family members, and courts award damages for animal suffering and punish perpetrators of animal cruelty. In this climate, I believe the profession should embrace, rather than challenge, this social and legal trend. Further, I think that livestock welfare will continue to impact the national consciousness and national conscience. The AVMA would position itself well to get out ahead of this issue and serve as a leader, rather than a follower. I wonder if this issue may contribute to lack of interest among new graduates to be active in professional organizations. When I talk to new graduates who are not members of AVMA, they tell me that they do not feel AVMA represents their views on this and other issues.

The AVMA needs to be involved in this discussion, I feel we are on the wrong side of the issue, often

Will the veterinary profession base policies strictly on science or will public opinion have influence. (example blunt trauma in baby pigs meets the scientific definition for humane euthanasia, but it does not provide a pretty picture to the public) Defending a practice that the public deems inhumane will cause an erosion of credibility. somet

There continues to be greater scrutiny with animal welfare issues. Evidence based approaches need to be evaluated on productivity, pain, and health of animals. Veterinary profession needs to be proactive in responding to this issue as seen by the public.

We all entered this profession because of our love of animals. Unfortunately we have those in society that are radical when it comes to animal issues (ie PETA) We need to educate the public about animal issues so that they get the full picture and understanding of what we do.

How do we reconcile the differences in animal welfare standards between large animal/production medicine and companion animal medicine? The AVMA cannot continue to be all things to all people.

Huge issues in the area of animal welfare/rights/biomedical research. AVMA should be playing a more upfront, vocal, and reasoned role in addressing issues in order to protect animal welfare (not from an emotional standpoint, but from a reasoned/scientifically oriented standpoint) so that those with emotionally appealing but medically and therefore ethically unsound agendas do not prevail.

It is time for the AVMA to support humane treatment of all animals. If we don't speak for animals that have no voice, who will? We need to improve conditions for farm animals, for slaughter, especially poultry. The USA should be a leader in humane treatment of animals. We need to do the right thing and not just kowtow to the dollar. It will hurt our public image if we don't.

Being more proactive in being the "source" that the general populous turns to

Reliable metrics to assure ourselves that we are taking good care of animals.

Veterinarians must enhance the public's (and scientists') perception of the role veterinarians play in ensuring animal welfare (not just animal health). We appear to be losing ground in this arena. We should be able to demonstrate responsible "use" of animals while maintaining animal welfare.

Veterinarians are no longer seen as the guardians of animal welfare. There needs to be a campaign, both extrinsically and intrinsically to ensure that the welfare of the animal always is the priority.

Recommendations/improvements need to be based on science-based research.

Can AVMA continue to be the reasoned, science-based voice for animal welfare and defend the position that animals should be regarded as property and can be ethically used for food, fiber, recreation and all other traditional uses?

Veterinarians need to be at the forefront of protecting animals from abuse or misuse. This does not mean we need to concede to animal rights fanatics who do not believe in the use of animals as pets, for exhibitions such as zoos, and for food (both farmed and wild caught or hunted).

The profession's public image on welfare issues needs to be clearly communicated to take leadership on care of pets. We are the experts, not humane groups, but we have given in to corporations/private enterprise when we should not. Get back to being advocates for animals in a reasonable approach.

Animal welfare issues as they relate to food animal production, including housing alternatives and management changes.

Large and Small animal - even how pets are "characterized" after disasters

I worry that the "left field" advocates of animal welfare will impact the way veterinarians can practice and succeed in having the needed impact on animal wellness.

Take an active role in animal welfare issues and try to come to a consensus that is beneficial to animals and people. One must consider zoonotic diseases.

The AVMA needs to be seen by the public and governmental agencies as the voice of reason in the animal welfare arena. Other groups have access to a motivated and engaged volunteer base, so this will be no easy task, as emotion, not science seems to drive the issue. However, we as a profession need to be consistent with our message.

Topic: Animal Welfare Activists Being the Advocate for Animals Instead of Vets

Description:

The animal welfare activists are trying to promote themselves as the experts on animal welfare. Veterinarians need to take and keep that role.

Topic: Animal welfare and animal husbandry as it is perceived by the public

Description:

HSUS is in the driver's seat in the public eye with regard to these two issues and it is my considered opinion that somehow AVMA needs to regain the notion in the public's eye that we are the real guardians of animal health and welfare practices. Most of the public views this issue through the lens of their own pets, however it seems to me that both the veterinary educational curricula as well as most practitioners have abdicated the leading role that we actually have. I believe that the public should be reeducated to perceive us as playing the first role in animal welfare and husbandry.

Topic: Animal Welfare and Animal Rights Groups

Description:

Animal rights groups are taking control of animal welfare in many aspects that has changed, is changing, and will change how veterinarians practice and how food is produced. Animal rights groups take many issues to the impractical and extreme. Already in California there are laws in several cities banning declaw in cats. These groups are changing many aspects of food animal production throughout the country. Animal rights groups take a very biased and aggressive approach to each issue and then places the decision of new laws and regulations into the hands of the public, after much very aggressive and biased information is given to the public. Veterinarians are the most educated people when it comes to animal health and welfare and food production. As a small animal veterinarian, I know very little about food production, but I feel I know far, far more than the public. Any small animal veterinarian knows most of the public knows very little about how to take care of an animal and is not qualified to make these decisions, especially based on what 'whoever has the most money' has shown them. Veterinarians should be the best advocates for animal health and welfare. Veterinarians should not have to defend themselves against animal welfare groups, but that is what frequently happens when issues are brought up. We will not be practicing the same way if pets no longer have 'owners' and now have 'guardians' or if laws are made about controversial procedures and practices without the guidance and agreement of veterinarians. The U.S. will not be eating the same food if changes are made that make food animal production and products cost too much to produce and maintain. Domestic animals are no longer wild and what is natural is now very different for them. So, we cannot argue about what is natural when it comes to many of these issues. Animals were domesticated to provide food and companionship for people, and both the animals and people have benefited greatly from this in several ways. I believe veterinarians should be the best source for animal health and welfare and should be leading changes made in animal rights and welfare.

Topic: Animal Welfare and Food Safety

Description:

The food animal industry needs to be more transparent. It will be interesting to see how well the AVMA Animal Welfare Committee addresses this and many other issues. It is my impression that they are, at least now, making an effort. My understanding is the HSVMA was formed as a result of the lack of response on the part of AVMA leadership to show leadership on the topic of animal welfare. I wonder which organization will win the race at being a representative and legitimate voice of veterinarians in this country?! I have to admit I was greatly disappointed of the news report of an individual with NO DVM credentials who was hired as a DVM for the USDA. What's up with this? Can the AVMA help prevent this from happening?

Topic: animal welfare disconnect between veterinarians and the public

Description:

We're supposed to be the experts on animal welfare - yet I see too many veterinarians towing the industry line rather than engaging in real debate regarding issues such as foie gras, brucellosis in bison ranging outside Yellowstone, antibiotics in animal feed, castration of young cattle/sheep/pigs without anesthesia, crowded conditions of housing in feedlots, regulation of puppy mills, confined housing for chickens, sows, etc,

Topic: Animal Welfare Factory Farming

Description:

Specifically related to factory farming (food) - humane and appropriate care and our sensitive and interested response - our defensive behavior toward animal welfare organization as they fight for their agenda - sensitive issue!

Topic: Animal welfare groups

Description:

These groups pressuring elected officials to regulate Veterinary procedures and medicine. They shouldn't determine what is accepted and legal.

Topic: Animal Welfare issues

Description:

This area in general will be a big one on how we will be able to utilize animals in the veterinary schools and research. It won't stop with just those, though. I think that we will be in for some real changes overall and especially in the food animal areas.

HSUS attacks on the humane treatment of animals, particularly food animals. HSUS has the emotional and financial advantage currently. Scientific knowledge, while factual, can seem cold and uncaring.

Veterinarians need to be fully aware and educated about all aspects of animal welfare issues so they may express rational solutions rather than emotional pleas which do not address all angles of the problem.

Growing public concerns about animal welfare place increasing pressures on the profession to come in line with societal views; while especially germane to production animal medicine, evolving cultural paradigms are impacting multiple segments of the profession, i.e., in food animal, companion animal and research settings.

Societal pressures are "running ahead" of good scientific information regarding these things. The AVMA needs to take an objective approach to all issues. I sense they are trying to establish such a posture publicly. Keep it up.

Those include cosmetic procedures--declawing and earcropping.

When I read an article about animal welfare, I look for quotes from veterinarians or AVMA. These rarely occur. I believe that the AVMA and the profession have lagged behind the public and advocacy groups on this issue. We either side with industry against the opinions of society, or we're afraid to be leaders for animal welfare. Veterinarians have lost the status of being the foremost experts on animal health and welfare. AVMA needs to be more progressive, and less beholden to industry. And we need to be at the front where the public can see us, and they may start looking to us again.

Topic: animal welfare legislation sponsored by animal rights groups

Description:

Animal rights activist sponsored legislation to define livestock welfare or to endow animals with legal status other than that of property threatens American food animal agriculture and opens companion animal veterinarians to lawsuits that can raise the cost of veterinary care to beyond affordable levels.

Topic: Animal welfare on the farm

Description:

Animal care and husbandry are important for consumers and producers but animal rights are an agenda item used incrementally to change our culture.

Topic: Animal welfare priorities

Description:

Animal welfare is a tricky subject. It is the profession's duty to advocate for humane care and treatment of all animals (companion, food, research) while being cautious not to anthropomorphize. Veterinarians are in a unique position to educate on issues such as proper food animal care and humane conditions and the need for animal based biomedical research. So called animal welfare advocates such as PETA and the HSUS should not be the only voices the public hears on these issues. Public sentiment against biomedical research and perceived negative conditions of food animals is on the rise and if not addressed, legislation limiting both scientific advances and adequate food supply could gain public approval.

Topic: animal welfare v. animal rights

Description:

Many localities have passed ordinances/laws defining rights for pets and other animals rather than my concern about animal welfare. The "animal rights" movement is a dangerous move toward tortitious awards in cases of animal death or less than expected results of veterinary care. I do not feel that an animal has unbridled intrinsic value beyond market value. For pets, there could be some value placed on companionship or other such value but it should have specio limitations such as a maximum of two or three times market value (or similar basis of valuation) but not tens of thousands or more in court damages.

For food animals, the issue comes down to making the production of food animals so expensive to produce that many economically disadvantaged people would not be able to afford the much higher costs in the marketplace to feed meat to their families. The apparent agendas of PETA, ALF, and similar groups is to economically force people to be vegetarians.

Topic: Animal Welfare vs. Animal Rights

Description:

I have grave concerns about the influence Animal Rightists are gaining in our society-----in the realm of government, the realm of public opinion (HSUS, PETA, Etc...), and even in the realm of professional organizations like the AVMA.

I have appreciated the largely "common sense" approach that the AVMA has taken to date, knowing that efforts have been made within the assembly of delegates to change AVMA's stance on Animal Rights. Keep up the good

Topic: Animal Welfare, well-being - setting the record straight

Description:

I know that this is already part of the strategic plan - but it needs to remain in the forefront. Movies like Food Inc and news coverage have painted animal industry in an unfavorable light. AVMA needs to take the leading role in establishing parameters that are scientifically evaluated to improve production practices. AVMA needs to work cooperatively with other organizations - AAAP, AABP, AASV, PSA, Animal Science organizations, etc. to become the experts in this field.

Topic: Animal Welfare/Animal Rights

Description:

The animal rights groups have a head start and are very powerful. We need a strong voice to counter the emotional rhetoric with science and facts.

Topic: Authority and Responsibility of (Licensed) Veterinarians in Determining

Description:

Most,if not all,states in the USA have a legal view of veterinarians as "Expert Witnesses" for animal health and well-being. This obviously includes "Animal Welfare". This would include reasonable medical care of animals, up to and including euthanasia. Veterinarians determine what are acceptable methods of euthanasia. Veterinarians may be asked to determine for a court of law whether actions by others constitute neglect or even cruelty to animals.

Topic: AVMA position on humane issues

Description:

We have a weak track record on this subject.

Topic: Balance between economics, animal welfare. veterinary practice and public

Description:

Problem of achieving the best for animals and people using good science relating to animal welfare and the changing emotional and cultural values of people for our companion animals and food animal production economics

Topic: Blurring of the lines between Welfare and Rights for animals

Description:

PETA and other organizations that resort to extremely violent or aggressive methods to bully their opinions into the medical treatment of animals will become more commonplace. This will not benefit anyone who is truly interested in the advancement of the humane and scientific care of animals, within industry for production or as companion pets.

Topic: Bucket including animal rights/welfare/non-economic damages

Description:

Lines between animal rights and animal welfare interests are becoming increasingly blurred. The European movement to consider animals as "sentient beings" will likely gain ground here, and terms such as "pet guardian" are becoming more prevalent. And, will we be able to continue to offer the types of services we are capable of that cost tens of thousands of dollars, yet state that a pet is only worth a couple of hundred dollars is something goes wrong?

Topic: change in pet owner status to guardian

Description:

If pet owners are successful in certain states in changing their status to "guardians", it will severely impact the profession in terms of malpractice insurance and cost of veterinary care.

Topic: Changes in the way animals are viewed

Description:

The new legislation ruling humans as animal guardians instead of animal owners will change the veterinary ethic. Humans will have a legal responsibility as well as a moral and ethical responsibility to provide medical care for their animals. This is okay as far as small animals are concerned, but to require a higher standard of care for food producing animals is a bit of a stretch. Animals are responsive to their environment. We do have a moral and ethical responsibility to provide them with the basic necessities: food, shelter and water. We need to be aware of their welfare and end suffering where we can, either through management of disease processes or through humane euthanasia. A rancher cannot be held to the same standards as a pet owner. Horses are both a companion animal and a production animal (performance horses). Guardians of a companion animal are willing to do what they can for their horse within their financial means. Guardians of production animals will only provide medical care up to the value of the animal. Economics drives the decision factor for the producer, and they should not have to meet the same standard as the companion animal care provider.

Topic: Combating animal rights activists and their agendas

Description:

Dealing with HSUS, PETA, ALF etc. They are pushing forth a vegan agenda for animal "rights" that is based on a dogma that all animals are equal (including humans). The long term affect of this could have extremely detrimental effects on our food supply and the cost of food. They represent a very vocal minority/special interest group of probably <1% of the population taking advantage of the ignorance of the silent majority suburbanites to pass emotionally driven legislation like proposition 2 in California and currently attempting similar in Ohio. The problem is complex and emotional. Veterinarians are being put on the defensive and having to choose sides. It is creating dissention in our industry. Small animal veterinarians will also have extremely higher liability insurance and passed on higher costs to clients if our companion animals ever receive the same legal equal rights status as humans. Medical research (human and veterinary) is already being harassed by animal rights activists around the world and it is ever increasing in the United States as evident by what has happened with the UCLA scientists in the recent past. Critical advances in bio-medical research will be very difficult to attain if researchers, companies and institutions are being threatened by extremists and regulations become too prohibitive (which we are already seeing with select agent regulations).

Topic: Dealing with the animal rights groups

Description:

Their efforts to change laws related to all domestic animals---horses, food animals, and small animals alike--- continue to threaten both owners rights and the ways veterinarians practice our profession. This will continue to require ongoing vigilance.

Topic: disposal of unwanted animals

Description:

Horses, in particular, are a hot button these days. But with increasing pressure to consider them "pets" (or surrogate children), it's becoming harder and harder for owners to find ways to humanely dispose of their old/ill/dangerous horse. Farmers also face barriers in disposing of livestock or large numbers of smaller livestock (environmental concerns are increasing). We need more channels for disposal, not fewer, but we need to find ways to do it that aren't cost-prohibitive or paperwork-intensive.

Topic: Effects of Animal Rights Groups on the Profession

Description:

So many different groups, from city boards to PETA, are trying to tell veterinarians what they can and can't do. I know that much is currently being done to address these concerns - but I really feel that things are only going to get worse before they get better. The further people are removed from a farming background, the less they understand about Animal Welfare.

Topic: Equating animals with people

Description:

I think we need to keep animals as animals and not equate them with people. We need to promote our role as stewards of animals not their equivalent.

Topic: Factory Farming, and Animal Welfare in the United States and Abroad

Description:

The AVMA has been weak on opinions and policies as they relate to animal welfare. We need to address the horrors of factory farming in this country, as well as the abuses of animals used in entertainment.

Topic: Farm animal welfare

Description:

Society is changing their opinion of how animal agriculture is managed. Veterinarians should be at the forefront of this change as they are seen as the principal advocates of animals. Neglecting animal welfare for the sake of industrial profits will prove disastrous to the reputation of the profession in the decades to come.

Topic: Food animal welfare issues

Description:

AVMA needs to refute the propaganda from animal rights groups, educate the public on animal welfare issues, point out where food animal welfare can be improved, educate veterinarians on food animal welfare issues, and educate the vast majority of small animal veterinarians.

Topic: Food animal well-being

Description:

Placing the role of food animals in the proper context and ensuring the proper balance between food safety, animal well-being, and cost of production - housing and production practices included

Topic: Growing strength of animal rights' activists

Description:

I am concerned that politically-motivated animal welfare groups are gaining strength in terms of changing core attributes of agriculture, animal handling/housing, etc. for the worse. Groups I am referring to include PETA, HSUS, etc. Such groups have the ear of politicians and sympathetic non-agriculture-type people who continually donate money in support of their "causes." I am afraid that the consequences of their actions will ultimately (and permanently) change the way food animals are raised, slaughtered, processed, etc. This not only adversely affects the animal, but will also adversely affect the food supply. I worry that people who have no idea what agriculture is all about will continue to have a significant negative impact on agriculture.

Topic: Guardian vs Owner issues

Description:

I feel this is very important and listing owners as guardians can drastically change the face of veterinary medicine, especially with livestock or horses.

Topic: Hijacking of organized vet med by the animal rights movement

Description:

Organized vet med should not, IMO, get involved in PETA-like activities. We should be advocates for improved animal welfare, absolutely, but not the very nebulous field of animal rights.

Topic: Horse slaughter

Description:

Need to be more represented when these issues are presented, and need to be more vocal! Need to come up with alternative for the thousands of unwanted horses.

It is abhorrent that thousands of horses have been abandoned or starved in the last few years which is partly due to economic downturn and the general collapse in horse values. There is also the explosion in the number of feral, "wild" horses in the western states that is causing environmental degradation threatening the viability of our indigenous species. Allowing horse slaughter is the only humane or economically viable outlet to reduce the various unwanted or excess horses in the US.

Topic: HSUS

Description:

The Humane Society of the United States is trying to shut animal agriculture down.

Topic: Humane care of food stock(veal hutch/gestation crates)

Description:

public awareness of poor housing and inhumane/substandard care

Topic: Humane Issues

Description:

The veterinary community needs to be a leader! Important issues include the export of equines for slaughter and the use of the captive bolt for killing of horses being made a conditionally accepted form of euthanasia in the AVMA guidelines, housing and medication use in farm animals, the castration of horses & farm animals by non-veterinarians, the use of elastrator bands, the use of live animals in teaching and research etc. The public perception that veterinary associations do not care enough about these humane issues will continue to get stronger this decade.

Topic: Humane treatment and welfare of Farm Animals

Description:

This portion of our profession has always been about economics over humane care. They are still way behind the "humane curve" as a group. The Ballot Proposition covering this topic (legislating some humane care standards for farm animals) in California last year passed overwhelmingly in spite of huge expenses by the industry to defeat it, so the public is very much aware. The CA VMA even came out against this Proposition until the membership overwhelmingly shouted them down. What a shame!

Topic: Humane treatment of animals

Description:

The profession must take a much more active (proactive) role in animal welfare, animal cruelty and animal welfare issues ranging from slaughter house abuses, puppy mills, tail docking in all species, ear cropping, etc.

Topic: humane treatment of farm animals

Description:

increase public awareness of how farm animals are treated and of current farming/animal husbandry practices will encourage the public and lawmakers to make changes in laws to protect these animals. The problem is how do we enforce/encourage farmers and food animal producers to follow new practices?

Topic: Increased focus on animal welfare

Description:

Veterinary medicine must move from a passive to an active role in this arena. Veterinarians must provide the scientific knowledge needed to objectively measure animal stress levels associated with various animal husbandry and handling systems.

Topic: Legal quest to allow pain and suffering in pet loss

Description:

Practicing good medicine and excellent record keeping will help if/when this push by the legal and private sector is ever realized.

Topic: Legislative issues from special interest groups

Description:

Many issues may put veterinarians in a difficult situation, looking like we are on the wrong side of an issue, especially animal welfare concerns. Misinformation or lack of information is rampant. We need to be more proactive in presenting the real facts

Topic: Livestock welfare/humane care

Description:

As the public is becoming more aware of the conditions of livestock in factory farming/mass production, I think we will have to reassess how we assist farmers in improving production while at the same time ensure that the animals are respected as sentient beings. The veterinary medical community has helped to create the poor conditions in which livestock are currently raised because we focused on economics and production rather than the welfare of the animals. Now we must lead the way in elevating the focus on humane animal care and husbandry. If these animals are giving up their lives for our sustenance, they at least deserve guardians during their short lives who protect their basic needs and kind treatment.

Topic: Loss of the animal welfare high ground

Description:

Animal use critics (e.g., HSUS, PETA, etc) are highly skilled in their public relations efforts. AVMA must somehow seize the high ground on animal welfare such that the public looks to us as the source for authoritative information. Unfortunately, science doesn't trump heart-rending visuals in the mind of the American people.

Topic: Making Animal Welfare a Standing Committee

Description:

The animal owning public looks to us to be the leaders in animal welfare. We do not speak with one voice on this matter but rather have opinions on one side about companion animals and another about food animal welfare. These two positions must be melded together in one ethic.

Topic: Narrow views of animal roles in society, and of our own:

Description:

Globalization, regionalization, acculturation: Veterinary students and veterinarians need to understand, as does the public, that "our" American values with respect to animals, agriculture, and public health needs are different than those in other nations. Indeed there are differences regionally, among states, cities and between the same that make the need to appreciate and accept other value systems essential. An urban, eastern companion animal veterinarian and his/her clientele should not condemn a rural, western food animal veterinarian and his/her clients. The profession needs to maintain a big tent and accept our own diversity and that of our client publics. This issue mirrors the political atmosphere in the nation as a whole.

Another example: hunting and trapping. The native peoples do it. The northeastern urban and suburbanites for the most part do not. The latter should not be lobbying and suing to stop the former from living their traditional lifestyles.

We need a big tent in the profession and as a microcosm for society in general we need to advocate for a big tent with respect to animal use and welfare generally.

Topic: Need for more humane treatment of animals

Description:

Need for more humane treatment of animals

Topic: Pet are Family Members

Description:

Pets are Family Members.
They are not "chattel" nor personal property.
There should be NO limit on legal values on pets lives.

We treat our pets as what they are, family members. There are no \$ limits on our pets, just like our brothers, sisters,mothrs or fathers, our pet are our family. This has been and will be met with great skepticism. However, if we can open our minds we can see how this will propel our profession into the next dimension. As leaders we MUST dispel the egregious thoughts and actions that suggest our pets are anything less than our family members.

Topic: PETA/Humane Society of the US

Description:

Passing laws that will make animal rights equal to human rights. Increase in lawsuits, malpractice insurance, etc.

Topic: Pets as Property

Description:

Having pet owners receive tort damages in malpractice claims would be the downfall of our profession as we know it. The cost of veterinary care would rise to a point where only the wealthy would be able to have pets. It will require constant vigilance to keep this from happening.

Topic: Poor attention to animal rights concerns

Description:

See above

Topic: Public must identify veterinary profession as "THE" experts in animal well-

Description:

Veterinarians are the best profession to characterize what is animal well-being and health. Many organizations, including animal rights organizations, spend much money and generate media attention to further their agendas that include focal issues and actually result in a decline in animal well-being. e.g. horse protection. AVMA & veterinarians need credibility & clout with politicians, regulators, and the public as the best profession to characterize animal well-being

Topic: Puppy Mill conditions

Description:

It has been very obvious that there are many large puppy mill producers of dogs in this country. Even though everyone agrees that the conditions are deplorable and that the animals are not treated humanely; they are still allowed to continue business without any regulation. The AVMA has been very weak in any stand against these practices. Any proposed laws that are put up for voting have been turned down because 'it would be detrimental to breeders.' I am a strong supporter of breeders who are responsible and conscientious. So why would good breeders be not supportive of laws and regulations to support them, and discourage the puppy mills. Puppy mill stores are also allowed to run their businesses without much regulation. I feel the AVMA should take a firmer stance with these situations, including more public education so that pet owners can make wiser choices when purchasing pets for their families. The AVMA states in many mailings to veterinarians that they are active in the legislative process in our government, however all I see is money spent on 'studies,' and no REAL ACTION. Why is the AVMA so scared to put it's foot down and actually help dictate the humane and responsible breeding of animals? It is my opinion that the AVMA has been very compliant and not PROACTIVE in it's overall message. Puppy Mills are a topic that has been discussed at length for decades, yet no new or substantial changes or regulation have been made.

Topic: Respected source of information on humane relations with animals

Description:

We need to have research proof supporting our positions on the issues that propel consumers to look to special interest groups to be their preferred animal advocates. Though they will always want those special interest groups because they feel a part of something that way, if we put out information that suggests a different set of facts on an issue, we need even that staunch supporter of HSUS to believe us.

Topic: Special Interest Group Influence of legislation

Description:

Special interest groups have started having quite a bit of influence in many areas that affect veterinary medicine.

1. Ending of USDA sanctioned horse slaughter has wreaked havoc on the horse market, and thus decreased the value of many animals that we practice on. I also see a drastic increase in animal neglect and a sharp decrease in condition of the horses at the lower end of the spectrum, which I feel is directly cause by the drop in horse prices.
2. Groups also are fighting against the use of live animals in veterinary schools, how are the future students supposed to learn without animals to use? When I went through schools, we partnered with the shelters and rescues to have students spay and neuter the animals available for adoption. These are the only live animal surgeries we were allowed to perform, and even this use, which I feel benefitted the students and the stray animal population was under fire by special interests such as PETA.

Topic: Split in profession over animal welfare issues

Description:

With the decreasing number of veterinarians with expertise or interest in food animal medicine, I have observed what I believe will be the most difficult challenge facing the profession in terms of its position on animal welfare issues involving animals raised for food and fiber: the objection from our own members about "humane" methods of raising animals raised for these purposes. From the method of housing, to husbandry practices, to the use of antibiotics, our less informed, or naive members are swayed by the increasingly biased and scientifically unsubstantiated view perpetuated by entities, like HSUS, interested in eliminating our ability to own animals for any purpose, and certainly not for purposes of food, fiber, entertainment or medical research. As important as science is or should be, to inform the associations positions and policies, and the laws governing the use of animals, the propaganda that capitalizes on the emotional component of these matters, has been the most successful tool used to sway public opinion, including the opinion of our small animal colleagues. I am uncertain of the best path forward, but, in my opinion, it must include the following:

1. Humans, are by nature, omnivores. The consumption of animal protein and use of animal fibers must not be villified. Recent attacks alleging that animal agriculture is the primary cause of global warming must be carefully and persuasively corrected [I know attempts to do so have begun].
2. The general public is not opposed to raising animals for human purposes, so long as they are treated "humanely" during their lives. The question is, who defines "humane" and more importantly, how do scientists prove that practices used to raise animals are "humane"?
3. HSUS and similar organizations must be exposed to reveal their true objectives. AVMA has been placed on the defensive and in that position, cannot prevail, no matter how scientifically correct their position is [e.g. response to the PEW Charitable Report, which was an excellent, point by point rebuttable of the biased report on the sustainability of animal agriculture].
4. Continued expansion into allied fields, including medicine and law is essential to educate professionals currently influenced by animal rights organizations.

What seems unfortunately clear to me, is that, if we remain on our current path, our food will be increasingly imported from other countries, where animal welfare and food safety are inconsequential

Topic: The animal rights movement

Description:

The animal rights movement will continue to gain ground, especially as the population becomes further removed from our rural/agrarian background. This will directly affect the cost of food production, lead to an array of expensive legal battles (on many grounds), delay or stop the legitimate use of animals in medical research, and potentially put many veterinarians in a "bad light." As a profession, we must promote animal welfare, while demote many of the agendas of the animal rights movement.

Topic: The loss of animal welfare expert legitimacy

Description:

The AVMA should not abandon common sense in favor of "science-based" policies. It should not be too closely aligned with agribusiness, which is making the veterinarian irrelevant in the direct care of farm animals. Industrial agriculture has turned farm animals into commodities, and the AVMA has supported policies that have allowed animals to be viewed as commodities. Animal science has replaced animal husbandry.

Animals are not commodities. The AVMA, and the veterinary profession, sacrifices its moral authority when it supports policies that treat animals like machines/commodities. The goodwill built by previous generations of veterinarians is being squandered by the current leadership.

The replacement of animal husbandry with animal science also results in negative economic and cultural consequences for our country. The AVMA should be paying more attention to the philosophies of people like Bernie Rollins and Wendell Berry.

Agribusiness likes to justify unsustainable and inhumane practices by saying "we have to feed the world". This statement is so disingenuous that it is offensive, and the AVMA is closely aligned with people who use this argument. Rather than addressing all the reasons this argument is specious, I'll simply say that veterinarians should accept responsibility for the oath they take upon entering the profession. That oath does not include increasing the supply of red meat to a population already suffering from obesity and heart disease epidemics.

Topic: The unwanted horse in the U.S

Description:

Closure of horse slaughter plants in the U.S. has produced a problem of lack of an ability to dispose of many horses. This has led to an overpopulation of unwanted horses, leading to increased cases of neglect, lack of veterinary care, and reduced value of horses.

Topic: Veterinarians are most qualified to approve subject species of research.

Description:

As federally-required "Attending Vet.s" and/or members of the IACUC* for an institution, a veterinarian will be called upon to approve, or not, a particular species and procedure for a proposed biomedical project.

*Institutional Animal Care & Use Committee

Topic: Veterinarians as influential animal welfare experts and advocates

Description:

Veterinarians need to take a central public position as an important resource and advocate for animal welfare. If we don't assume this role others will. We must expand our knowledge on welfare issues and provide comment to the public.

Category: AVMA Organization

Topic: Animal Communication

Description:

The AVMA should be leading the field in this emerging area.

Topic: Animal rights

Description:

I think the AVMA will have to have stronger positions regarding animal rights if the public is to respect our organization.

Topic: Animal welfare

Description:

The AVMA must continue the process of becoming a leader in the area of animal welfare. The organization has been dragged, kicking and screaming, into the fray--constantly on the defensive. This has had a deleterious effect on the public opinion of veterinarians. The recent activities (e.g., the welfare symposium) are steps in the right direction, but the AVMA must be much more aggressive by encouraging and supporting research in areas pertinent to this topic (animal cognition, pain perception, social needs of animals, alternatives to animal use in research, etc.) Passing position statements is a nice thing to do, but it means nothing if not followed by action. Ensure that animal welfare is embedded in the veterinary curriculum.

Animal welfare proponents within the AVMA seem increasingly to be aligned to animal rights positions

The AVMA should be the go-to place for all things related to animal welfare (food animals, shelter animals, breeding animals, laboratory animals, animals in disasters, etc.) The leadership for these issues is now in the hands of the humane groups--which have a different agenda and it isn't always based on evidence or scientific thought.

The shelter/rescue groups represent the source of the majority of new pets for owners to bring to their veterinarians. If the AVMA does not address shelter animal welfare and bridge the professional gap that exists between private practice vets and shelter vets, then many opportunities for revenue, improving animal welfare, and decreasing euthanasia will be missed. Euthanasia is the leading cause of mortality for dogs and cats--and the AVMA is not taking the leadership to address this problem. Instead, the leadership rests with humane groups--such as Maddies Fund and the HSUS. Agriculture education in our K-12 schools has fallen out of vogue--and the nature of animal welfare reflects the current lack of understanding the uneducated public has toward food production. We veterinarians need to promote agriculture education in the schools. We also need to actively teach humane education to students.

Mainstream issue in society now, AVMA should continue its increased presence in this field

Topic: animal welfare in food production

Description:

The AVMA has a duty to serve food industry veterinarians but also to lead the way in supporting good animal welfare in food production. These are not incompatible views. Don't be afraid of change! Rather, the AVMA needs to embrace and be at the forefront of addressing public concerns about animal care and management on combined animal feeding operations (CAFOs) and so-called 'factory farms.'

Topic: AVMA Governance

Description:

AVMA governance has the appearance to many as the "good old boy system".

1. Term limits need to be strongly considered.
2. The "who you know" and "what have you done for me" system of getting elected needs to be evaluated and changed.

Topic: AVMA governing structure AND Debt/Salary Ratio

Description:

The governing structure of the AVMA inhibits the infusion of energy and new ideas into the organization. It also makes it hard for the average veterinarian to engage with the AVMA leadership and its decision-making process. It shouldn't be difficult to determine how to influence AVMA policy or who to contact if wanting to express a viewpoint. Encouraging more activism and engagement among members might revitalize the organization. ALSO- talent will not enter the profession if the economic prospects are poor. Given the downward pressures on state budgets, debt is unlikely to decrease, unless the AVMA loosens its standards of accreditation. Therefore, veterinarians have to increase salaries. Doing so will require greater business education and the availability of technical nursing manpower to improve efficiency. Schools should consider requiring students to take a course on some kind of basic business operational and managerial efficiency training and personal finance.

Topic: AVMA is corrupted by corporate donations and influence

Description:

There are pharmaceutical and pet food companies that have given AVMA millions of dollars over the years. Why does AVMA accept corporate money? What are the companies expecting in return? The AVMA has been silent on this issue, while in the human medical field doctors and schools are trying to divest themselves of outside influence. Some medical schools have kicked the companies off campus. Other groups have weaned their meetings from corporate sponsorship. More and more doctors refuse to accept gifts, from travel to seminars down to pens and stationery. What do the human doctors know that we don't know?

Topic: AVMA membership

Description:

Many vets (associates) are struggling to maintain membership in these times due to high costs of everything. Renewing was a task for me with the bills I've got and I know DVMs who no longer belong to AVMA for the same reason.

Topic: AVMA must strive to represent its members in an equitable manner

Description:

...from the smallest office to the largest group practice without bending to influence from any one of these factions. The core value represented here is neutrality in representation.

Topic: AVMA out of touch

Description:

AVMA has always been rumored to be a "good old boy" group with mostly middle-age to older white men in charge of the organization and most committees. The longer people serve on AVMA boards and committees, the more insulated they become from their colleagues. AVMA is often way behind on issues and months to years can elapse between something that's in the media or being discussed in society and AVMA responding, often with a bland, noncontroversial stance. Do the leaders of AVMA ever ask themselves why we (veterinarians) should belong to the group? Is it only for the insurance or group benefits? If the AVMA did not offer insurance, how many members would leave?

Topic: AVMA relation to Humane Society (animal rights)

Description:

The AVMA must diplomatically and quietly distance itself from the Humane Society. The Humane Society, as you know, is a major player in animal rights. I believe the organization does so subtly and most people are unaware of its true objectives. Most people still see it as the organization that rescues abandoned animals.

While the Humane Society has the wherewithal to stage a public smear campaign of the AVMA if the AVMA came out against the Humane Society, the AVMA must keep the humane society at arm's length. It must not partner with the humane society at any level.

Animals do not have rights.

The humane society is slowly creeping into local politics and attempting to change laws in that manner. They are also slowly advancing and extending their non-profit cause and care to more pet owners. I can not compete with the cost of a humane society vaccine or spay/neuter clinic. Their services continue to expand to more advanced care and eat into my revenue.

Topic: AVMA's position on modern scientific food and fiber animal production

Description:

To date, AVMA has been generally supportive of modern scientific methods of efficient food animal production. Pressure is mounting against these practices from misinformed segments of the population and those with covert agendas, and will continue to mount in the future, not only from outside of the profession but increasingly from within the profession as the demographics of the profession change. Will AVMA continue to support scientific, efficient practices to provide a hungry world with wholesome high quality protein, especially in view of the fact that the proportion of the profession involved in food animal production and medicine will likely continue to decline?

Topic: AVMA's responsibilities to members

Description:

I feel the AVMA does not truly represent my interests as a practicing veterinarian. The organization needs to put the interests of its members above any corporate or industry interests. There are decisions being made by people I have not voted for that effect me in negative ways. I'm a 30+ year member of this organization and up until a couple of years ago I felt comfortable with the AVMA's representation. But the pet insurance debacle and now the possible manipulations by a corporation to lower accreditation standards have me rethinking my faith in the organization. Since I practice in CA, I know well the pressures Banfield tried to put on our legislature and board to accept substandard veterinarians. We successfully fought this bold attempt to lower the quality of our profession. Now it seems that this same company is trying to make an "end run" around the states' requirements by manipulating the accreditation process that AVMA has long upheld. This is an affront to practicing veterinarians and vet students who will have to compete for jobs that will pay less due to the cheap labor Banfield will import. Here in CA we are well aware of this labor tactic and sick and tired of our citizens losing jobs to foreign nationals. I feel it is the AVMA's job to insure that any and all schools are held to the same standards that our US school are held to. No exceptions!! The AVMA's decision on this will be pivotal in my decision on continuing my membership. I truly hope that the AVMA doesn't make the same mistake the AMA did years ago when big insurance interests, drug company interests, and hospital corporation interests steared that organization's focus away from it members. That resulted in the loss of many members and to this day the majority of MD's in the US are not members of the AMA. Sad.

Topic: AVMF monies

Description:

Need to be awarded according to merit and need as opposed to awarding monies to those with most political pull ... read VMAT. Pet Safe was refused monies on Long Island and NYSVMA was refused monies. Instead monies went to those organizations that were "connected" Its such a shame because a good organization like Pet Safe that could have helped hundreds of needy pets and people was refused because of politics. I am truly no naive but i hope things could be changed....but then back in the sixties, we all did

Topic: Communication, Communication, Communication

Description:

For the AVMA to continue as a member service organization it is imperative that the AVMA continuously take the pulse of the membership. Any and all means of communication should be goal 1 for this organization, and that includes communication to state and local VMA's as well as direct to the AVMA member. The focus of AVMA's strategic goal or plan shouldn't be "what will the AVMA look like in 5, 10 or 20 years", but "what will the AVMA member need us to be in 5, 10 or 20 years? and "how will we as an organization be able to recognize and quickly respond to those needs". A subtle difference, sure, but focusing on the member will assure the AVMA continues to be a strong unified voice for our diverse profession.

Topic: Complementary/Alternative/Integrative Veterinary Medicine (CAVM) support

Description:

There are many issues concerning CAVM that need to be addressed. Firstly the different modalities of CAVM including but not limited to acupuncture, Chinese herbal medicine, chiropractic, massage, homeopathy, homotoxicology, etc need to be recognized as different yet valid aspects of veterinary medicine by the AVMA and veterinarians as a whole. These treatment methods have helped many veterinary patients and are becoming mainstream and more important in human medicine. The same is happening with veterinary medicine but practitioners, including myself are not always receiving the same support from their colleagues as some human practitioners receive.

The AVMA can help this issue by recognizing the need for boarded specialists in these fields and by allowing the different specialty groups (such as the AAVA, American Academy of Veterinary Acupuncture) to form the basis for charter groups (such as the AAVA Fellows, of which I am a member) to create these boards. I think if the AVMA recognizes a specialty group important enough to form a Board of Specialists, then many veterinary colleagues will follow suit and also recognize their importance. This will allow more stringent guidelines for the use of these modalities and will help those veterinarians who are truly serious about using them and who want to become Certified (and later on Boarded). For example, I know many veterinarians who have taken a few quickie courses in acupuncture or "who have read a book on it" and claim they practice veterinary acupuncture. They have done this mostly so that they can make money on the treatment and feel they do not have to refer. This is a disservice to the patient, to the client, to the veterinarian (such as myself) who has spent years practicing acupuncture to become the best veterinary acupuncturist possible, and to veterinary medicine as a whole.

One does not see general practitioners touting they can perform cataract surgery, or perform a total hip replacement. If they are able to perform these surgeries, then they must be upfront and explain they are not board certified (or board eligible). The same high standards should be used for CAVM. Thus CAVM needs to be recognized as valid and higher standards for the veterinarians using them need to be maintained.

Topic: Computers/Technology

Description:

Individuals seemed to have embraced paperless practice, computerization and the internet but our AVMA seems to have let it slip through their fingers. The service that is paid for on VIN should have been started on NOAH and the AVMA should attempt to integrate with them. I fear this lack of response may be due to an older group of veterinarians within the inner workings of the AVMA who just have no interest or knowledge of how to join the internet generation. Our profession should be starting easily accessible databases of information, even very simplistic ones could be helpful.

Topic: Connectivity

Description:

AVMA needs to find a way to keep in touch with its constituency. To consider the opinions of its members before doing things like partnering with a pet insurance company and online health sites. The majority is strongly opposed to these actions and most members were blind-sided by the decisions.

Topic: Continuing Ed

Description:

I hope the AVMA will continue to provide excellent continuing education in the form of the Journal and meetings.

Topic: Corporate influence on the AVMA

Description:

Banfield using vet schools as employee mills.

Topic: Cost of AVMA membership

Description:

Raising the cost of membership \$50 (I am told) is not a healthy thing to be doing at this time. It would be better to decrease services.

Topic: Creating a more efficient and effective AVMA

Description:

The AVMA could use a major overhaul. I am amazed at the staffing. The journals are second class and have bloated staffing. They need a total make over. My few interactions with many staff are they are clueless about the big picture in the health sciences.

Topic: Decent, affordable health care.

Description:

The AVMA health care is not affordable anymore especially for new graduates. \$1,500 deductibles are ridiculous.

Topic: decrease in professional membership in AVMA

Description:

More veterinarians will resent the inefficient use of our (increased) dues and will seek professional information and insurance opportunities elsewhere. It is increasingly less cost-effective to belong to the AVMA (see also issue #1).

Topic: Demonization of animal agriculture

Description:

AVMA has generally responded with good science in support of animal agriculture. This may not be enough, especially if the driving impetus behind AVMA's scientific support is politically challenged within the HOD.

Topic: Disconnect between segments of the profession

Description:

When veterinary medicine first became professionalized (i.e., became a profession requiring a formal education and licensure), most veterinarians still practiced in the James Herriott model of mixed animal community practice. We were all much the same and had the same issues and concerns. Today, we are a mishmash of companion animal veterinarians, production animal veterinarians; primary care veterinarians and veterinary specialists; clinical practitioners, non-clinical practitioners, and researchers/educators. Every day, these disparate groups conflict with each other, sometimes to the point of splintering off from the mainstream profession (e.g., the conflict between veterinarians who believe in animal rights and veterinarians who believe that animals are resources to be managed to maximum efficiency for the benefit of humanity. Primary care veterinarians find themselves competing with specialists rather than cooperating to provide the highest standard of care to patients. We have lost an understanding of every aspect of the veterinary profession that is to our detriment and will, if not reversed, lead to the splintering of our profession into subgroups based on type of practices or ethical/moral viewpoint.

Topic: Disinterest of young veterinarians in organized vet med

Description:

Young veterinarians don't want to spend the time that running organizations (private practice, veterinary organizations, etc.) requires.

Topic: Diversity

Description:

The AVMA needs to actively address inclusion of people of all races, gender, culture and professional background. Talking about it and actively integrating and implementing effective strategies are two different things. AVMA needs to design a path forward that removes obstacles and truly engages professionals from all levels of every diverse sector of our profession as well as those of both genders and all races and cultures. Without serious attention to this issue, AVMA will continue to reflect an image that is not consistent with those who make up the active profession of veterinary medicine.

Topic: Diversity w/in AVMA Leadership

Description:

Mechanism to attain leadership positions w/in AVMA is outdated. Current leaders still not technically savvy and not listening to those that are. Too much thick documentation as proof of job well done. Save a tree.

Topic: Does the AVMA represent me and my interests?

Description:

What does the AVMA do to address my concerns as listed above? I understand there has been passage of a federal bill to help out with education debts for those veterinarians working in rural, income depressed areas. What has the AVMA done to ensure the funding of this passage the past few years? Obviously not enough because it has not been funded. But they have been able to take enough time to examine and look at accrediting a school in Mexico.

Timely dispensing of information especially regarding drug recalls. The AVMA truly has dropped the ball on informing its members about drug recalls and other aspects that affect us greatly. Thank goodness for VIN otherwise I would have had no clue. I work relief and was able to work with several clinics not on VIN to get them the information they needed to pull the recalled drugs from the shelves.

What is the AVMA going to do to limit the corporate influence on their actions and decisions and speak for its members? To provide its members with an openness and honesty for ALL of its actions (accreditation!!).

Topic: Embracing Diversity while Maintaining a Common Voice

Description:

Sometimes I feel like our own worst enemy is ourselves. Each specialty or species group has their own interests, rather than using the scientific education they were provided to look for the common good. How can we be better? If we, as AVMA can't have a consensus, it makes all of our decisions look bad.

Topic: Fight Professional Fragmentation

Description:

It's an understatement to say that Veterinary Medicine is an extremely diverse profession. Our very broad training prepares us for many walks in life and is one of the reasons why this is such a wonderful profession. But, it also creates the risk of fragmenting and polarizing us, making us not understand each other unless we create opportunities to nurture interactions and relationships. Hence, we have organized Veterinary Medicine. These relationships are especially important in the face of rumors and ripples of discontent within the Veterinary Community that could cause our further fragmentation. That would be unfortunate for now is just when we need to all join hands and work together to keep Veterinary Medicine strong in every arena, especially with today's legislative issues and in our litigious environment.

Topic: Focus on helping all facets of the profession cope with this poor economy

Description:

I think this is one area that the AVMA is doing a good job on. With the practice analysis website and legislative lobbying, the AVMA has upheld my interests. The organizations just need to continue supporting these efforts.

Topic: Food animal mis-information

Description:

Animal agriculture is under attack from organizations like HSUS and PETA. AVMA could be a voice in balancing mis-information about animal agriculture.

Topic: Fracture of the Profession

Description:

Given the many facets served by veterinarians, I for see the potential for serious factions with opposing views to become more prominent in the profession. Examples include animal rights, food safety, antimicrobial resistance to name a few.

Topic: Greater leadership roles for women in veterinary organizations.

Description:

We need a greater number of women in the top leadership positions in our local and national organizations.

Topic: growing division within the profession

Description:

As veterinarians become more specialized and less uniform, each group clamors that it should be heard above others. Each group demands more and more attention to its specific issues. There are individuals and groups who prefer to sow division and discord over the issues instead of playing constructive roles in developing solutions - they choose to perpetuate rumors, gossip and conspiracy theories that spread virally and increase discord. There is a growing concern about the relevance of organized veterinary medicine when the associations/groups cannot address every issue that is important to that individual. The profession as a whole has lost its unity in favor of selfishness and isolationism.

Topic: having a national vet organization represent the basic tenet of Vet Medicine

Description:

The AVMA is silent on so many aspects of ongoing animal torture. Farm animals are housed in horrendous conditions & when the veterinarians ask their national association to take a position it is impotent to voice an objection on the basic tenet that all veterinarians SHOULD, BY THE VERY NATURE OF THEIR PROFESSION be the ANIMALS advocate; all animals advocate!!

Topic: How to engage the "entire profession" in it's future?

Description:

Because of the rapid changes in the gender and generational make up of today's veterinarian, there seems to be a disconnect with the big picture in favour of splintering into smaller and smaller groups based on either species or discipline. Beginning with pre veterinary students and continuing through the entire life span, we need to find a way to engage our fellow professionals in this work. A great deal of effort needs to take place from AVMA outward to engage these groups to see, engage and work towards our profession generically rather than the narrow lines now being taken.

Topic: Increasing cost of liability insurance

Description:

Ever-increasing AVMA dues REQUIRED to have AVMA-PLIT

Topic: Increasingly contentious public eager to sue or threaten

Description:

Problem with society in general has hit the vet profession big time. Unreasonable standard of maintenance of written records, where every single word must be recorded to protect yourself. Where was AVMA's influence in representing our side with Informed Consent and Red Flags rules?

Topic: Influence of corporations in associations and government oversight

Description:

There is a disturbing increase of instances where corporations are directing organizations and associations to fulfill their own agendas. One blatant example was where the California state board appeared to work on the behalf Banfield in the complaint against Karen Zagorsky. None of the state or national organizations did anything to help the individual practitioner who had to stand against not only the state board but Banfield too. Shame on you all. Associations are supposed to be there to support your members or at least those most vulnerable.

Another example is the work of the AVMA on the behalf of Banfield to accredit National Autonomous University of Mexico (UnAM). At this time when more and more veterinary students are graduating with large debt burdens the AVMA appears complicate in allowing foreign veterinarians to enter the work force at lower wages and little to no debt. Again our national organization fails to look after the interests of it's members and graduates of American universities.

Topic: Insurance and Corporate Interests

Description:

Large organizations will have too much influence over organizations like the AVMA that should be looking out for it's individual members and not "thought leaders."

Topic: Internet Pharmacies

Description:

Need to try to establish a AVMA based internet pharmacy that will directly compete with 1800petmeds. This might enable more reasonable use of internet pharmacy in the future.

Topic: INVOLVING more members, especially getting younger folks in leadership

Description:

I have often heard my colleagues say that the leadership at the AVMA does not 'look like them' and so they are not compelled to participate. Yet, the leadership will 'never' look like them unless they get involved and active. The relevance and importance of participation in organized Veterinary Medicine needs to be made very clear to Vet students and New Grads since many of us never had it pointed out to us and never realized that the way to be involved at a national level has historically required first being involved at the state level. It seems that AVMA committees and councils are only fed by the state organizations, leaving some who chose not to be involved at the state level (state associations can sometimes be cliqueish) marginalized and unable to really have their voices heard at the national level. AVMA is so much more dynamic and interactive since DeHaven came on board; with this survey, for the first time I am aware of in over 25 years of membership, AVMA is seeking input directly from the grass roots members. More of this needs to happen and committees and councils need to recruit more from the general membership, not just be fed by the state associations.

Topic: Involving the upcoming veterinary generation in organized vet med

Description:

As you look around the room in any meeting of organized veterinary medicine most of those that participate are male veterinarians over 50. In order for our profession to stay viable in is imperative that methods be developed to include and encourage participation by those who are coming behind us.

Topic: Keeping the profession unified

Description:

I hear too many colleagues complaining about the membership fees and asking, "Why do I need the AVMA?" I believe it is extremely important for the AVMA to maintain the "umbrella" control over specialties, accreditation of Veterinary Technicians and Veterinary Assistants, accreditation of training programs, etc. Every effort must be made to market and promote the AVMA well..both to the public and to our new graduates. The AVMA must continue to be the professional authority and to set the standards.

Topic: Lack of science in agricultural, antibiotic and animal welfare legislation

Description:

AVMA is doing better on this, but needs to expand visibility and promote expertise.

Topic: Lack of Unity among Vet Med Disciplines

Description:

Division amongst vet med disciplines. Each small group of vet med practitioners (public sector, small animal private practice, mixed animal, food animal, industry, equine, vet med universities) have had different needs and have acted as small groups or managed themselves locally. The nature of vet med does not allow practitioners to meet frequently, efforts need to be made to consolidate veterinarians so that AVMA speaks for a majority and we do not wake up one morning without having a say in our livelihood....legislation, corporate owned, etc. (Read Pion below). Many veterinarians lack leadership, management, and training skills. Veterinarians are generally competitive with each other which in the long run will mean non-veterinarian organizations will have managing control. I support generalist testing not tracking. I do not support the foreign vet med school certification and development. I worry about organized lobby groups dictating procedures we can perform and breed specific legislation.

Topic: Lay dentists in equine medicine and other lay people working on animals

Description:

We need more representation of veterinarians at the state and local level. Also, the AVMA and other organizations such as the AAEP need to work together. We either need to stop these lay people or get them licensed and insured in the proper manner.

Topic: Leadership

Description:

The AVMA has displayed a paucity of leadership with regards to fighting the HSUS on animal rights/animal use issues.

Topic: Leadership succession planning

Description:

Leadership begins in the workplace at the local level, and extends to the AVMA and AVMF at the national level. We need to learn how to adequately help mentor individuals to become future leaders, whether that's at the level of the veterinary clinic or the national level. We need to weed out people interested in furthering themselves more than furthering the profession and causes that advance the art and practice of veterinary medicine to keep animals and people healthy. I have many ideas about leadership development and succession planning.

Topic: Legislative issues

Description:

We must stay on top of legislative issues that affect veterinary medicine at all levels. It is difficult to get most veterinarians interested in politics unless the issue is a "pocket-book issue". Therefore we must keep veterinarians informed regarding the legislative issues that can result in a detrimental outcome for the profession.

Topic: Legislative issues - politics

Description:

Veterinarians must remain proactive in the political arena. This is ever changing and veterinary medicine must be well represented in this arena.

Topic: Lobbying

Description:

I feel it is important to maintain a presence with our government officials to explain our views.

Topic: Maintaining a unified voice to represent the veterinary profession

Description:

Topic: Maintaining a united front for the profession

Description:

The AVMA enjoys one of the largest memberships proportional to the size of the underlying profession among U.S. professional associations. However, discontent with AVMA's representation of the profession has led to the creation of splinter groups (e.g., HSVMA) and more veterinarians looking for alternative organizations that are more focused on their interests and views. Recent decisions by AVMA such as threatening legal action against the Veterinary Information Network's news service have demonstrated that AVMA can be seriously tone deaf about how its actions are perceived by the profession. Two years ago, the Member Services Committee and the Council on Communications jointly recommended to the Executive Board that the AVMA pursue a policy of transparency in its decision-making and other activities. Today, the Executive Board has adopted a weak, watered-down transparency policy and the Council on Communications has been eliminated in favor of a Communications Division overseen only by AVMA staff and indirectly by the Executive Board. AVMA is losing its luster as the organization that speaks for veterinarians in the United States, and it will only regain its shine through genuine openness about the policy-setting process and by becoming more accountable to the general membership instead of the leadership of state VMAs.

Topic: Member Benefits

Description:

More members is key to a viable and robust association and we need to look for ways to increase benefits and reasons for more vets to join association. There is more power as a group and more financing for our causes.

Topic: Natural or "man made disaster" relief readiness

Description:

Since 9-11 most of us has a constant fear what our profession going to do in case of a disaster ("kathryna" was another example).will be nice if the AVMA offer some seminars in future meetings about this topics.I know that there are DVD-s available but I know my own situations that I do not have the time and patience to watch them and I think seminars are much more effective.

Topic: Organized Veterinary Medicine's Contributions

Description:

We have to continue to reinforce the need for, and power of, organized veterinary medicine. The splintering of the profession serves the purposes of those seeking to diminish it.

Topic: PETA, Animal Rights Groups

Description:

We need a STRONG public relations program. I realize we will never be able to spend the millions that PETA does but we need to do something. The animal rights groups will do nothing but hurt our profession. We need to counter that.

Topic: professional dues increase

Description:

How can the AVMA justify an increase in dues? Why don't you/we cut some unnecessary costs such as the glossy bimonthly magazine? Most of us would prefer to view this information on-line rather than in the expensive glossy paper format that is immediately recycled. Production and publication staff and costs could be minimized for the greater good of the AVMA membership. At the very least, a nominal discount should be offered to those of us who would be happy to save the paper, printing, and mailing costs, and resent the mandatory waste of our professional dues for this purpose.

Topic: Providing food animal, teaching and public health DVMs

Description:

The government and AVMA need to institute some real changes fast or we as a nation are in a serious corner.

Topic: Public Education

Description:

The AVMA needs to be let the public know who they are and keep on the political forefront supporting the veterinarians that help keep the national food supply safe and support the farmers/ranchers that care for the

Topic: Reassurance of focus and commitment in Ag-related issues

Description:

The general misconception among food-producing veterinarians is that the AVMA is not focused and committed to being an advocate of these veterinarians on agriculturally related issues. This was my misconception until I began employment with the AVMA. The communications department is working hard. But, the current programs established in the communications division do not appeal to these veterinarians especially when these programs circulate one-sided, pro-HSUS/PETA editorials or special reports on agriculturally related issues. These need to be further policed to ensure that both sides of the story are fairly represented. If both sides are not fairly represented, then the respective editorial/report shall not be recognized or distributed by the AVMA.

Topic: Relationships between state VMAs and the AVMA

Description:

If the AVMA wishes to continue to develop future leaders on a national level, the most fruitful recruiting grounds are the state VMA's. State VMA's need the support and cooperation of the AVMA in the recruitment, nomination, and election of leaders within the profession.

Topic: Relocation of the AVMA Schaumburg location

Description:

Indeed, we have a nice building and "centralized" location. However, the cost of living and expense of maintaining an office at this location is ridiculous. Furthermore, Chicago is the LAST place travelers want to fly in and out of during the winter months due to snow delays, etc. Further to this, the salaries and benefits paid to employees is ate up by the cost of living here; therefore, the "best and brightest" are not being attracted to positions that do not meet the competitive standards of other employment opportunities of various locations. If the AVMA remains located here, then we need to reduce the occupation of this building by establishing off-site, work-from-home positions that do not require presence at the Schaumburg location. The cost of the home office will be absorbed by the employee, not the AVMA. This will provide more office space for rent and free up funds that would be better used to support other programs rather than on-site office space.

Topic: Status of Veterinarians as a class of Professionals

Description:

Veterinarians tend to be trusted more by the public than M.D.s or attorneys, but their legal and ethical obligations are often unknown or misrepresented. We should, as an organization of professionals, make this aspect of veterinary practice clear. Veterinarians may need the support of the AVMA in the future more than ever in this coming era of a constricted economy with a burgeoning "animal rights" movement which is heavily funded and acquires more funds and voters all the time.

Topic: Stronger leadership

Description:

We are facing many issues. I feel that special interest groups are taking control of the general public on animal welfare and environmental issue to be precise. In some instances, I feel our leadership has ignored problems instead of tackling them head on. I feel leadership is sometimes more concerned with maintaining the Status Quo of the profession as to not disrupt veterinarians or interested parties. I feel leadership needs to seek expertise from outside the industry as well as from within to be considered credible in the eyes of their constituents and the public. Professional organizations in this industry leadership sometimes seems more concerned about protecting the professional and not the profession. Protecting the latter may certainly cause disruption of the constituents, but long term will improve veterinary medicine. BEING DISRUPTIVE Creates positive/successful change! Finally, I fear that if we don't do a better job self-regulating our profession, Someone bigger than us will come in and regulate it for us....this would kill our independent spirit and possibly segments of our industry.

Topic: Support CAVM

Description:

I'd like to see AVMA embrace the public's increasing use of complementary/alternative medicine. Acknowledgement by the AVMA would echo recommendations in human medicine (from the Institute of Medicine and other advisory bodies) to increase training of physicians in these techniques.

Currently, the AAVSB (via RACE) is making it difficult for veterinarians to get training and continuing education in these areas. RACE is denying approval and holding training programs 'hostage' by delaying approval to acupuncture, herbal medicine, and homeopathic programs. This is occurring while nonveterinarians are offering their services in acupuncture, chiropractic, herbal medicine, homeopathy, etc., to the public without benefit of veterinary training.

In my state (WA) the board won't approve any CE from a holistic veterinary association that is not currently listed as approved by AVMA. The Academy of Veterinary Homeopathy for example has approved CE with many states, but our state says it's not "on the list", so they cannot approve any CE from the annual conference.

Are we willing to leave the alternative veterinary modality to non-veterinarians?

Topic: Support for practicing veterinarians

Description:

Veterinarians in private practice need more programs related to business management, time management, and lifestyle quality management that are provided by the AVMA. These programs come at a high price as a result of special sessions at CE events or consultant fees. We need to develop staff positions that will work focus on these areas, produce reliable information and effective results, and provide this specialty support as a service for our members without further tapping their pocket books and enslaving them to their profession to pay for these

Topic: Support Veterinarians that Choose to Raise their own children

Description:

Our profession needs to support veterinarians-yes mainly women, that leave the profession for months-years to raise their own children. Lower membership fees during maternity and extended leave will help retain women that would stop paying dues to save money. Staying at home to raise my own children is the most important and best job I will ever have. However, it is a financial hardship. Why should seniors with retirement plans have reduced membership dues when I am making less than \$10,000 dollars a year and raising my own children pay full dues? That makes no sense.

Topic: Taking high debt and low income seriously

Description:

I would be shocked if other veterinarians were not seriously concerned about the above issues. However, outside of personal action (climbing the corporate ladder or getting specialized), until there is a critical mass addressing these issues, we will continue to wander.

Topic: The gender shift/lack of publicity

Description:

Not only for the next 5 years but also far into the future. A large influx of women (myself included) are already affecting previous generations who want to sell and retire. This is a more mobile population (moving with non-vet spouses) willing to work part time in order to engage in child rearing at the same time. Surely a profession/job force has not seen such a huge shift since WWII and Rosie the Riveter!
HOWEVER we need to celebrate and publicize this! We should engage/interest a major media news program to report on this (60 minutes, 20/20 are two that come to mind). I could envision a show using the teaser "Bet you can't guess what traditionally male profession has been taken over by women, the answer will surprise you." I also would love to see (in the same show) a segment that starts with physicians & dentists of different specialties explaining why their dream of being a veterinarian wasn't realized. I have quite a few of them as clients and they all said it was because THEY DID NOT HAVE THE GRADES. Can you even imagine a show that opens with something like "Here are 3 people in the medical field, a neurosurgeon a periodontist and a veterinarian, guess which of these was the highest academic achiever." We should publicize the "brains" of our profession and let the public know what a truly exclusive "club" we are. This of course could be expanded to show the specialties that have evolved and the broad range of jobs that vets can engage in, research, government, military, industry etc. The world's best and brightest go into this profession...lets show off! This is a horn we must toot!

Topic: The Image of the AVMA

Description:

The AVMA has appeared weak, and actually inhumane, in for example, not taking a position on Prop 2 in California; on their decision to proceed with the "Flying Fish" exhibit at the AVMA conference last year- and not coming out against some of the most horrific farming practices, including foie gras production. The people making the decisions need to re-evaluate why they went into this profession, or at the very least, hire a public relations firm.

Topic: The increasing role of women inside organized veterinary medicine

Description:

The governing VMA gender is male, while females are increasing in numbers in practice. Lets come up with a way to incorporate more women in leadership roles in the AVMA and thus across the profession.

Topic: Trend toward mediocrity

Description:

Income limits in practices plus the unwarranted belief that veterinary medicine (VM) is considered to be a sub-standard profession ("Why didn't you become a real doc?") will continue to limit VM's reach for excellence. We should work more toward changing the public perception. But rather than advertise (and that still may help), the AVMA should be partnering with it's professional colleges (e.g. ACVPM, ACLAM, AVP, ACVS, etc) and work with them to focus the message. Highlight our strengths and differences from human medicine. For example, we're much more efficient since we have little insurance companies to deal with, thus less paperwork, less litigation and therefore the minimum is needed to diagnose something and that is worked out between the clinician and the client. Whereas in human med, many tests are ordered (shotgun approach) and cutting edge technology is used up front rather than after standard technology is used.

Topic: Unified

Description:

The AVMA must still represent all veterinarians-especially those involved in agriculture-not special interest groups. I went into veterinary medicine to help provide safe, healthy food for the American people. I need support from the AVMA to do so.

Topic: Unrepresentative society democracy

Description:

Two words: John Ensign. If we are constantly seen as in the hip pocket of one party or another, we will be taken for granted by one and ignored by both. I do not support AVMA-PAC because they are constantly supporting causes and people who are not worthy of us.

Topic: Vaccinations

Description:

The AVMA should update their report on vaccine guidelines and consider recommendations on vaccines titers. As you well know, vaccinations are intended for healthy animals only, since animals need a healthy immune system to respond to the vaccines. Yet veterinary practitioners are over-vaccinating compromised animals, like animals with cancer, auto-immune diseases, allergies etc. ... compromising further their health and sometimes creating deadly reactions. In spite of JAVMA articles showing increases in vaccine reactions in dogs and cats less than 20lb, veterinarians still give multiple vaccines to these pets in one visit. This is contrary to our veterinary oath! The public is growing increasingly aware of the evidence and expecting their veterinarians to be aware as well. It is time for the AVMA to update their guidelines on this issue.

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The AVMA should take a position on Vaccinations guidance and the acceptance of Vaccines Titers. As you well know, Vaccinations are intended for healthy animals only, since animals need a healthy immune system to respond to the vaccines. Yet Veterinary Practitioners are over-vaccinating compromised animals: i.e. during surgery, animals with Cancer, with Auto-Immune Diseases, with Allergies etc ..., compromising further their health and sometimes creating deadly reactions. This is contrary to our Veterinary oath! The public is very unhappy about this and realizes it does not make common sense. This often leads them to search for the care of a Veterinarian practicing Alternative Medicine. It is time for the AVMA to open its eyes and address this issue.

Category: Economic Viability

Topic: \$ The public's perception of how much vets cost = keep us off the farm

Description:

If I didn't have to pay so much for my education, I could probably charge just a little less for services. Then large animal ranchers/managers/producers would probably be more willing to give me a call. But as it stands, it feels as though most farms would rather handle things themselves and not get a vet involved because of the cost associated with calling me out to the farm. I want to work hard, but people need to want a vet or I'm dead in the water. There has to be a happy medium somewhere. James Herriot seemed to have it figured out, but I'm afraid those days are gone. Sigh.

Topic: ability of the public to utilize Veterinary Medicine

Description:

For over 40 years I have spent my profession working with a wide range of people of differing financial abilities. What I see now is a widening of the gap between those that can afford Veterinary care and those who cannot!! With the advent of Specialty Clinics and specialists comes a higher quality of Veterinary Medicine, that is sure. However, especially in economic times such as now, more and more people are going for "just the basics" and in many cases not even going for the basics. In human medicine, there are always County or charitable organizations to provide medical needs for those without funds. Not so in Veterinary Medicine. Granted there are some organizations that might help out a situation and surely there are individual Veterinarians who will help out a needy client or even a non-client. But when push comes to shove, in most cases the pet gets the shove. Off to the Shelter or dumped by the side of the road with hopes that some kind hearted Samaritan will intercede. It is a problem!! I personally don't have a solution, but it should be open to discussion. There is always the comment that "if a person can't afford it, they shouldn't have a pet". But this eliminates the emotional and beneficial advantages of one having a pet, especially those in financial situations where the pet is their only link for hope and the future. Unless there was a proposed tax on "something" to bring in money for social services for the pets of the needy, where would the money come from? And who would run it? And, in practicality, it would become just one more government boondoggle!! So what can be done????? How about a good discussion?????

Topic: Ability to provide veterinary care at an affordable cost

Description:

Increased costs of providing veterinary care influenced by inflation, salary and benefit costs, keeping up with emerging technologies and meeting the requirements of growing governmental regulation will make veterinary care less affordable and thereby less available to the general public.

Topic: Ability to run a profitable business

Description:

Clients are less and less able to afford fees.

Topic: affordability of advanced technology for practices and their clients

Description:

The technology we have these days is wonderful, but many people can't afford it

Topic: Affordability of our services for clients

Description:

Our practice gross keeps inching up, but the net stays about the same, primarily because of increases in health care costs. We have been slowly raising our fees, but do not want to increase beyond the affordability of our clients. We do not see an end to this cycle.

Topic: Affordability of veterinary care

Description:

With the standard of care rising and technology having a bigger role in how we practice, as well as other pressures that increase the costs of running a profitable practice, our fees are marginalizing many pet owners.

Topic: Affordable health care

Description:

Since the cost of health insurance continues to rise at an exorbitant rate, and the cost to small businesses continues to soar, we need to support smart and cost controlled health insurance reform. this is both an economic and ethical priority.

Topic: Assoc DVM pay rates

Description:

pay level expectations are vastly different between newer associates and many business owners.

Topic: Better promotion of pet insurance

Description:

Currently cost is still the greatest limiting factor to the quality of care veterinarians can provide. We must encourage insurance as a means to support animal owners in seeking our highest level of care and service.

Topic: Burn-out, stress

Description:

Having to work longer hours for less pay

Topic: carcass disposal

Description:

The issue of carcass disposal is a dilemma for all veterinarians, but especially large animal practitioners. The safe and economical disposal of remains is important. It is also unfair for veterinarians trusting carcasses to disposal companies to be responsible for what they are doing with them. Good outlets and options need to be available for veterinarians and animal owners with reasonable fees.

Topic: Change from small business owner to corporate practices

Description:

Lack of compassion and flexibility in the large corporate entities. Inability of individual DVM's to treat according to what they feel is best in the individual case, but general protocol that must be followed at all times.

Topic: Change in income sources in small animal practice

Description:

The need to move from our reliance on pharmacy (prescription as well as over the counter) as an income source to medicine and surgery. Fees for these services will have to support us.

Topic: Change the private practice paradigm

Description:

Private practice vets are losing their business to low-cost wellness alternatives. The cost of basic wellness care has risen beyond the reach of many pet owners. The lack of basic veterinary care purchased by many pet owners leaves animals unvaccinated--and shelters are being struck by mass outbreaks of canine distemper virus, feline panleukopenia, and other contagious preventable diseases. Since the shelters are the sentinels for the communities--it follows that with this many unvaccinated animals in the community, the veterinarians are not serving the needs of the pet owning public. Instead, the vets fight amongst themselves, enact rules and statutes to prevent low-cost animal health care, and in-general drive away their own customers. The paradigm needs to shift. No longer does every private practice have to have its own surgery suite, radiograph machine, etc. We need to create new business models that keep our overhead low so we can draw in the clients who need us the most. We need to address what pet insurance might do to help or to hinder the practice of veterinary medicine. We need to find ways to reach the majority of pet owners that never venture in the doors of the private practices. Human medicine includes public health along with private and corporate medical practices. Veterinary practices work hard to exclude veterinary public health--focusing more on trying to make money. If this trend continues, then the public will lose faith in veterinarians as compassionate people and begin to view us more as money grubbers.

Topic: Client demands for services

Description:

Clients are demanding more intensive veterinary services for their pets, but we must always balance the demand with the ability to pay. We strive to keep our cost structure low, and that helps some, but there is a limit.

Topic: Client education

Description:

Many owners, especially of cats, are not pursuing preventive medicine. Not as many clients as I'd expect are pursuing insurance, even simply the good and inexpensive catastrophic plans that are available. With all of the new technology that is available on the treatment room side of veterinary medicine, many owners don't know the value that their pets are receiving, despite veterinarians efforts at informing them.

Topic: Client perception of cost of care

Description:

As cost and acceptance of care increases, consumers will turn "on" veterinarians as cause of care being out of reach and negatively affect our image with public. Yet good medicine cost money and profession needs to promote third party payment systems as viable option for pet owners to budget for their pets care.

Topic: Client Perception of Value

Description:

Clients seem to be really changing their perceived value of their pets. Most spend a lot less and others spend anything they need to. Insurance has affected some which helps with compliance for recommended treatments/testing. Others have dropped insurance due to cost. A lot of clients forego things that we consider essential like flea/heartworm/parasite control. Advances in medicine are very exciting, but few clients can afford them or are willing to pay for them.

Topic: clients' financial ability to afford care level desired

Description:

economy isn't going to up swing soon. Clients' level of commitment and bonding to their animals is growing. Clients are having to choose between basic life needs and the care their pet needs to stay alive or to live comfortably. Most aren't aware of insurance till after the fact. Our ability to serve is hampered by these limitations more than ever

Topic: Commitment

Description:

Lack of commitment of new graduates to a full-time/ life-time career.

Topic: Companion Animal Health Care Costs

Description:

Again, animal welfare agencies are filling the gap between what most veterinarians perceive as appropriate care for a companion animal and what many Americans can or choose to spend on their pet - defensive behavior is a very common response by a veterinarian - understanding and being savvy about how to respond to these changes is important - just because someone doesn't or will not spend money on vaccinations, MRI, elective surgeries does not mean that they do not have a human/animal bond!

Topic: Compensation for performance of professional work

Description:

Due to the economic downturn the nation is experiencing, it will be increasingly difficult to maintain a good professional income. As disposable income tightens, people will be less inclined to spend money for veterinary care on companion animals. Also, as lay people take over tasks which veterinarians have performed in food animals, food animal compensation will suffer.

Topic: Compensation levels/economy

Description:

The economy's effect on consumers seeking to use veterinary services is sure to be an issue for the next couple of years at least.

Topic: Competition from non-profit small animal entities

Description:

There is a developing trend for Humane Societies and other groups of this type to open full-service small animal hospitals in competition with private practices. Since many of these entities get government funds and large private donations they can offer veterinary services at a much reduced cost. They also get volunteer labor. In some areas of Florida these animal hospitals have severely hurt local veterinarians.

Topic: Complexity of medicine rising above client ability to pay

Description:

Veterinary medicine continues to become more complex and the costs of delivery continue to increase. Identifying ways to appropriately compensate veterinarians is essential especially with the increasing costs of delivering veterinary care. Perhaps pet insurance is a viable answer, however, there are numerous issues that need to be addressed so the positives can be used and the negatives minimized. Assistance for low income clients can be helpful but does not broadly benefit all affected clients.

Topic: competition from low cost internet vendors

Description:

I know we need to increase professional services and their prices to compensate for loss of medications, but professional services will have to continue to rise to offset this loss. If pets are not insured, then many owners of pets will not be able to afford good veterinary care and this could lead to increased economic euthanasias.

Topic: Consolidation of practices/ veterinary management corporations

Description:

I can see both sides of this issue. Many of the younger generation wish to work part time and are more likely to be mobile. Large vet management corporations provide employment opportunities for the millennial generation. Large management corporations tend to be motivated by profit and as such I believe unnecessary procedures etc are recommended. I personally do not want to see veterinary medicine go the way of human medicine.

Topic: Contribution to Society is not government funded

Description:

Shelters, disaster assistance, pet overpopulation are some of many ways Veterinarians give back to the community but are not compensated by the government. Because of our generosity our compensation is lower than that of other equally educated professions and new graduates are more in debt and less able to pay for it.

I am out 20 years and am now the employer. I can not afford to underwrite the salary of a new graduate with tremendous debt with the low compensation our profession still sees today.

My solution: get government/ ag business/ pharmaceuticals to underwrite the education in recognition of the contributions and pro bono services we provide.

Topic: corporate buy-outs of individual practices

Description:

This is changing the face of our profession, and it's hard for small businesses to compete with deep corporate pockets

Topic: Corporate ownership of Veterinary Clinics/Hospitals

Description:

I wish to see them owned by individual, or groups of Veterinarians.

Topic: Corporate practice

Description:

Veterinary medicine as the small business is going by the wayside, the same way human medical practices have already done. We're seeing more and more larger, corporate practices. A big concern is that these corporate practices will dictate the future of the profession in their own interest, and not necessarily in the interest of the profession.

Topic: corporate veterinary practice

Description:

How can independent veterinary practices compete with corporate veterinary practices when the playing field for benefits is not level? For example, an independent veterinarian may pay (either personally or through the practice owner) twice as much for health insurance as someone working for a corporation.

Topic: Cost of being a small business out pacing the clients ability to afford services

Description:

The current costs to keep the doors open, abide by state and federal regulations, keep the department of labor out of our practices, compete for quality employees, and pay taxes are rising so that the margin between what clients can pay for services and what it costs to provide them leave precious little left to actually pay ourselves. This has never been considered a financially lucrative profession, but soon it will just be a suicide mission.

Topic: cost of building and equipping a companion animal practice

Description:

I feel that there must be more multi-doctor hospitals or corporate practices in the future to consolidate the cost of equipment and training etc. It is hard to have a high standard of care and the equipment that accompanies that in a one to two doctor practice

Topic: Cost of Care

Description:

As our costs and prices rise, clients who do not budget, have a pet health savings account, or pet health insurance (and let's face it, most have none of these) will no longer be able to afford veterinary care. Rather than being responsible and not having pets unless they can afford it, we will see more intact dogs and cats roaming, more preventable shelter euthanasias due to overcrowding, and more zoonotic diseases (intestinal parasites, lyme disease, etc.) We need to find a way to get clients to purchase pet health insurance and invest in preventive care, and also educate them on the costs and responsibilities of pet ownership.

Topic: Cost of delivery of services.

Description:

This issue requires much thought.

Topic: Cost of Health Insurance

Description:

This is one of the benefits most important to our employees. As a small business (Veterinary Clinic) owner, this cost has become extremely burdensome.

Topic: Cost of supplying veterinary care

Description:

The cost of supplying care continues to rise at a rate that is starting to exceed what many people can afford. I know for myself I would not be able to afford the level of care I want for my pets if I wasn't in the business.

Topic: Cost of the care we want to give

Description:

I work as a specialist in three different practices, and in each the cost of my services is a major limiting factor. How can we help clients afford us?

Topic: Cost of veterinary care

Description:

The cost of a veterinary care is far too high for even the middle class to afford and is becoming a luxury, even though pet ownership is not a luxury (despite what some vets seem to think.)

The cost of veterinary care is climbing sharply, and this is mostly due to the higher cost of modern technology (which has dramatically improved our medicine,) and the very high cost of education. Pet insurance is one option, however, these companies are able to create and run their businesses on their own terms. It is very important that the AVMA help watch over and guide these insurance companies so that the industry is helpful to the clients/pets, and does not restrict or impede the veterinarian. It is VERY IMPORTANT that the AVMA and our industry be PROACTIVE in the pet insurance field so that we do not have the MESS that the human insurance has become. We also need to explore other ways to keep the veterinary medicine cost to a reasonable level to help maintain a better level of medicine for all pets (livestock, etc.) It is also irresponsible that the AVMA has endorsed one particular Pet insurance company, instead of supporting ALL those companies that would be supportive of ANY VETERINARIAN'S MISSION.

Topic: Cost of veterinary care may price us out of a lot of peoples budgets

Description:

If the economy doesn't turn around and people have less and less discretionary funds available, pet care will suffer and people will avoid bringing their pets to the veterinarian.

Topic: Cost of veterinary medicine to the animal owner.

Description:

Again, I live and practice in rural Georgia. I am in competition with practices that do things because they can, and not because it's the right thing to do. We (as a profession) used to be different from the human profession. We used to not be a group of doctors who charged exhorbitant fees to do things. I wouldn't have a problem if some costs were regulated by the profession. Yes, I know things cost more, but some of the costs are absolutely ridiculous.

Topic: Cost of veterinary services

Description:

My concern is the rising cost of veterinary services will reduce the availability of care for pet owners. Operating a fully self contained animal hospital means a huge investment by individual practitioners. Group practice models could be tested leveraging centralized equipment.

Topic: costs of veterinary care

Description:

new technologies and improvement in care are pricing veterinary services out of the market

Topic: Credentialing veterinary technicians in each state

Description:

If veterinarians understood how to utilize credentialed veterinary technicians and paid them accordingly, the need for more veterinarians would be decreased.

Topic: Credentialing technicians - developing nationwide standards

Description:

A consistent credentialing system for our Technical support team across the entire profession would build the esteem of these critical members of our teams. Separating Veterinary Technicians from veterinary assistants needs to be clearly and consistently applied if we want trained people to support us and provide consistent medical care for our patients. Consistent respect among practices and across state lines would encourage more good people to enter the profession. Perhaps as respect increases we'd see less burnout as well.

Topic: Debt to Salary Ratio

Description:

Increasing value of our profession to the public

Topic: Declining large animal practitioners

Description:

Large animal fees need to become commensurate with small animal fees to entice veterinarians into entering that

Topic: Declining salaries

Description:

The current economy is exacting a toll on veterinary salaries and something needs to be done to prevent further erosions.

Topic: Define CVT vs on site trained assistant roles

Description:

It is time AVMA recognizes the important role that CVTs play in the veterinary profession by defining what they should and should not be allowed to do. On site trained veterinary assistants, while important and needed by many veterinarians, are not CVTs and need to have defined duties as well. Many states have and are facing these issues, but AVMA does not have a clear stand on this. CVT membership status in the AVMA should be considered.

Topic: Definition and Scope of the Meaning of the Doctor of Veterinary Medicine

Description:

I graduated with a degree of Veterinary Medicine. The key word here is Medicine. My clients present me with the problems of their animals with a brief of resolving those problems, I work to diagnose the problems and produce a plan for treatment. This diagnosis is my work product and the client's brief is for me to use that product to treat the animal, generally, with medicines - hence the degree Doctor of Veterinary Medicine, Not Doctor of diagnosis or some other truncated degree. I do not surrender my work product to some other entity to complete the treatment. This should be the principle of Veterinary Medicine.

Topic: Demand for Veterinary Services by animal owners (both large and small)

Description:

There is the assumption that all people will be able to continue to pay whatever we say for veterinary care. We assume that the growth is forever possible.

Topic: Develop lowest cost health insurance for all members of hospital team

Description:

I>E>, support the national health initiative and work to support governments goal of care for all without discrimination

Topic: Diminishing interest in practice ownership

Description:

Lack of interest in ownership seems to reduce commitment to the profession.

Topic: Discounts/lack of charging for what we are worth

Description:

Veterinary medical charges are still too low on average, and I see majority of vets that I've seen discount charges too frequently. No-charge rechecks, intentional omitting of charges, charging very little because they feel bad, etc., etc., etc.

Topic: Economy

Description:

With stale or depressed economy, veterinary medicine will suffer.

Topic: Economic

Description:

Saturation of veterinary professionals in urban areas comined with reduced discretionary income of clients will challenge professionals to operate lean and efficient.

Topic: Economic effects on the profession

Description:

The long term effects of the current recession.

Topic: Economic inability of future US-educated veterinarians to compete world-

Description:

See #1.

Topic: Economic issues

Description:

How will a veterinarian make a living in the future with increased taxation, increased business costs and decreased client financial abilities. If there is a prolonged severe downturn we may find too many veterinarians and not enough jobs.

Topic: Economic Recession

Description:

People can't pay their bills, so they won't treat.

Topic: Economic Stability

Description:

The economic stability of veterinarians and their practices are going to be major factors in the coming years. Even niche practices are struggling now, and keeping practices open that provide a high level of care for non-traditional animals may be more difficult than it should be.

Topic: Economic viability of independent private practice

Description:

Veterinarians are not natural business people. Difficult to be both a veterinarian-producer and a business owner. Need to develop economically viable partnerships between practitioners and MBAs. Develop ways that practice managers are developed and compensated based on the profitability of the practice. Practices will need to be profitable to pay these managers a reasonable salary.

Topic: Economic viability of practices and practitioners

Description:

As a long-standing advocate of appropriate use of credentialed veterinary technicians, I think the profession needs to pay more heed to the economic necessity of leveraging itself by maximizing use of credentialed veterinary technicians.

Topic: Economic worries.

Description:

Dealing with making a living from discretionary income of animal owners.

Topic: Economics

Description:

It is becoming increasingly difficult to offer quality care to pets without having to charge exorbitant fees. The costs of supplies keeps rising, employees need a fair wage and benefits (which are rising at an alarming rate), workman's comp and other business expenses are all rising. Soon, veterinary care will be available for the wealthy only. I think this needs to be addressed.

How are veterinarians going to justify the significant investment in education as well as personal expense of daily practice. How are veterinarians going to continue to be profitable.

Including:

- fee structures
- student debt
- salaries of owners as well as new grads
- who will buy the one doctor practices?
- ability of clients to pay for the high level of services we can provide

Relative to my previous 2 issues.

The Small animal model of "Build it and they will come" is Dead as of 2009. Any vet could be successful over the last 15-20 years in SA practice, riding the strong wave called the Human-Animal-Bond. DVMs with huge debt, wether student loans of from the building of their dream practice will have to have a way to pay for those debts. Personal wealth management and business acumen are vital to our future success.

Animal owners are struggling to pay the costs of keeping animals, especially the veterinary care costs. Pet insurance is problematic. Some animal owners are guilty of neglect because veterinary costs are extremely high, especially in urban areas. Sanctuary and rescue facilities need to have a national network of oversight or at least best practice guidelines from a respected veterinary source. Veterinarians are perceived as making a good salary because the basic costs of vaccines and wellness visits are so high - this makes emergency, surgical and diagnostic care costs even higher and out of reach of many. Programs that match new graduates to areas of need such as rural, farm animal, shelter medicine, low-cost spay & neuter etc are needed and encouraged.

Within the profession there is a continued push for continued improvements in diagnostics and treatment that closely follow the human medical profession. As a cutting edge development this most often requires higher professional fees, which are economically required, but then the profession raises ancillary fees or unrelated fees in anticipation of either increased competitive demand for the service or a narrow window of profitability due to demand. Common sense needs to prevail before the profession manages to price itself irrelevant.

Topic: Economics of Veterinary Practice

Description:

How can practice owners continue to provide quality care at a cost that pet owners will be able to pay - taking into consideration all the financial challenges of running a small business?

Topic: ECONOMY

Description:

The large animal industry is usually the hardest hit in economic downturns(speaking from experience as a mixed animal veterinarian), but with this recession, even the small animal industry is seeing increased eutha. due to costs and less elective procedures performed.

Maintaining quality service that is within the budgets of clients.

Our business (as much as we choose to discuss otherwise) is a luxury service business--no one HAS to own a pet. Therefore, if they CHOOSE to own a pet, there is not mandate to take care of that pet. Some people don't even take care of themselves! If jobs don't return to the public sector, people will not have discretionary income to pay for the care of these beloved pets in their family, more euthanasia/"disposable pets", and abandonment of pets will

The 2009-2010 recession will continue to have a ripple effect through the next 5+ years as people think more critically about personal finance, credit, etc. I'm concerned that this may result in pet owners taking a hard look at veterinary practices as they consider less expensive options like online pharmacies, pet insurance, discount clinics, etc. Of course, we already see this happening to a greater or lesser degree regionally. AVMA should be on the forefront of emphasizing concepts like, "You get what you pay for" and encouraging best practices in veterinary medicine by veterinarians and best choices of pet owners.

As the economy continues to bump along the idea of veterinary medicine being recession proof is being disproved. While my personal hospital is continuing to see very small growth we are having to become creative to help our clients get what they need done.

Lack of money to be spent

Poor economic outlook affecting business. People can't afford veterinary services.

Topic: economy and cost of patients

Description:

The cost of veterinary care keeps rising, as espoused by practice management gurus. But the public's perception of their ability to pay is diminishing. There should be a worry that we are approaching a time when most people won't be able to pay for what we can offer. Example - \$2,000 for cruciate repair.

Topic: Educational Debt

Description:

The cost of a veterinary education and the debt that students are taking on as a result are absolutely astounding. My own alma mater has raised its tuition over \$20,000 (per year) since I graduated in 2000. As more young people discover the disconnect between salaries and the cost of a veterinary education, the fewer of them are going to be drawn to the profession. Quite frankly, I would never recommend becoming a veterinarian to a young person today (unless their parents were wealthy and going to foot the bill). When one earns a doctorate in a medical field, his/her lifestyle afterward should not be one marked by constant worrying about money and the ability to pay routine bills.

Topic: Emotional Value of Companion Animals

Description:

Our profession needs to adjust to the changing times. The companion animal bond has been emphasized by our profession for some time. We continue to stress the importance of companion animals in the family. But when it comes to litigation, all of a sudden we believe that pets have no emotional value in a court of law. We had better accept that we will lose that argument. We had better consider campaigning for caps on malpractice awards before it is crammed down our throats.

Topic: End of the single man/women practice

Description:

Group practices and specialty practices will force the independent veterinarian out. He won't be able to compete financially, hire good employees, or sell the practice. This is probably good, but the days of the independent veterinarian is numbered. No longer a dream to own ones own practice.

Topic: enough veterinarians to buy practices from retiring veterinarians

Description:

Lots of solo practitioners trying to retire and new veterinarians not feeling secure and confident enough to purchase these practices.

Topic: Equine economics and horse slaughter

Description:

Realizing the current decline in equine economics is driven by by many factors like: over-population, decreased racing purses, and the general economy, I believe the biggest influence is the lack of availability of the slaughter horse market. I have interviewed equine enthusiasts at many levels of the equine profession and the general consensus revealed overwhelmingly that we need an outlet for unwanted horses to aid the demand for useful horses. Horse owners need an outlet for unwanted or unuseful horses, instead of releasing them on the highway or state and national parks.

Topic: Escalating costs

Description:

Pricing increases due to increased costs and increased expenses that must be passed on to the pet owner has the potential to slow/stop people from bringing in pets.

Topic: Expanding the Role of Veterinary Technicians

Description:

There are still not many options for veterinary technicians to move into new roles. We can't expect them to stay with the profession without some exciting and rewarding career paths to follow.

Topic: Extreme low price of their products on the market

Description:

1. Extreme low price of milk and meat that is paid to the producer.
2. Commitment to the necessary long hours of care required to have levels of care to clients.
3. Not enough emphasis on the veterinarians skills in public health. Veterinarians' knowledge of many varied species makes the veterinarian more properly trained for public health, yet, we do not promote this as one of our many skills to offer the public.

Topic: Failure to leverage paraprofessionals

Description:

Our profession has been slow to recognize and reward the value of great teams. Quality credentialed paraprofessionals have the ability to address both the DVM shortage and assist students in conquering their school debt.

Topic: Failure to offer competitive salaries for equivalent medical training

Description:

Human medical doctors can anticipate a much higher salary than animal medical doctors....even if the educational requirements (college/medical or vet school/internship/residency/specialty board certification) are equal. Many, when comparing fields, opt for the human medical field due to straight economics.

Topic: False Idea of Veterinarian Shortage

Description:

We don't have a shortage when we have clients that constantly skip/ reschedule appointments. My wife would not think of missing her hair appt... It needs to be that way about FIDO's appt

Topic: Fee for Service

Description:

Veterinarians do not receive appropriate pay for their services.

Topic: Financial issues affecting all small business owners

Description:

Issues like health insurance and other factors affecting all small businesses continue to hit small practices hard; it is increasingly difficult to maintain a profitable practice in light of all of the extra "costs" of doing business, both in time and money. The AVMA has done a good job of keeping its members abreast of the regulations, but they continue to be an issue.

Topic: Financial Survival

Description:

In a world where costs are rising, but clients' ability to pay is dwindling, it is hard (almost impossible) to keep a practice solvent. Pet Insurance, increased awareness by clients of what their pets' health care really costs, tax breaks for the small business owner, better professional group assistance regarding employee benefits, and help with regulatory issues are only a small part of what needs to be done.

Topic: Financing to buy practices

Description:

Again as above DVM's for the most part have to raise their own capital for a facility to work in. The obvious of huge tax increases will make raising money much more difficult

Topic: For industrial veterinarians, maintaining institutional knowledge

Description:

Because of the economy, shift toward efficiencies and hiring younger employees requiring lower salaries, veterinarians with years of experience at an institution and who have addressed issues of animal welfare and ideal scientific design are being displaced and that knowledge and experience lost. Within the pharmaceutical industry for example, there are very few veterinarians currently employed for longer than 3-5 years at the same company. As a result, questions of animal welfare, technique and study design that had been worked out in the past are being asked and investigated again. This leads to "reinventing the wheel" when other more pressing veterinary questions could be addressed.

Topic: Gender shift to female affects sale of practices at retirement

Description:

There has been a shift in the gender ratio of our profession in the last several years. The increase in the number of female veterinarians that wish to work part time and have no ownership in the practice has left senior veterinarians searching for potential buyers long past their projected retirement age.

Topic: General Economy

Description:

The whole country's economy,

Topic: health insurance for employees

Description:

cost to small businesses unaffordable

Topic: Health insurance for pets

Description:

We are faced with insurance denials now. Expect it to become like human medical insurance in next few years. Insurers will dictate veterinary medicine as they do human medicine. Maybe the AVMA should get into the pet insurance business like they have for human (veterinarians)medicine. It is nice for pet owners to have, but they will run to us with every minor ailment like humans do today, because they don't pay for the visits. It puts money in our pockets but it will become unsustainable and insurance cost will become unaffordable. Veterinarians should not promote any form of insurance. My internist advised me 20 years ago that health insurance for humans will change the way human medicine is practiced and physicians income will decrease and insurance companies would dictate human medicine. I see this coming in veterinary medicine. It will create jobs because we will need more people to do the paperwork. But it will decrease our bottom line.

Topic: High cost of continuing education

Description:

It is difficult for a solo or relief practitioner to afford the time off and fees involved in keeping current.

Topic: Higher salaries

Description:

For present positions in all levels of state and federal governments.

Topic: Human Animal Bond and Veterinary Care

Description:

The definite relationship of pets to owners as an integral part of a healthy life style has been well established, but the advance medical care available may not be affordable in the future by the general pet owning public. So, how do we continue to expand the high levels of care and be assured of compensation. Also, if the patients have such value- the courts will begin to see that more than the replacement cost of the pet is valid reimbursement when errors occur and a pet is lost at the hands of a veterinarian.

Topic: inadequate recognition of Registered Animal technicians

Description:

More schools and graduates are needed as is better pay and fringe benefits so those entering do not leave.

Topic: Income

Description:

Figuring out a way to make a living in this profession

Topic: Increase Fees, no Increase Business Skills

Description:

As studies have shown veterinarians have been maintaining their salaries by increasing fees dramatically over the past 10 years but they have not significantly improved the business skills that are associated with higher salary and more productive practices. Eventually you can't keep raising fees and veterinarians need to be better business

Topic: Increased unneeded legal scrutiny

Description:

More and more law schools are aiming courses toward animal law and veterinarians as an untapped resource and this could pose an increased risk and cost of insurance to veterinarians

Topic: Increasing ability to treat, decreasing ability of clients to pay

Description:

Medicine keeps advancing which of course is good but clients often don't understand that if they want state of the art treatment, they will have to pay for it.

Topic: increasing cost of veterinary medical care

Description:

the costs of care, like those in human medicine, keep rising. Unless insurance becomes widely used, many pets will not get the care they need because of costs. The other way to reduce the cost is to increase efficiency by much better delegation of tasks to credentialed and non-credentialed staff.

Topic: increasing specialization

Description:

primary care veterinarians serve an important role, and must evolve a specialty. Too many specialists and too few primary care vets leads to higher costs and poor coordination of care.

Topic: Individual Veterinarian losing control of our profession.

Description:

I am deeply concerned that we as individual veterinarians are giving in to "Corporate America". I do not know if this is a gender problem or the lack of proper education by universities. It seems to me as if too many veterinarians are desiring to become employees rather than owners of very successful businesses. Many seem to desire part time employment with large corporate practices and have no desire to own a business. If this continues to be the trend, I see our profession heading in the same direction as the troubled human medical profession and where many pet owners will not be able to afford any care for their pets. I strongly feel that if this trend continues, we will soon lose control of our profession to non veterinary owners.

Topic: Insurance

Description:

Veterinarians must make income to compensate for their already low salaries and high student debt, but how can they do that when much of the money spent by clients is out of pocket. A good insurance set up could be helpful, however, we are desperately afraid of developing the horrible monster that has happened in human healthcare.

Pet owners wanting insurance to cover their pets care and dealing with that headache...

As our prices rise, more people will get insurance. The current insurance programs reimburse the client leaving the vet out of it, but soon the insurance companies will want to control what we can do for our patients, as they do in human medicine, and we will be in the same boat as our physician brothers. Why will the insurance companies want to control our treatments? Because vets will begin to abuse the system just as physicians abused the system.

Health insurance has not solved the problem of cost-effective human medical care, can the veterinary model do any better?

The professional organizations need to stop promoting pet insurance. They should be acting as an unbiased source of information on the pros AND MANY CONS of insurance, not the insurance company's salesmen. Has no one learned from the disaster that resulted in human medicine? And I'm sick of people who say it won't end up the same if the pet insurance get's similar market penetration as human health insurance. Whoever pays the bills is going to call the shots. Period. It has been ever thus and ever will be. Human doctors now work for 2 or 3 big insurance companies and I know some who have been put out of business because they were dropped from one network's approved provider list.

Currently, the insurance claim is handled by the clients. I am concerned that insurance will eventually fall into the hospital's responsibility and, like the MD's, we will be forced to comply to a standard that may be beneath us.

Topic: Internet based sales of Vet drugs

Description:

Increase number of products are becoming OTC product and many products are sold in the net which actually killing the business and in some cases not good for the environment also

Topic: Internet pharmacies

Description:

Now with Bayer unabashedly selling Advantage products directly it opens the door for other companies to do the same.

Topic: keeping good people in profession

Description:

salary issues with techs- can't pay them enough to make them stay even if really good and certified

Topic: keeping up with advances in technology

Description:

As many veterinary practices employ 1 or 2 doctors, it becomes difficult to afford many of the advances in diagnostic/therapeutic equipment that can enhance patient care and improve revenue. Avenues for cooperation and even consolidation between smaller practices should be explored for the purpose of improving overall quality and minimizing duplication of services.

Topic: Lack of Comparable Pay for Government Veterinarians

Description:

It is difficult to recruit and retain the best veterinarians at the USDA. Other medical professionals get additional compensation, veterinarians should as well.

Topic: Lack of Private Practitioners who want to purchase and own hospitals.

Description:

Veterinary hospitals are becoming poor investments. We have so few individuals who have the means or desire to own and run a practice. Current practice owners who are being pinched by decreasing client numbers and profit will not be able to count on a good return on their practice investment.

Topic: Lack of service

Description:

We are pricing people out of decent medical and surgical care. Some segments of our population can't afford the very best of care and so get no care. We need to find a happy medium.

Topic: Large corporate practice vs privately owned practices

Description:

Due to the inherent presence of a large store like Petsmart and large groups like the VCA and others I fear for the survival of single or 2 man practices. My practice is one of the low value practices due to my gross income. I am generating less gross income than what practice management consultants recommend. I think there will be either practices going out of business (2 in my area) or merging with a neighboring practice.

Topic: Law suit attacks

Description:

An increase of 5 dollars per patient visit will decrease the number of pets that get to a vet. Pets suffer, vets suffer, no one wins but the lawyers.

Topic: liability limits for pain and suffering for pet loss

Description:

We need to continue to closely monitor what the courts are doing in regard to awarding compensation for pain and suffering caused by loss of pets. This has the potential to result in an explosion of the cost of malpractice, both insurance coverage costs and in the form of "defensive practice".

Topic: Loss of income and control of medications to internet pharmacies

Description:

Internet pharmacies will continue to grow and take away from the veterinary practice control over pricing and access to quality medications. the larger companies are in this business for profit and if they see the profit increasing on the OTC market, then they will pursue that market.

Topic: Loss of market share to internet pharmacies

Description:

internet pharmacies are taking market share, decreasing the number of office visits , and forcing decreased margins on sales.

Topic: Loss of pharmaceutical income

Description:

Self explanatory

Topic: Loss of Pharmacy Income to Veterinary Practices

Description:

Veterinarians today inherited a fee system that relied heavily on pharmacy income. We've known for some time pharmacy income would be lost but I suspect few have prepared for it and I suspect the next 5 years will see the most significant loss of income yet. The fee structure for other services will have to shift dramatically and I think many clients will have a difficult time adjusting to the higher fees for surgery, diagnostics and medical care. Insurance will likely be the big winner.

Topic: Low numbers of DVMs willing to become practice owners

Description:

Most current practice owners are facing a dilemma. Many newer graduates have no interest in owning a practice, and for good reasons! They already have almost insurmountable debt upon graduation, and there are for more reasons (read governmental regulations) NOT to be an owner, than there are to be an employee. Who will we sell our practices to? Who will be the employers for all the willing employees?

Topic: low salaries

Description:

veterinarians are poorly paid

Topic: Low salaries compared to physician/dentist peers

Description:

It is striking how little new graduates and even those with 5-10 years of experience fetch - especially as non-owners. Hard to believe a 4 year college degree graduate can now achieve the same starting salary as a veterinarian. This will be hard to sustain in a very short time.

Topic: Maintaining professionalism in contrast to commercialism

Description:

Pressures on practitioners to "stay in the black" continue to increase and lead to increasing, though often subtle, temptations to "sell" products or services that may be of marginal benefit to patients or clients. These can include special diets, supplements, diagnostic procedures, medications, etc. Veterinary resources are often grossly and needlessly duplicated. For example, every clinic has it's own surgical facilities, x-ray and ultrasound units, point-of-care lab facilities, and hospital facilities. Physicians tend to insulate their professional activities from commercial activities better. For example, medications are prescribed and obtained from pharmacies, not dispensed by the practitioner. Diagnostic tests are ordered and provided by separate laboratories, imaging facilities or hospitals. Patients are cared for at centralized hospitals with shared surgical facilities for which practitioners have priveleges. There needs to be a move by the profession to shared, centralized facilities for major resources and away from isolated, self-contained units if the profession is to survive as a profession rather than as retail providers.

Topic: Maintenance of stable income in poor economy

Description:

In every aspect of veterinary medicine, with a poor economy, it is difficult for veterinarians in any aspect of veterinary medicine to maintain income and maintain employment. This same state of the economy likewise leads to the question of how animal owners or people who oversee use of animals can continue to ensure the provision of optimum health care in a poor economy.

Topic: Need to spearhead centralized hospitals

Description:

Still living in the past.. every DVM has Xray and SX and Dental units.. etc.. We need offices for exams. .. HOSPITALS for everything else.. That way the Xray machine really pays for itself.. and TRULY generates a

Topic: Nobody to buy retiring veterinarian's practices

Description:

More and more females entering practice that do not aspire to be practice owners.

Topic: Non-economic damage awards

Description:

As a profession we tout the human-animal bond, yet resist damage awards based on the emotional value of pets. This is a disconnect that will have to be addressed. Better for the profession to have a part in setting caps on such awards, rather than continue to fight them altogether. Courts or legislation is likely to recognize such value in the future, and if we aren't part of the solution, we will be left out, much like human malpractice currently.

Topic: On-line pharmacies and mail-order catalogs

Description:

Loss of professional income from dispensing drugs must be made up elsewhere. This also increases overall cost of veterinary care.

Topic: Our Pets are Family Members NOT CHATTEL

Description:

For too many years we have considered pets as "chattel" or personal property. In simple terms my Yorkie is a very important family member. He is worth more than the \$5.00 a court of law places his value at. We have has some courts of law award large amounts of money for them. However, these judgements are usually overturned by Appeals Courts.

Take a look today at your favorite pet, is he or she really only worth \$5.00? Yes, this will increase our malpractice insurance rates. Equine vets make much more money than small animal vets, yes they pay higher insurance rates. They also have more money in their 401K plans than do small animal vets. It is time we take our head out of the sand and wake up. PLEASE DO A SURVEY AND ASK HOW MANY EQUINE VETS HAVE GONE BANKRUPT DUE TO THEIR MALPRACTICE PREMIUMS. I bet this survey will never happen because WE do not want to hear the truth. REMEMBER, I REALIZE ALL TOO WELL THAT I AM PUTTING MY HEAD ON THE CHOPPING BLOCK IN THIS MATTER AS WELL.

I also predict that this "Critical Issue" NEVER shows up in any printed AVMA publication nor survey.
Kindest Regards.

Topic: Over pricing for services rendered.

Description:

Bottom line, they are still animals and there is an invisible ceiling to the amount of money majority of pet owners are willing to spend on their pets, especially during a severe recession where they need to put food on their tables. I see the days of corporate medicine coming to an end.

Topic: Over Regulation

Description:

I own and operate a one veterinarian practice in a small rural town. I have two full time and three part time employees. I find it impossible to comply with all of the regulations from the alaphabet soup of federal and state government agencies. We work 10 to 12 hours a day to make the pay roll, pay the bills, pay off the loans etc. etc. I can not afford to hire the help needed to cover the bases of all the regulations. One unannounced vist by OSHA,FDA or some other agency could result in thousands of dollars in fines.

This may not be an issue for multi veterinarian practices that can hire office managers, consultants, etc. But for solo practitioners in rural areas it is a big concern.

The AVMA needs to work to protect the small practices from a rather large and, at times, heavy handed government.

Topic: overall economy

Description:

downturn in economy is hitting us all, some practices have had decreases in revenue as much as 35% in my area. Increasingly suppliers are less and less helpful with payments due.

Topic: overpopulation of dogs/cats

Description:

I believe that the future of veterinary medicine will be spay/neuter hospitals that just do that. Veterinary practices will be for wellness care and sick care and diagnostics.

Topic: Oversupply of Veterinarians

Description:

There is an oversupply of veterinarians as every manpower study from the 1986 AVMA Wise Study to the KPMG study and likely will be the result of the long delayed National Academies of Science study due this April. Falling income has been a major reason while men no longer are interested in veterinary medicine as a career when better opportunities exist in medicine, dentistry and even nursing pays better especially with advanced practice degree like nurse anesthesia where the average salary with a 27 month masters is over \$150,000 and men are a significant proportion of nurse anesthetists. We have ended up with a plethora of pet practitioners interested and trained to do little else without additional expensive degrees as the KPMG study reported in 1999

Topic: Paraprofessionals

Description:

Use paraprofessionals to a maximum. This will free-up DVM's to utilize the skills we are trained for in a manner that will save time.

Topic: Pay

Description:

This is obviously related to my #1 issue. I also think this is directly related to the lack of business savvy of veterinarians.

Topic: payroll

Description:

Making enough profit to support a quality practice

Topic: Pending huge increase in private incomes, will not hurt government employees

Description:

The horrendous taxes that absolutely that will be laid on private incomes with all this out of control already squandered by this current administration, there will be more to come

Topic: Personal Investments in the DVM Degree Property

Description:

The costs and expenses of acquiring the DVM Degree is an investment of money, time and effort. These investments should be recovered from revenues earned in the practice of a veterinary business or livelihood before any income tax is paid. This is the same principle as recovering investments in other properties - such as an apartment building, for example. This requires a change in the IRS policies to implement. Such a change must happen to mitigate the burdensome debt of the costs of the DVM Degree. More needs to be said of this issue.

Topic: Pet health insurance

Description:

I anticipate continued growth of this industry in the future. The veterinary profession needs to be active in learning about the insurance industry and educating its members about how insurance might help (or harm) their clients. Obviously, the nation is currently embroiled in a debate about human health care. This debate is partly due to the rising costs of premiums and the increasing numbers of people that are uninsured. It is noteworthy that similar debates are not occurring about other standard insurance products! The public's perception of their own health insurance may influence their perception of pet health insurance. The veterinary profession needs to get in front of this issue and help lead discussions with the insurance industry and representatives of the pet-owning public. It seems to me that having the veterinary profession directly involved in the developing pet insurance industry will pay dividends as that industry becomes an important part of the veterinarian's business.

pet insurance companies telling us how much we can charge for a procedure

clients utilization of pet insurance will cause an increased burden for the practitioner

Topic: Pet insurance

Description:

Critical issue #1 and #2 are leading more and more folks to look into pet insurance. Right now the pet insurance companies seem to be working very well with their reimbursement system. It really keeps the veterinarian out of the insurance cycle. My fear comes from talking to other medical professionals who state that the insurance industry in their profession (dentists and physicians) started out the same way. We all can see where that has led and I don't want our profession to go down the same path.

This is a mixed blessing. We could easily improve the care of pets by having it available. We may also elevate the standard of care to a litigious level. I could see insurance coverage going hand in hand with the legal definition of pets changing and no longer being considered property. However we all have had a client who just refused to pay for inexpensive, treatable/ preventable disease. Would we be able in the future to report these owners to a social service when their member of the family is being neglected? We need to monitor this situation carefully.

How to encourage/promote insurance to help people pay for care

Topic: possible passing of health reform legislation

Description:

How will this affect the small business owners of veterinary hospitals and their ability to hire and afford employees if employer based health insurance is mandated.

Topic: Practice Growth

Description:

Getting more clients in the door, and getting compliance with our healthcare plan.

Topic: Practice sales

Description:

The preceding thought has affected many of my similar aged colleagues who have been trying to sell VERY LUCRATIVE practices for literally years. Again many of the graduates do not wish to go into fringe areas (high gross/net good practice ares) Because of gender - -or lack of schooling in mixed or food animal practice. Again , many times the spouse doesn't want to leave their job/income. I know fellow practitioners that have "walked away" from thriving , busy practices , for lack of buyers!

Topic: pricing

Description:

due to the internet and corporate vet practice...the products are now available so much cheaper than we can afford to sell them...because of overhead....so losing this business means higher prices for vet services...it seems to be corporate takeover to me.

Topic: Pricing ourselves out of the market for the common man

Description:

Present economic times or not, the wealthy can afford veterinary care. The majority of the population however cannot afford routine care at present prices. The ones that suffer are the animals and the human animal bond. The old charlatan, carpetbagger image of the veterinarian will resurface (already has - "we are just out for money like human doctors") and the strides we have made to achieve a high level of trust will elude us.

Topic: Private practice staying liquid in a competitive marketplace (small animal)

Description:

Traditionally small animal veterinarians have become practice owners in order to secure a more comfortable transition into retirement. With increasing costs of real estate as well as client-driven pressures for continual investment in low-yield profit centers, such as ultrasound machines, the actualization of every practicing veterinarian becoming a practice owner is not only unlikely, it is an unwieldy direction for the profession. As well, it is a business venture that is more likely to end in low-profit practices with poor end-of-career sales or failure for the investors. Encouraging the development of larger, more extended-service primary care centers which provide excellent client and patient services combined with financial benefits for all practitioners - not just practice owners - is an important endeavor for the business future of our profession. This will likely help graduates with heavy loan burdens pay debts faster and then begin to reinvest in their futures, families and careers without creating increasing competition and lower profits amongst local practitioners. A paradigm shift from "every veterinarian for himself" to greater cooperation under one roof is likely to benefit all veterinarians, full or part time, and increase the quality of care offered to clients and patients.

Topic: Professionalization (is that a word?) of Vet Techs

Description:

AVMA has improved, but is still a haven for right-wing wackos who aren't so much against raising the minimum wage as they are against the concept of a minimum wage. If it's seen as a dead-end job, that's the people we will get.

Topic: Profitability

Description:

With more competition in marketplace from on-line pharmacies and doctor-crowded cities and towns, it is increasingly difficult to be profitable.

Topic: Public lack of money to pay for animal care

Description:

American public may have less cash to spend on animal care.

Topic: Qualified staff

Description:

The shortage of qualified vet techs and support staff makes practicing a challenge

Topic: Real or Percieved Shortage of vets

Description:

Is there a shortage of vets? If so, why have salaries not risen to attract new members to the profession? What is the AVMA doing about it?

Topic: Recessiion

Description:

Directly impacts my income and staff wages

Topic: Recovery from the Great Recession

Description:

Since many have seen client numbers and revenue decline in the last 2 years I am anxious about restoring client numbers and income. I hope clients value personal service and not change their buying habits to go to the "cheapest" veterinarian. Growth in personal income is essential for practices to recover from the recession.

Topic: Rising cost of pet care

Description:

Unfortunately higher quality health care and the cost of that health care are directly proportional. I really don't want to see the day where only the upper-middle class can afford to own and care for a pet. With the current economy this makes it even harder. I hate getting to the point in a case where economics as opposed to the best interest of the pet takes priority.

Topic: Rising cost of veterinary care

Description:

the cost of pet care continues to rise and management experts continue to come up with ways to increase profits while the public has less and less discretionary money

Topic: Rising cost of veterinary care; people can not afford it!

Description:

As a new graduate, I am not only faced with the challenge of how to practice medicine, but also with clients who can not afford the treatment necessary for their pet. Their have been several stories in the media of how veterinarians are "money-hungry." Is this how our image is changing? How do we deal with this?

Topic: Rising cost of veterinary medical care

Description:

Every day in private practice I face the problems of people that cannot afford diagnostics or treatment for a pet. If the spiraling problem of human medical care continues, this trend will continue to impact the lives of pets.

Topic: Rising cost of veterinary medicine

Description:

It costs more than ever to take a pet to the vet, which has been financially rewarding. However, the economy has "fallen" and clients are tending to stay away. The costs of medications and equipment, as well as insurance, salaries, etc...are not going to go down. How do we resolve this?

Topic: salaries

Description:

the salaries of veterinary professional are embarrassing low compared to other professions requiring similar education

It is getting very difficult to pay the younger generation the salaries they think they deserve. It takes them so long to 'pick - up' speed and be able to perform the caliber and amount of work a more seasoned veterinarian can do. They have no interest in what it take to keep a practice going. all they are concerned about is their financial gain.

Topic: Salaries will probably stagnant as well as practice income.

Description:

We have already seen that salaries are not rising in many areas. In the Midwest, there does not seem to be any significant change over the last 5 years. Many clinics employ several part time veterinarians (particularly females) to avoid paying full time salaries with desirable benefits as health insurance or 401 K's. The profession erroneously assumes that most female veterinarians are content with part time work as they raise their families. However, this perception ignores the number of veterinarians that would gladly accept more hours and stable long-term employment opportunities. Comparing our profession to others, I do not believe that women pursue law, human medicine, business, or other challenging fields just to work a little and depend on spousal income to support them throughout life.

Topic: Salaries, Pay

Description:

Salaries to low. Good part time job for women - beats Walmart.

Topic: Sales of Vet businesses by retiring DVMs to Assoc DVMs

Description:

See above. Recent trend of vet clinic sales to "for profit" corporations diverts more of the clinic revenue away from DVM salaries and into shareholder pockets. This also increases client costs w/o necessarily increasing quality of care.

Topic: Selling practices.

Description:

I am concerned as the baby boomers hit retirement age that there will be fewer young veterinarians wanting to run their own practice and corporations will be taking over. I find that most women veterinarians don't want the stress of owning a practice. The retiring vets need to sell to supplement their retirement. I fear corporations are becoming their only answer.

Topic: Skilled paramedical staff

Description:

We need a livable wage for individuals interested in careers in general practice clinics and hospitals in positions of veterinary technician, nursing care, etc.

Topic: Small business survival

Description:

With increased competition from corporate veterinary medicine as well as things like on-line pharmacies, the business climate has become very difficult. Not to mention the possibility of pending health care legislation and such.

Topic: small pet population

Description:

the boomer generation is too active to have pets

Topic: Spiraling veterinary costs

Description:

I see many elderly people who are existing on social security, or people who have lost their jobs and now can't get surgeries or long term care for their pet. (I know I said they need to understand the commitment of time and money, but pets are also therapeutic). I think we need some sort of low cost care for those who are financially qualified. I don't have the answers here. I try to help when I can, but I'm a very small practice and need to stay afloat if I am going to continue to help. Maybe we need to emphasize just how much owning a pet can cost, and perhaps encouraging more folks to purchase pet insurance.

Topic: Staff

Description:

When will standardization of veterinary technicians, assistance affect all veterinarians. Technical staffing increased regulation to raise the standard of care.

Topic: standards for spay/neuter clinics

Description:

AVMA needs to take a firm stand on Animal Welfare issues - a genuine, positive PR campaign aimed at veterinarians and the public. Here's my idea: Can AVMA create a certification of excellence for Spay/Neuter clinics (which would include Humane Societies, public, and private clinics) to guide their policies from asepsis to staff training and reward them with an AVMA stamp of approval? I have worked in and toured many of these facilities and all are severely lacking in good protocol, hygiene, and staff/DVM training. This would be seen as a member benefit because all small animal veterinarians have to contend with these discount clinics periodically when their clients choose these clinics over their regular veterinary practice.

Topic: Student Debt

Description:

Most new grads are coming out of school with a debt double their first year salary. I graduated in 1984 with \$20,000 in loans and a \$20,000 salary.

Topic: Student debt at graduation

Description:

I am aghast at the average debt load that most student preceptees coming to our practice tell me that they are carrying. Trying to counsel students about minimizing debt at their matriculation into veterinary school is far too late for most of them. They need counseling before or at the time they enter a preveterinary program as an undergraduate. Perhaps then they can understand and be convinced of the time value of money. I just had a conversation with a last year's graduate. His payments are \$1400 per month for the next 35 years! How can you afford to hire someone with this starting debt staring them in the face and expect them to ever have much of any financial security? This student chose to go out of state from a state where there was a veterinary school and he could have paid in state tuition, but he chose to go out of state because of a reputedly better food animal program. I am routinely seeing students in our practice that will have around \$150,000 of debt at graduation. Given the current state of the economy and its prospects for recovery, the CVM's need a real wake up call with regard to their delivery of veterinary education and what they are charging for it.

Topic: substandard veterinarians who advertise and cheapen veterinary care

Description:

In this down economy we have seen several "low cost" clinics set up shop in our area and advertise very low fees. Do they utilize LVT's, sterile surgery suites, pain management etc etc. These issues need to be addressed or the future of veterinary medicine will be low quality, low cost veterinary care because the higher quality practices will not be able to compete and survive. There should be inspection and standards of care that ALL veterinary hospitals need to adhere to.

Topic: successful neighborhood practices

Description:

would hate to see the vet profession go the way of corporate America

Topic: Support Staff (too few qualified applicants available!)

Description:

In order for a practice to survive in this economy, they need to use their "para-professionals" more. This is hard when there is a very limited number of qualified applicants available. This is in part due to the limited number of vet tech schools that provide an up-to-date education in the various avenues that their graduates may pursue. This is also in part due to a lack of CE for technicians in species specific medical and behavioural areas: e.g., feline behaviour, nutrition, endocrine and metabolic diseases, viral diseases, and feline vs canine heart disease: plus basic management issues such as inventory control, client communications, etc. (How many times can you send your techs to learn about anesthesia, pain med, basic nursing care, and lab procedures! They need to learn more in more depth and in more areas!) And then, we need to increase client awareness of their worth, specifically what their billable time is worth, so we can afford to pay them better and give them better benefits to attract more "qualified applicants"!

Topic: The cost of health care

Description:

In order for our field to stay competitive with other medical professions and attract future vets, we need to be able to provide benefits such as health insurance. It is getting increasingly difficult for employers to pay for employee health insurance benefits. If more and more privately owned vet. clinics fail, we will be taken over by larger veterinary corporations (Banfield, VCA, etc.) That will make it even harder for other private clinics to stay in business.

Topic: The economy

Description:

people are poor, medicine is expensive, need I say more

As the government moves toward socialism, people will be less likely to spend money on veterinary care to protect their receding resources. Veterinarians will be less motivated to expand in order to stay under crippling tax ceilings.

people are poor, medicine is expensive, need I say more

The economy is greatly limiting our income.

the recession & how it affects our clients & their inability to afford quality health care for their pets

The recent downturn in the economy appears to have negatively impacted our patient flow. I find that once patients are here the owners are willing to do whatever medicine is necessary, typically, but getting them here seems to be the problem.

people are poor, medicine is expensive, need I say more

Topic: The Need for a Renaissance of the Capitalistic Framework of American

Description:

The principles of property and the right to acquire and trade property have been the hallmarks of the history of the American Republic. Governments have not been constitutionally empowered to own and operate business in competition to tax paying enterprise, nor to play favorites in how enterprises are operated. Nevertheless, trends have evolved to tolerate such incursions. More needs to be said

Topic: The politics of cheap food

Description:

Highly trained agricultural managers can produce a lot of product as long as there is water and investment capital. The problem is that the more the agriculturalist produces the cheaper his product becomes. This makes it hard for the producer to stay in business and to therefore pay his veterinary services.

Topic: The poor economy

Description:

The cost to owners of pet veterinary services has increased, especially specialty care, yet fees may have gone too high during the economic bubbles of the 90s and mid 00s. When the U.S. economy contracts, jobs are lost, disposable income goes down, and companion animal veterinarians can lose clients and income. Couple this with the large debt repayments that younger veterinarians are dealing with, and we have a recipe for economic turmoil. I believe there is a surplus, not a shortage, of pet veterinarians. If there were a shortage, then we would all be busy day in and day out, there would be many job openings, and salaries would be a lot higher. Students realize this and more attempt the internship/residency route in hopes of achieving higher incomes. However, a surplus of specialists in a poor economy is not helpful. AVMA should consider advocating for fewer veterinary graduates unless they can be absorbed into the U.S. economy in ways other than traditional pet practice.

Topic: The recession

Description:

Less discretionary income for clients to spend on their pets in a private practice setting. Also, horse owners having to give up their horses due to lack of discretionary income to properly care for them, leading to a horse overpopulation without capable owners.

Topic: The threat of managed care

Description:

Veterinarians will lose their autonomy if they accept the temptation of managed care/insurance plans in order to build their client base. We should not follow the physicians' mistake. The AVMA should be in front on this issue and leading the fight against managed care.

Topic: Third party payees

Description:

We will be more and more under the effects of "insensitive" costs to the consumer for health care for themselves (insurance and/or government). The shock of paying for it personally for the pets will become a point of resistance.

Topic: Too high a Ratio of loans to First Year's Salary

Description:

self-explanatory

Topic: Too much emphasis on high tech and high dollar equipment and clinics

Description:

The AVMA Journal and all the other trade magazines high light the need for the newest high tech equipment and awards are given to the finest clinics that money can buy.

Too many of the younger generation of veterinarians now believe it is a right to have such clinics and equipment and think they can not practice without them.

I would say the the majority of solo practitioners in rural small town America can not afford the technology that is now considered a necessity. Yet we provide great service and care, at an affordable cost, with what we have.

The AVMA needs to get the message out that veterinarians can still provide a great service with out all the high tech equipment. I can not afford digital radiology in my practice yet my 30 year old X-ray machine and dip tanks produce excellent pictures.

The younger vets need to know that it is OK to practice without all of the bells and whistles. Other wise it will be come increasingly difficult to fill the void in small, rural towns.

Topic: Transition of veterinary medicine to a corporate atmosphere

Description:

Concerned with the growing influence of VCA and especially Banfield on the direction of veterinary medicine and the corporate practice model. I can understand that a great deal of research dollars come from corporations but when it starts to influence the direction of education it becomes especially concerning. One of the reasons that veterinarians are respected is that clients do not feel that they are one of a herd and just put through the motions. This is due to the small practice model and the level of personal communication and interaction that our clients receive. At a corporate level, this personal touch starts to disappear and the focus leaves the patient and is placed on the numbers. This is not to say that smaller practices do not focus on profits but they don't always have a cookie cutter methodology for treating a problem when the problem does not present the same in every patient. For example, I don't perform vaccines if I don't feel they are appropriate for my area or for my client. Vaccines have a high profit value so I lose some of that profit but instead work with a client on the best needs for their pet. I don't focus on a corporate model that tells me I need to do xyz despite the needs of the patient. It is frustrating to watch friends run ragged because they are down a doctor at a corporate practice but the manager is so worried about not "making numbers" that they double book the doctors. The AVMA mainly consists of members from the private sector who work in 1-4 doctor practices. The AVMA NEEDS TO SUPPORT these members and not become solely influenced by the corporations just because they have more money to throw around.

Topic: Utilizing non-veterinarian health care professionals, (e.g., vet techs as nurses)

Description:

How much of the 'shortage' of veterinarians would go away if we more fully utilized veterinary technicians, at all the levels with which nurses are now certified? Some veterinarians may find this a threatening topic, but this WOULD help ease that 'shortage,' and leave doctors to do real doctor work. As a pediatrician said to me with a loud laugh, regarding vaccines, "It's only a shot!" (Why would he be worried someone did it, other than he? He is a doctor for goodness sake, and that is a shot which nurses give.) A great deal of food supply 'medicine' can be accomplished by techs... whether vets lead or follow this movement it will happen (economic forces and public demand), so will we go kicking and screaming or will we help mold the future?

Topic: Vet. med is a luxury item

Description:

We have graduates emerging from vet school with higher and higher student loan debts, and higher and higher expectations of the level of medicine they will be able to practice out in the "real world." I am a 2006 grad, and one of the most frustrating things for me to deal with as a recent grad has been not being able to use the knowledge I have to work up cases -- due to owner financial constraints. We are able to practice medicine at a higher tier than ever before, but for the majority of practitioners, and the majority of pet owners, practicing at a higher tier simply isn't realistic. We can do the best medicine (and, indeed, I always recommend it) but the majority of pet owners cannot pay for it. Our profession needs to realize that, ultimately, we are a luxury/pets are a luxury item. Similarly, in large animal medicine, many of the traditional procedures (displaced abomasum in dairy cattle, etc) performed by vets are now being done by lay people. Vets are primarily in consultant roles. We're deluding ourselves about our importance. We need to get over ourselves as a profession and be more humble/realistic about what we really do and what we really can do.

Topic: Veterinry Technician Profession Partnership

Description:

Continue to advocate for increased utilization of the Credentialed Veterinary Technician. Continue to strengthen partnership with NAVTA and take leadership in defining the roles of the credentialed technician Vs. unregistered assistants on the Veterinary medical health care team.

Topic: Veterinarian Salary

Description:

My income is the same now as it was 10 years ago. How can I charge more when my clients are getting less for their products? Talented youth will not choose to become veterinarians without better pay.

Topic: Veterinary collegiality

Description:

Rural vs urban veterinarians is not as divisive as the economic divide with the resultant legal and competitive issues created by the issue of expensive technological diagnosis being more effective than experience and a good quality exam. Many Veterinary students are graduating not only with excessive debt, but the inability to function without technology combined with the inferiority complex of referral to a specialist is always the best option. There for they graduate with excessive debt, borrow excessively for start up and then refer cases with out working them up properly. With out continual challenges from graduation, confidence and competence decrease rapidly. Location and clintel determine cash flow. If our goal is to serve everyone, not just the rich then we as veterinarians need to remember that it is ok to have multiple theraputic choices, that is our insurance, and it is sustainable. First, do no harm, then second use our knowledge and skills to preserve the animals dignity and quality of life

Topic: Veterinary fees and salaries of private practice veterinarians

Description:

Private practice fees have stagnated for too long. We need to raise fees in order to increase not only starting salaries but salaries for "veterans".

After graduating from veterinary school I had to convert my student loan into a 30 year loan. The monthly payment for this is equal to a small house payment. This could have been part of a payment for a vacation home.

I believe it is truely a self perpetuating problem: veterinarians fail to capitalize on the value of their services. While this may be admirable we have allowed other professions, vendors, construction contractors, universities to race past us with their fees.

Also, in terms of value, I find it hard to compete with competition a half mile away that offers free exams with a coupon of course. That is so telling to pet owners.

The AVMA has to do more in a substantial way to help its own. If there was some way to obtain JAVMA legally without paying dues to AVMA, I would do so. You represent the politically correct issues ad nauseum, but what about your own?

Solution: The AVMA needs to invest serious time and money into effective ways that private practice veterinarians can increase revenue. For instance in the last 5-10 years, how did general practice dentists increase their revenue so dramatically?

Topic: Veterinary Income.

Description:

My feeling is that none of the models for increasing veterinary salaries can work without a significant change in the veterinary business model. We too long have touted that we need to leverage our veterinarians with enough staff (anywhere from 1.6 staff/DVM to 2.3 staff/DVM according to the 1999 KPMG study). Leveraging veterinarians only gets you so far. We have to address the fragmentation of the profession and it's affect on veterinary salaries and that of their staff. We must use economies of scale to our advantage but we, as a profession, frequently choose our independence over sound business principles that can lead to better income and better lifestyle. Again, the 1999 KPMG study concluded "some thought should be given to developing the arrangements that more effectively share labor and capital across practices". For some reason, our profession is loath to do this. Possibly, we consider ourselves too independent and entrepreneurial to merge with other practices for the betterment of ourselves, new grads and the profession. The current average veterinary student debt makes absolutely no sense if we do not address veterinary income as a solution. To address veterinary income, we cannot as a profession, continue the status quo. We need a sound business model, one that goes beyond just financial arbitrage, and we need to look to professionals to guide us on this. We need to step out of our comfort zone and embrace merging practices, either on our own or within a corporate structure. We should realize that 70% of our profit comes from outpatient services and only 30% of our profit, and most of our overhead, comes from inpatient/hospitalized services. MD's realized this years ago and made alliances with central hospitals. We need/should do the same. Only 14% of veterinary hospitals in the U.S. have 7 or more doctors. The high density of small practices creates redundant overhead and decreases veterinary salaries as well as their ability to invest in technology and modernization.

Topic: Veterinary Pet Health Insurance

Description:

The growth of this industry has the potential to move the veterinary healthcare system more towards the human healthcare system, where cost controls are limited (because patients are not directly responsible for costs) and medical decisions are made by insurance companies rather than doctors and patients/clients.

Topic: Veterinary Profession becoming a 2nd income profession

Description:

It is increasingly becoming harded and harder to consider Veterinary medicine as a primary income profession. Many of the new grads and even several of my colleagues get out of school with their DVM, practice 1-3 yrs drop out for various reasons and then after several years decide to return to the profession on a part time basis. This lowers the overall value of my services and cheapens our profession.

Topic: We need to adopt a uniform computer for our services

Description:

We must adopt a computer code for our services rendered and thus be able to utilize insurance more effectively. Third party payment is a must!!!!

Topic: We need to pay our assistants more

Description:

We need to use LVT's throughout our hospitals and not just someone that wanders in off the street!!!! Yes, we need to raise our prices to support such people as LVT's!!

Topic: Who will buy the practice?

Description:

As we age, we are looking for the next generation to take over our practices. They are saddled with educational debt and trying to afford to raise a family. With the low profitability of veterinary medicine, where will the funds come from for the next generation to buy us out? I fear that the source may be large corporations, a model of practice I do not like. As the profession becomes predominantly female, and as women tend to work more part-time, and still carry the primary responsibility for raising the family, I wonder where the vets are who will be able to dedicate full time to buying and running our successful practices.

Topic: Work-place health insurance issues

Description:

Health insurance costs keep climbing. If practices become legally bound to provide health insurance for all employees, how can we afford to do so?

Category: Education Debt

Topic: \$ Economics/Debt of attending veterinary school, then trying to join the work

Description:

Our current admissions and education system is selecting for independently wealthy families/students who don't actually NEED to earn money through veterinary practice. It's that simple. The salaries available do not justify the cost of going to vet school anymore. If mommy and daddy paid for vet school though, salary doesn't really matter and neither does the cost of education. Do vet schools not see what they are charging vs what their new grads are earning?!

Topic: College debt and future salaries of employed DVM's

Description:

The 2 issues must be dealt with or college debt will drive salaries to such a level that our client base will resist our services due to perceived excessive costs.

Topic: Compensation

Description:

Continue to advance the salaries for new and seasoned DVMs so the financial gap between indebtedness and income decreases.

Topic: Compensation and debt

Description:

Compensation (salary, benefits, time/off...not enough burnout, debt forgiveness). Low compensation for vigorous long work hours compounded by >100K debt for most students...means payoff and low standard of living for >10years. (Versus 2-3 years for Human Med grads). The issue is not fully understood by veterinary med graduates >10years ago who do not face the same economic situation. Also, many practitioners in practice for >10years have not managed their practices well and subsequently they do not have the income to compensate new graduates at the desired level or fund their retirement. Compensation and debt forgiveness are very crucial to recruit veterinarians to large animal and public sector work.

Topic: cost of education for veterinary students

Description:

salaries for veterinarians are not keeping up with the costs of a veterinary education.

Topic: Cost of Education vs actual earnings

Description:

Few individuals graduating in the last decade can afford to live, practice veterinary medicine and pay student loans.

Topic: Cost of Veterinary Education

Description:

Economic educational costs for the Profession have made it difficult for young people to enter Veterinary Medicine. Some states have implemented programs to allow students to trade some of that debt by agreeing to practice in rural areas where Food Animal Practice is in need. Also incentives should be provided to encourage and help students to become involved in careers in research, teaching and regulatory Medicine directed by the State or

With state funds being cut so drastically, the pinch for future veterinarians is ever so acute. The cost of veterinary education has trumped the income capacity of veterinarians leaving veterinary school. Currently, my mortgage payment is less than that of my monthly student loan payments. This divide will only grow as my graduated student loan payments will continue to increase every two years while my mortgage payment remains stable.

The profession will suffer tremendously from intellectual capacity if it continues to cost \$140,000 to earn a veterinary degree. Salaries are just too low to accommodate a debt load of this significance. Even with personal fiscal accountability, these numbers at times seem insurmountable.

I have friends in the profession who have even taken on second jobs to help pay back student loan debt faster. This comes at the expense of family time and other leisure activities which a doctor should have.

The answer may lie with the federal government, although we have seen how slowly the response is from them in the past. It may take a national animal health disaster before Congress and Washington sees the light. So far we have dodged H1N1, but we may not be so lucky in the near future.

Cost of education must be kept in line with what veterinarians will make.

It is going to be harder and harder to attract quality candidates into the field if starting salaries are not able to cash flow the debt that students have accrued over their college years.

The cost of a veterinary education is too high, especially compared to typical earnings

Student debt load continues to rise and influences the job choices of new graduates.

Topic: Cost of Veterinary Education in relation to salaries in Clinical Practice

Description:

This is integrally related to the two above. In clinical practice, the ability to repay student debt is directly related to the ability to produce. We can only produce if the demand by animal owners is there. Demand is not just desire but also the ability to pay.

Topic: Cost of veterinary education to students

Description:

The cost of vet education continues to increase, resulting in staggering student debt loads which cannot be serviced by entry-level veterinarian salaries. We will lose the best and brightest applicants because the return on investment is out of line with the costs involved.

Topic: Cost of veterinary education/student debt

Description:

Student debt influences both the ability of a practice to employ new graduates, graduates to find employment that supports a reasonable quality of life, and restricts the ability of retiring practitioners to sell practices to other than corporate enterprises.

Topic: Cost of veterinary medical education and debt burden new graduates.

Description:

Cost of veterinary education is so high that many good candidates for the profession are excluded. Also, the debt level of many new graduates causes significant financial problems.

Topic: Debt

Description:

The debt to starting salary ratio continues to rise

Topic: Debt for graduation veterinarians

Description:

Debt that most veterinarians incur restricts the quality and number of applications to veterinary school and results in a lack of students applying who will go into rural veterinary practice

Topic: Debt level of veterinarians

Description:

Graduates are taking on more debt than their careers will be able to pay. This will affect the older generations of veterinarians as we go to hire the younger generations.

Topic: debt load of graduating veterinarians vs income

Description:

I graduated in 1990 and carried a \$40,000 student loan debt. With a starting salary of \$28,000 then, it was difficult enough to pay the \$431/mo for 10 years and attempt to buy a car, house etc. Can't imagine how today's graduates with debt loads of well over \$100,000 and salaries of \$70,000 will cope.

Topic: Debt load of new graduates

Description:

Veterinary students need more financial counseling before graduation to avoid getting in over their heads. Costs are also increasing faster than starting salaries in most places.

Topic: Debt load of students upon graduation

Description:

Students are graduating with so much debt that I am afraid they will be unable to afford to purchase practices from those of us who want to retire.

Topic: Debt load of veterinary students

Description:

costs of school outweigh earning potential

Topic: Debt repayment

Description:

As a new graduate, the ability to repay student debt and have income left over!

Topic: Economic issues such as unmanageable student debt

Description:

The current rising educational debt of new graduates is unmanageable with current entry salaries.

Topic: economic return on education investment

Description:

Salaries / Benefits keeping pace with cost of vet med education

Topic: Economics

Description:

Student Debt, New Grad Salary, & Impact of Economy on Practice Profitability.

Topic: Economy and Debt

Description:

The increasing debt load of new graduates, and the weak economy are combining to make a very bad situation for many newer graduates. The salaries that are available are not high enough to live on and pay student loans. This is causing less qualified applicants to apply to veterinary schools and lowering the quality of the graduates. It is also causing problems for the veterinarians who are trying to sell practices, since less associates are able to afford to buy a practice with the debt load they already have.

Topic: Education

Description:

The cost of educating a "practice ready" veterinarian. New graduates are leaving school with a debt that dictates where and how they have to practice as opposed to where they want to practice.

Topic: Education debt

Description:

Cost of education is skyrocketing yet the salaries have not followed in suit.

Topic: Educational Debt

Description:

New graduates from veterinary school face tens to hundreds of thousands of dollars of debt. Speaking from personal experience, this debt load limited my professional options and prevented me from continuing in a mixed (dairy) practice in a rural community because I could not support my family and pay my loan debts on the salary I could earn in that setting. Further, my loan debt was a factor in my decision not to pursue practice ownership. I believe that my situation is representative of that of many, women especially, who graduated in the last 10-15 years, and is especially true of recent graduates (<5 years since graduation). I feel that increasing starting salaries is an inadequate method to address this problem, because this fails to account for the inability of practices in underserved areas to charge adequately for their services. Instead, more programs to reduce debt load/provide loan forgiveness/change repayment practices for veterinary students and veterinarians who practice in underserved areas or in public practice are critical.

Debt load of new veterinarians and available salaries continues to spiral out of control. We need to address strategies to allow new and qualified applicants into a veterinary medical program to see that there is some financial reward to gain at the end of the program.

Students (like me) are coming out of vet school with \$130,000 dollars worth of debt or more to repay. Unfortunately, this makes salary a very important criteria of our jobs. It limits our options because we must work in a job that pays well.

Topic: excessive Debt of new graduates relative to starting salaries

Description:

I do not see how one can repay \$100,000 and more in education loans and live comfortably- considering other living expenses: house, car, family, etc.

Topic: Financial sustainability

Description:

The high cost of veterinary education must be offset by financial reward in all phases of practice.

Topic: heavy debt of veterinary students and low pay

Description:

need to help students defray rising costs and offer better pay out of school

Topic: High debt load of new graduates

Description:

The high debt load of new grads makes it necessary for them to get a high salary that may not be justified in the marketplace.

Topic: High debt load versus compensation

Description:

High debt load versus compensation

Topic: Huge debt load as vet students graduate

Description:

Many vet school graduates carry huge debt loads as they enter into private practice...paying down their student loans while trying to support families, and perhaps buy practices seems very daunting!

Topic: Income for veterinarians

Description:

Professional income does not reward graduates sufficiently to offset educational debt. Increased rewards are needed to continue to attract people into the profession.

Topic: Increasing disparity between educational debt and starting salaries

Description:

Educational debt is out of control and positions new graduates for economic failure as they begin their careers.

Topic: Increasing student debt

Description:

The rapid increases in tuition for veterinary school is a serious cause for concern. The disproportionate increase in cost of education vs. expected salary is making it difficult for retiring practice owners to sell. Graduates struggle to find a job that will pay enough for them to make payments on their student loans; practice owners struggle to find new associates, especially in economically challenged areas.

Topic: Keeping veterinary education costs as low as possible

Description:

Through scholarships, working with university administrations, etc. to pool expenses and therefore lower the total cost to the students

Topic: Loan forgiveness for vet students

Description:

going to underserved areas to work
going into research
going into teaching

Topic: low salaries

Description:

start up salaries too low to pay education costs

Topic: Low salary to debt ratio of new grads

Description:

It was bad enough when I graduated (1996), now even worse

Topic: Mismatch between cost of education (student debt) and entry level salaries

Description:

While the actual cost of veterinary education is not much different from other health professions (medicine, dentistry) the ability of recent graduates to pay off their loans with the low salaries they are receiving is disturbing and a matter of major importance for the ongoing strength and healthy of our profession.

Topic: money

Description:

Student debt relative to post graduation salary.

Topic: new graduate debt

Description:

With the debt that new grads have amassed it will be nearly impossible for them to pursue the American dream of family, home and practice ownership. I fear that new grads will become indentured servants to loaning institutions, vet management corporations and the government.

Starting salaries are simply not commensurate with substantial indebtedness faced by our new graduates.

Topic: new graduate indebtedness

Description:

When I graduated 24 years ago my student debt was equivalent to a car payment for 10 years. Now new graduates routinely owe a house payment for 30 years. That obviously impacts the financial decisions for their entire career. Instead of buying a practice, starting a practice or even saving for their future, the money is being paid to banks as interest.

Topic: Pay scale for veterinarians are generally lower than other professions.

Description:

The amount of college required to obtain a DVM degree is a minimum of six years and most require eight years. The cash outlay is not in proportion to the amount of income offered to new graduates. To entice more people into the profession it will have to offer higher salary to new graduates as many 4 year Bachelor of Science degree's earn the same amount of income.

The amount of college required to obtain a DVM degree is a minimum of six years and most require eight years. The cash outlay is not in proportion to the amount of income offered to new graduates. To entice more people into the profession it will have to offer higher salary to new graduates as many 4 year Bachelor of Science degree's earn the same amount of income.

Topic: Paying for education

Description:

Self explanatory

Topic: Poor pay and high debt for graduating veterinarians

Description:

If the cost of a veterinary education continues to rise and the salaries do not come up to match it, the profession will no longer be able to sustain individuals to make a living that can support their families. Either individuals will not enter the profession for this reason or they will leave it or pursue alternate options than traditional clinical

Topic: Ratio of student DVM educational debtload to earned compensation

Description:

The rate of increase of student debt for a DVM education in comparison to the rate of increase in starting compensation is not sustainable. It was identified as a critical issue by those interested in veterinary economics over a decade ago and has reached a level of urgency if we are to maintain our applicant pool and respect as a profession for the value of our services for and by society. An average student debtload of \$130,000 for a \$60,000/year job is not sustainable with indications of it getting worse every year. This has to be addressed.

Topic: Reducing Veterinary Student Debt

Description:

This one is self explanatory.

Topic: Rising cost of veterinary education

Description:

With the rising cost of veterinary medical education, it is likely that fewer students will pursue veterinary medicine as a career. A new graduate these days is running into problems being able to afford paying back the steep student loans, even when they watch their spending during veterinary school. However, it does not make business sense to pay an inexperienced new graduate the high salary that (s)he needs to make their student loan payments.

Topic: Rising education costs

Description:

Education costs are rising faster than salaries. Education subsidies from states are being reduced as we speak. Unless schools find a way to make more money, or trim costs effectively the net result will be higher tuition for students.

"Statistics paint an even darker picture. A review of American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) data reveals educational debt represented 184 percent of entry-level salaries for new graduates in 2007, compared to 91.6 percent in 1980. The association's most recent survey shows last year's mean educational indebtedness totaled \$106,969, although some students are saddled with \$250,000 or more in loans. Tuition increased nearly 100 percent since 1997, yet starting salaries rose just 46.5 percent during the same 10-year period. Interest rates now top at 6.8 percent, and the vast majority of 2007 graduates reported to AVMA that they accepted positions paying between \$47,000 and \$58,999 a year.

Upheaval is inevitable, contends Richard Vedder, PhD, former senior economist with the U.S. Joint Economic Committee and Ohio University distinguished professor. He calls the debt burden students face compared to salaries "shocking." If the cost-earnings ratio fails to soon balance, students simply won't be able to afford a career in veterinary medicine, he claims.

"This trend will be unsustainable in far less than a generation," predicts Vedder, who sat on the U.S. Secretary of Education's Commission on the Future of Higher Education in 2006. "At some point, no one will want to go to veterinary school. The word will be out that you're assigning yourself to a life of utter poverty. I can only predict that disaster is a few years ahead."

Data taken from: <http://veterinarynews.dvm360.com/dvm/Veterinary+students/Economic-emergency/ArticleStandard/Article/detail/525880>

Topic: Rising loans, Low salary

Description:

As student loans continue to increase far greater than new vet salaries, this occupation may become increasingly less desirable. As vets, we should be able to control this better-petition for lowering vet school costs, interest loan rates and demand higher base salaries.

Topic: Rising veterinary student debt and educational cost

Description:

This will impact the financial health of all veterinary businesses. New graduates will need higher salaries to meet debt expenses, associates will be unable to purchase practices from retiring owners due to debt load, etc.

Topic: Salaries for veterinarians

Description:

I am very concerned about the lack of cost of living increases and even starting salaries seen in the veterinary field. We spend a lot of money on our education and not compensated appropriately.

Topic: Salaries of new graduates

Description:

Starting Salaries for new graduates are appallingly low compared to the starting salaries of other medical professionals. salaries are not keeping pace with the graduating debt most students face.

Topic: Salary for practitioners

Description:

Starting salaries for practicing vets have not substantially increased for 40 years when compared to other areas of professional employment. This is a substantive issues when you consider educational debt.

Topic: salary versus student debt

Description:

The veterinarian debt ratio compared to ANY other profession is absurd.

Topic: Salary vs debit load

Description:

It is hard to find veterinarians that can make money for the clinic (stay under the 25% total distributions) and still have enough to pay off their debit load. They want to be paid big bucks as soon as they walk in the door. They do not understand how a business model works. Commission is great until they feel they are not getting paid enough. If they want to make more, they need to work more - as much as 60 hrs/week and that is not acceptable these days. The cost of veterinary school is more than most can repay and still work the acceptable 40 hour work week. I think that vet school is not giving new graduates a realistic understanding of what is expected of them upon graduation and how much they may have to work to earn the big bucks.

Topic: Starting Salaries of New Graduates

Description:

This issue goes in hand with the rising cost of student debt. As there are drastic increases in debt, the salaries are not even close with keeping pace. I know there are a lot of dynamics involved, way too many to fit within 2500 words, but business education needs to be become an integral part of all veterinary education if this problem is ever to be tackled.

Topic: Student Debt

Description:

Students come out of veterinary school with too much debt today and they must choose to take higher paying jobs rather than jobs they may be interested in, but have lower salaries (i.e. rural jobs, mixed animal practice, etc).

Student debt is rising faster than salaries. Must slow debt down until salaries start to catch up.

Cost of school is skyrocketing and nothing is being done other than to just allow it to increase. Research does us no good if future students are too scared to pursue their dreams because of the excessive amount of debt that comes with it. Possibly, more time needs to be spent on developing the field in terms of business success and stability. Veterinary medicine is quickly becoming a trade for only the rich to attain. Is that the kind of profession we want?

huge student debt upon graduation is adversely affecting our profession

Student debt has become the #1 or 2 issue facing veterinarians and future veterinarians these days. I, myself and know of many others who have questioned their profession after realizing the difficulty in today's challenging world to earn enough income to responsibly pay back out student loans in a timely fashion. This problem will continue to become the #1 problem in my mind in this profession. I don't believe gov't rural incentive programs are going to fix it either. The cost of tuition needs to be addressed because I am not sure the salary increase can be adjusted to reflect the current needs of graduating veterinarians.

The amount of student debt is staggering and unfortunately there is very little recourse for future veterinarians. Combine the cost of undergraduate schooling and veterinary school and some students are faced with over \$200,000-\$250,000 of loan debt. Given the economy and difficulty the profession has charging appropriately for services (and the public recognizing the value of these services), it often seems as a student will never get out of debt and has little hope for eventual practice ownership.

The high cost of a veterinary education, combined with the relatively low starting salary of new graduates, will lead many prospective students to consider alternative careers. This could lead to a shortage of highly qualified students, and hence, highly qualified veterinarians.

Student debt is so high for many new and recent graduates that it is crippling, and severely limits how and where we are able to practice. For instance, I would have been quite happy to stay in the midwest as a mixed animal practitioner, but could not afford to do that after graduation. I am a small animal practitioner on the west coast.

The increasing debt of graduating veterinary students is a growing problem. Our associations need to work with state legislatures to increase funding of the veterinary schools to reduce these debts.

I don't think students are willing to graduate from 8 or more years of college to be paid the going rate and be \$100,000 in debt. This is resulting in veterinary medicine attracting mostly female students and their salary's being used in the family as a secondary source of income.

We can't pay these graduates enough for them to be able to survive and satisfy their HUGE debtload

New graduate debt levels are untenable at present, and continue to rise, especially when compared to starting salaries which are not rising as fast. Unless abated, this will have dramatic consequences for selection of vet med as a career choice and how vet practices conduct business.

Topic: Student debt as they graduate and attempt to enter the workforce

Description:

As a recent grad, I know how difficult it can be to find a job. Internships are almost necessary, especially when trying to enter the field of equine private practice. But this sets you back another year where the income is very minimal. Even with an internship under my belt, a lot of private practices are not hiring right now due to the economy. All of these factors together make for a dismal outlook for new grads.

Topic: Student debt load

Description:

As student debt load increases, students are being forced into practice situations or geographic locales that they don't necessarily want to work in. In addition, it hurts the number of students willing to participate in lesser paying practices such as mixed animal or rural practices when they can't financially sustain their interest in joining those practices.

The solutions need to incorporate a serious re-examination of the amount of time/money it takes to produce a functional veterinarian. Most of the effort to date has been devoted to trying to increase jobs for veterinarians (many of which can be filled by veterinarians educated in countries that produce veterinarians at lower cost) or subsidizing an inflexible and over-priced veterinary education system. See JAVMA 208: 341-342. 1996.

Topic: Student debt load.

Description:

Can compensation keep up with the rapid rising cost of a veterinary education. Especially in the rural areas.

Topic: Student debt to salary ratio

Description:

Topic: Student debt vs. Salaries

Description:

Salaries are stagnant while the cost of education continues to rise. At the same time, a generation of practitioners is looking to retire and sell their practices. Something has got to give.

Topic: Student Debt.

Description:

The cost of education will not go down. We must find ways to increase our value to society, so that our incomes can afford to pay off the debt.

Topic: student indebtedness

Description:

Coupled with the issue of majority urban practice is the seemingly insurmountable debt with which students are laden upon leaving veterinary school. I believe some of these students are not necessarily seeking a particular urban lifestyle, but rather an urban salary with which to service their debts. As the recession carries on, state budgets are not likely to be of much assistance, but need the schools strap the students with the burden?

Topic: Student indebtedness

Description:

Costs of education seem to outstrip veterinary earnings

Topic: Student Loan Burden

Description:

The amount of debt that most students accrue over undergraduate AND graduate is climbing quickly. Most of the published studies I have seen state that the average student has between \$80,000-130,000 in debt when graduated. I graduated with \$225,000 which included undergrad and Vet school. I had to pay for most (almost all) of my schooling from loans. There needs to be a more comprehensive solution to lower the cost of schooling, as well as a better school loan interest tax deduction once we start to pay off those loans. Currently most veterinarians earn enough money after 1-2 years to no longer qualify for the student loan interest deduction. There also is so little scholarship money and almost no government grants available.

The magnitude of the student loan debt is not only pressing for the students and new graduates, but also to the practice owners that hire them. It is becoming more and more difficult to balance fair compensation for the new graduate that will cover student loan payments with fair fees for the pet and livestock owners that ultimately will be paying for those salaries.

Topic: Student loan debt

Description:

10 years out, and I am still paying my veterinary loans back. I can't imagine this issue will ever go away until job compensation equals cost of education, as in human medicine.

People commit their lives to becoming a veterinarian. We have always done this with the knowledge that we could achieve much higher salaries in other professions that require as much education and hard work. But now with the amount of debt students acquire for the education, the rewards of the job and the salaries paid are not enough to sustain the life expected with this level of education and profession. Most employers are not willing to pay the salaries new grads are asking for, salaries they are taught in school to ask for, to be able to afford student loans and the life they expect. This is affecting the types of jobs veterinarians take to afford the loan payments and lifestyle.

This is leading to fewer food animal vets, increased job turnover, veterinarians leaving the profession, and fewer well qualified people entering the profession. When you can make a veterinarian's salary with much less training and student loan debt, many will choose not to become a veterinarian. Veterinarians will have to start running businesses differently, increasing fees, and probably finally start getting paid appropriately for their education and skill. But, considering the food animal vet shortage and the need for skilled and quality veterinarians in all fields of veterinary medicine and public health, something needs to change for the debt acquired to become a vet.

Nothing has been more crippling to my life than my student loan debt. It has affected the jobs that I can pursue (I would like to be doing a more rural practice) because I would not be able to afford it. It has also negatively impacted my ability to buy a home and my families quality of life.

Topic: Student Loan Debt to Income Ratio

Description:

I, like many of my colleagues, paid non-sponsored (out-of-state) tuition and 6 years later, still have over \$100,000 in loans to pay off. Admittedly, I chose to have children, further effecting my income and effecting the time-line and interest in which I pay it back. Even before children, the loans ate a huge chunk of my income.

Topic: Student Loan Debt vs. Income Potential

Description:

The cost of education is far exceeding the earning power of veterinarians. As a newer graduate, I carry a significant debt load and face up to 30 years of repayment in order to make my payments feasible. My income potential in a semi-rural area (offers range from \$45,000 to \$55,000 with no to some benefits, no to some on call compensation) is nowhere near the amount needed to maintain a REASONABLE lifestyle (I do not have car payments and do not own a home) and pay my student loans in a 10 year time frame. On a 10 year plan my monthly student loan payments are \$1800. I still pay ~\$1400/month and my loan time frames are from 15-25 years. Yes, I did leave an engineering/corporate career after 4 years to become a veterinarian, which is a decision I do not regret. But with the costs of education rising so rapidly, how can we expect our profession to survive if the income potential is not there? Cost of education is not the only problem as I have experienced first had inadequate charging for services. But considering our income comes from the public's discretionary income, there is a limit to how much we can charge before we put price ourselves out of business. I am greatly concerned about the accreditation process for a school in Mexico. How can I compete with an influx of veterinarians that do not carry significant debt loads? Simply, I can't. I try to be the best veterinarian I can but the reality is that the majority of the time it comes down to money.

Topic: Student loan repayment

Description:

If it was not for the money I received from the student loans I would never had the chance of being a veterinarian. The most critical issue for a new graduate is repayment of the student loans.

Topic: Student Loans

Description:

Practitioner compensation makes it difficult for graduates to repay loans and drives many excellent potential candidates towards other courses of study. This is directly connected to the productivity of employed Doctors.

Education costs to high

student debt is so far beyond income that other profession become a better economic choice

The educational loan load that new graduates are saddled with has reached the tipping point. Something must be done to bring educational cost back to reasonable levels.

Topic: Student loans/ cost of veterinary education

Description:

Fewer qualified candidates will be able to seek veterinary educations because of the dramatic increases in the combined cost of both basic college and veterinary educations.

Topic: The cost of veterinary education

Description:

The debt load of new graduates is staggering to those of us well into the gray zone. What inovative measures can be implemented to control the ever upward spiral of veterinary education.

Topic: The debt load of new veterinarians

Description:

I graduated in 1980, and it took me 10 years to pay off loans for only two years of veterinary school (I could not get loans until I married because my parents were farmers, and owned land). I shudder to think of what the current student who has up to 4 years of debt (on top of undergrad debt) is going to do with today's prices and poor economic outlook. We know they have to be trained, and that takes money- how can we help them survive when they get out?

Topic: The high cost of a veterinary education

Description:

I am in academia. Our students need to have access to good, low-cost loans. The current cost of a DVM education is too high for many to even consider this option.

Topic: The increasing amount of student loan debt compared to starting salaries

Description:

The average new graduate comes out of vet. school with \$130,000 in student loans. How can she start paying that back 6 months after graduation with a starting salary of \$56,000? She may have to live with her parents for awhile!

It makes it very difficult to save money for the future when the student loan payment is \$1000 per month and she only makes \$4666 before taxes are taken. We need to invest more money to make it worth while for a person to go to vet. school or we will have a shortage of vets in this country. We may also have fewer and fewer younger vets

Topic: The rising cost of vet education

Description:

The cost of veterinarian medicine is so high that it causes a domino effect in that our new graduates need high incomes to support their debt load and cost of living. Yet, the majority of the existing one to two doctor practices cannot support these higher incomes.

Topic: tuition in veterinary colleges accross the country

Description:

As the majority of the current practitioners turn of retirement age, we are facing less numbers of capable younger veterinarians who can make it through a veterinary college without some astronomical debt load. IF this trend continues, people will not be financially able to afford veterinary school and the number of eligible students will fall. This point is tied into our economy as a nation.

Topic: Unserviceable educational debt of many veterinary school graduates

Description:

Levels of educational debt are rising faster than salaries veterinary school graduates are likely to receive. This cannot continue for long.

Topic: Veterinary Education & Costs of Obtaining the Education

Description:

Something needs to be done to address sky-rocketing tuition & cost to attend vet school. Post-graduation incentives and tax breaks, lobby to do away with the student loan interest deduction income cap.

Stagnant salary and earning potential due to lack of proper veterinary education. Revamping the current curricula to prepare new graduates for the needs of the workforce.

Topic: Veterinary salaries and debt

Description:

It seems like most of us associate veterinarians are held prisoner by one of the lowest salaries of any health profession. The national average is embarrassing, and even in parts of the country where salaries are higher on average, they are capped, with little hope for a raise. The fact of the matter is that somebody IS making the money, be it large corporations or frugal private owners, all of whom are humored by the fact that associate veterinarians have accepted generally low salaries for years, and there is very little pressure to change any of that. Where is our defense? Why is my local chiropractor or optometrist making \$30,000 more than me? If the expectation were higher, things would change. Not only does this affect some of us already in the profession who work hard and love what we do, but it will impact those who may one day want to be part of this honorable profession but unable to pay off their \$200,000 student loan or afford a mortgage and family. Not with \$80,000 per year.

Topic: Veterinary student debt

Description:

Veterinary Student debt increased 70% from 2000 to 2007. In 2008, the average starting salary for a veterinarian was \$61,518. That year, the average veterinary student debt was \$120,000 and has increased since. Financial planners suggest not incurring an educational debt in excess of one year's salary and now veterinary students are at twice that. Government-backed student loans since 2008 have risen to 6.8%. Compounding this is the fact that in 2008, 40% of graduates went on to do internships. This certainly exacerbates the debt issue. Dr. Ted Mashima, AAVMC associate director, stated that from 2000-2007, there were about 5000 job ads for veterinarians in the first quarter of each year. That number dropped by 59% in 2009! His concern and all of ours as veterinarians should be, what if a student with such a debt fails to secure a job?? A KPMG study done in 1999 predicts that the difference between supply and demand is increasing until it peaks in 2008 and then begins to decline until when supply meets demand by 2014. The study, I am sure, did not take into account the gender shift that is accelerating in the profession. The compounding of a majority of graduates going away from large animal medicine and into companion animal medicine will only put further downward pressure on veterinary service prices in that sector and thus will decrease veterinary incomes. The KPMG study went on to say that "It is probably more appropriate to characterize veterinarian's debt problem as not purely a debt problem but as an income problem. The increased debt will limit their ability to secure financing and thereby reducing their ownership opportunities which, in turn, affects their ability to repay the debt that they have accumulated to enter the profession". I strongly believe we need to wake up as a profession and deal with the fact that a veterinary education is a negative investment unless you have wealthy parents/relatives to fund your education. I truly believe it is a great and noble profession but one that needs a new approach. We have to address the burdening debt issue and, more importantly, the veterinary income issue.

Category: Food Safety/Public Health

Topic: Antibiotic availability

Description:

The use of antibiotics in food animal production is under increasing attack from misinformed groups and individuals. It is possible, perhaps even likely, that access to antibiotics for the profession in general will come under increased scrutiny. AVMA has to date stood for science and hopefully will continue to do so.

Topic: Antibiotic use in food animals

Description:

AVMA opposition to PAMTA and PEW. AVMA basing policy on science and refuting the legislation that wants to seriously hamper the food animal industry. The restrictions that PEW and PAMTA want to place will cause animal suffering, farmers to go out of business, further consolidation of the food animal industry and is not based on

Topic: Antimicrobial resistance

Description:

The use of antimicrobials in agricultural animals, particularly for growth promotion, that may be associated with subsequent antibiotic resistance in humans and how AVMA will aggressively address this issue. AVMA needs to seriously revisit its stance on this topic.

Topic: biohazards in our food supply

Description:

chemicals in our environment/water supply from improper use of fertilizers, pesticides, illegal dumping etc. will or is already leaking into our food supply and affecting human health in the form of chronic illnesses or cancer. How do we protect our animals that supply our food?

Topic: Bioterrorism

Description:

See #1-it ties in with this concern.

Topic: Cloned and genetically engineered food

Description:

Natural diversity has always contributed to disease resistance and strength. Cloned animals are not typically stronger even if they carry desirable genetic traits, also the public is generally uncomfortable with the concept of consuming these animals. Along similar lines, genetically engineered food stuffs for these animals has recently been shown to produce liver and kidney disease, incorporate it's genetic material into the intestine and most likely adversely affect the health in ways we aren't aware of at this time.

Topic: emerging zoonotic disease identification & control

Description:

75% of all emerging diseases are zoonotic. The One Medicine concept is on the right track with combining veterinary and human medical expertise, but this relationship needs to be strengthened to coordinate efforts and have effective responses to zoonotic disease identification, prevention, and control. This includes responses to epidemics and pandemics.

Topic: Emerging zoonotic diseases

Description:

H1N1 influenza may be the tip of the iceberg of diseases that can be transferred from animals to humans.

Topic: Environmental and ecosystem health

Description:

There are large numbers of environmental health issues facing our country and our planet. The veterinary profession is uniquely positioned to address many of these issues. Help promote awareness of the veterinarian's training and knowledge in this area. Also, work to develop further training/educational opportunities. Positions of employment in government and the private sector also need to be created.

Topic: Food animal issues

Description:

As much of our society moves away from any knowledge of agriculture, questions will arise about animal welfare, drug residues, and other food safety issues. I am concerned that increase regulation will ultimately raise the cost of producing food in this country and more and more of our food supply will be imported. This is not only an economic problem, but a safety and national security issue. I see the need to fight to keep food production in this country and limit importation of our food supply.

Topic: Food biosecurity

Description:

Terrorist attacks on our national food supply would be incredibly easy with the way that we centralize and transport so much of our food. We need to find ways to decentralize our food and increase local consumption of food regionally.

Topic: Food Safety

Description:

Although there have been improvements, food safety still remains a huge issue that requires addressing by the profession. This includes the challenging issue of antibiotic use in food animals.

Promoting our profession as a vital contributor to the safety of our food supply.

esp. certification for pre-harvest sanitation programs - like NPIP, but for cattle; also raw milk issues

Both animal food safety & animals as human food source are a huge issue. Antibiotic resistant bacteria from both sources will become a life threatening issue for larger segments of the human population. We should be at the forefront in protecting animals & the public.

explore new opportunities such as irradiation, immunity/vaccines, on farm screening

Topic: Food safety/bioterrorism?? I don't think so.

Description:

I really don't / can't worry about that as an issue - I know fear mongering is very "in" and a great way to get govt. dollars to protect us from every possible evil falling from the sky. We have many smart people monitoring many areas of our lives and to divert our scientific and intellectual workforce to protect us from every possible virus, prion, and bacteria seems ludicrous.

Topic: food security and land use

Description:

I believe AVMA should get involved in land use issues. The relentless conversion of farmland to residential property has reduced our national food security. When fewer people and less land is available for food production, farmers are pressured to overcrowd animals and use drugs and other methods to generate more food from fewer resources. AVMA must advocate for animal farmers, and point out that farming is not just some hobby but is key to health and national security. Land use policies must acknowledge that farming is a priority.

Topic: greater integration with other medical professions

Description:

Regarding appropriate use of antibiotics, public health issues regarding climate change, food safety will require an integrated approach engaging multiple partners from various fields. This will require cross-training veterinarians to be converse with issues affecting those professions

Topic: Increase in importation of underage puppies

Description:

I am concerned about the introduction of infectious disease from countries endemic with rabies, screwworm, etc. Please refer to: <http://veterinarynews.dvm360.com/dvm/Veterinary+news/Breed-wars/ArticleStandard/Article/detail/658787?contextCategoryId=44923>

Topic: Lack of funding for regulatory veterinary medicine

Description:

There is continual reduction in funding for State and Federal Animal Health related work that will impact the response possible in disease outbreak situations and in monitoring and surveillance

Topic: Lack of Surveillance

Description:

Despite disease scenerio exercises sponsored by Homeland Security, it will be difficult to establish a quarantine in the case of an outbreak as practiced. Our local Animal Health Laboratory has been closed due to budget cuts. This lab, located on the eastern shore of Maryland in Centreville, as well as the College Park Lab, practiced local surveillance, especially by keeping locals/ veterinarians informed about disease clusters and by avoiding dissemination of misinformation. There is no reliable local science resource available for farmers should a large outbreak again surface: ie, the Equine Herpes cases from a few years ago.

Topic: Minimizing medications in food animal feed

Description:

I am very concerned about the emergence of so many resistant bacteria. We can't continue to ignore the role antibiotic use in food animals, fish and poultry plays in this problem.

Topic: Not being prepared enough for a pandemic.

Description:

This is across the board to include MDs as well.

Topic: One Health and Food Supply Veterinary Medicine

Description:

The societal value of veterinarians is much greater than most people consider. Public health, food safety and environmental health need to become more of a focus for this profession. This is of particular concern for veterinarians going into food supply veterinary medicine.

Topic: Our role in food safety and public health

Description:

There is a danger that we will lose our credibility as health professionals sworn to protect public health. I am concerned we may be pigeonholed by government agencies and animal rights groups as defenders of commodity groups instead of health professionals who use scientific evidence to guide our decision making process.

Topic: Preparing for national disaster-agroterrorism

Description:

Terrorism is a real and vital threat to national security and safety. Veterinarians need to be involved in preparations to combat this risk.

Topic: production animal issues

Description:

Antibiotic resistance, food borne disease, etc

Topic: protection of a safe, affordable and humanely harvested food supply

Description:

I believe hunger will be the number one challenge for our world for the next century anyway, along with access to water, especially clean water. Veterinarians need to be involved in a safe, and humanely produced food supply for the benefit of our own citizens, for the benefit of the animals, and for helping to feed the world. This will be influenced by animal rights activists, an American society that is concerned with where their food comes from and how the animals are treated, and may not purchase as much meat to eat or will be afraid to eat meat due to medical concerns or misconceptions of safety that could appear at any time with instant media communications and misinformation, or even if there was a true safety issue, that scares people off for months or years to come. It may also be influenced by the growing livestock industries in the BRIC countries where they start producing more food within their own counties or from the impact of OIE restrictions and guidelines, both of which would impact our animal agriculture world trade. Veterinarians need to be VISIBLE and VOCAL in media relations, legislative advocacy, and public speaking in local, state, national, and international levels.

Topic: Protection of the Food Supply

Description:

It is my personal opinion that not enough emphasis is placed on protection of our food supply in the veterinary college curriculum. More of our graduates need to be motivated to consider positions in public health to protect our food supply. More training needs to be done in the veterinary colleges as well.

Topic: Public health

Description:

We are the "gate keepers" of mental health and have expertise in zoonotic diseases. We need to partner with all the other health care providers for the benefit of man kind.

Not only is the veterinary profession facing a gap in the number of public health veterinarians needed vs. those being trained, but the profession is not prioritizing issues of public health when these issues may conflict with economic or business interests. For example, use of antibiotics in animals is linked to development of drug resistance, and the disproportionately high use of non-therapeutic levels of antibiotics for growth promotion in livestock cannot be supported in light of the risk this poses to undermine the therapeutic efficacy of these and other antibiotics in both humans and animals. Similarly, the profession supports industrial farming practices, which may impact communities in proximity to such farms and affect farm workers and others occupationally exposed. Allergens, endotoxin, bioaerosols, and pathogens are among the many risks present in industrial farming, and AVMA positions fail to reflect concern with the impact of these hazards to human neighbors, human workers, and the animals themselves. These risks are well-documented in the scientific literature.

Topic: Public Health and role of veterinarian

Description:

I am afraid the role of the veterinarian in the health of food animals and public health will be diminished over the next few years. Since the veterinarian is the one person that sees "all family members" I think this critical role needs to be encouraged.

Topic: Public Health re: Pets

Description:

I am taking the liberty of submitting another comment in this area.

I dawned on me that what I wanted to say in my previous submission was that public health in pet practice means consideration of the humans over the pet. When a client presents a pet, the veterinarian should consider if the pet is safe for the person/family (especially if there are young children) zoonotically and behaviorally. The humans' health and safety should take priority over the pet's. I think today's approach is that the pet is as important as the human, which is not public health.

Small animal veterinarians are treating the pet but not necessarily the pet-human bond. We have become great at keeping a dog alive another 8 months with cancer treatment but not so good at fostering a satisfying pet/human bond by teaching people that they need to train their pets. The role of pets is to help or be companions to humans, not to exist as their own entity.

Dog bites and feral cat colonies, sometimes supported by veterinarians, are a public health problem. Pet practice veterinarians should consider their responsibility in public health, not think it is the responsibility of only those who work in public health.

In addition to routine zoonoses discussion, veterinarians should address pet selection, screening of potential pets, dog obedience training, and even be ready to advise euthanasia of a pet that may become a threat to humans. These measures may help prevent the too many dog bites.

We need to treat pets as animals that need to be trained, not as equals to humans. Veterinarians contributed to this "part of the family" attitude and it has come back to haunt us in dog bites and abandoned pets.

2. Another problem is the issue of no-kill shelters. This is probably something the AVMA cannot realistically address, but it is a problem. We cannot ethically/ecologically keep every unowned dog and cat alive. Sterilization is not effective in 'population control' which is really unleashed pet control. The change in demographics of people and pet ownership will mean reaching out with responsible pet ownership information to diverse communities.

3. From various conferences, I have learned public health veterinarians, in association with food animal veterinarians, are doing great things around the World to feed people and to prevent disease in animals and people, but the public doesn't know it.

Topic: Public Health

Description:

Promoting our profession thru coordination with other areas of the medical community.

Topic: Public Safety

Description:

I think that it will become mandatory for veterinarians and technicians to become part of a more indepth public safety program with many things to be considered. Terrorism, new diseases, etc.

Topic: Public Visibility of the role of veterinarians in food safety including terroris

Description:

The public at large is poorly informed about the role of DVM's in food safety and our frontline position in the event of a terrorist attack against food and fiber. Keep up, and expand, the public visibility of the profession in these

Topic: Raw foods

Description:

More people are feeding raw meals to their pets. The feeding kibble paradigm is shifting. How about instead of the usual negative knee-jerk reaction, vets start to look at the benefits to the animals. When clients come to my clinic, they are already feeding raw because a friend or neighbor suggested it. Pet store employees are the ones talking to people about what to feed dogs. I'd rather be the one talking to them about possible contaminations and how to go about feeding a balanced diet if that's the route they're going. Pushing commercial diets as the only correct way of feeding animals really makes us sound like food pushers. I know because I used to be one!

Topic: Safe, nutritious food supply

Description:

The profession must take an active leadership role in food production

Topic: Shortage of public health veterinarians

Description:

Veterinarians are well educated and prepared to manage public health issues and management, alongside their human medical colleagues. We must market the veterinary presence in this field and start paralleling with and working closer with the human health profession to market our excellent background in this arena.

Topic: Terrorism and how it relates to veterinary medicine

Description:

Is biosecurity more important to our profession and what is our responsibility in keeping up with it?

Topic: veterinarians as stewards of public health

Description:

x

Topic: Veterinary Role in One Health

Description:

How are veterinarians prepared to actively contribute to One Health- to collaborate with human health care providers- at the community level. What are the barriers to One Health- perceived and unperceived- and how can they be addressed?

Topic: zoonotic diseases

Description:

Perceptions such as H1N1 virus is transmitted by swine

Category: Other

Topic:

Description:

Topic: Advocacy

Description:

Governmental issues such as the new accreditation process by the USDA did not reflect the opinions of the veterinary profession. This government agency has managed to totally confuse most veterinarians, and it is dubious at best to think that there will be any benefits regarding human and animal health.

Topic: Animal importation

Description:

International trade in animals, both illegal and legal, is a huge business. Currently laws, and staffing levels at federal government agencies, do not adequately address the humane and disease control problems that arise from this trade.

Topic: Animal Imports

Description:

The U.S. has faced the danger of the introduction of foreign animal diseases such as monkeypox, due to lack of strong controls on legal and illegal animal imports. Meetings have been convened to address this issue, but responsibility for all the issues is either non-existent or spread out among a large number of groups.

Topic: anti-antibiotic use in food animal production "lobby"

Description:

Topic: Apathy

Description:

Somehow instill a sense of mission and purpose. Too many vets seek financial gain above everything else

Topic: Avoid the One Health Initiative

Description:

Formal melding of the veterinary profession with the human medical profession is a frightening proposition. At this time, the federal government is attempting a hostile take over of the human medical profession and it is possible that veterinary medicine may be next. Good intentions aside, the One Health Initiative is not an initiative

Topic: Collapse/debt

Description:

The most critical issue facing the veterinary profession in the next 5 years is the potential for economic, political, and societal collapse due primarily to the massive and unsustainable national debt.

Topic: Communist worldview

Description:

Communists, socialists, progressives, and transnationalists within our government, academia, and various organizations, threaten to destroy our constitutional republic, transform our capitalist economic system, and nationalize private enterprise. To this end, even the AVMA One Health Initiative promotes this totalitarian worldview by emphasizing "collaborative responsibility" for the benefit of "global society." I find the quote by John Kotter, included on page 7 of the AVMA Strategic Plan, telling: "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." This suggests that many individuals should subvert their minds to the mind of a few, which has the potential to severely limit innovation and lead to tyranny. "The man who speaks to you of sacrifice is speaking of slaves and masters, and intends to be the master." -Ayn Rand

Topic: Complementary Alternative Veterinary Medicine

Description:

I am writing to you as the president of the Academy of Veterinary Homeopathy and on behalf of its board. A growing demand exists from the public for Complementary Alternative Veterinary Medicine. Holistic veterinarians not only have to keep their license current with respect to conventional practice, but also have to take yearly continuing education courses in alternative medicine through the various holistic associations: AHVMA, AVH, AAVA, IVAS. This represents many hours of conferences and a great deal of expense. We find it VERY distressing that now RACE is rejecting CE Credits for CAVM courses that were previously approved- and this after undue delays in reviewing the applications. For the protection of the public, we think that a well-respected organization like AVMA needs to take control of the continuing education approval system. We fear that CAVM practitioners will start forgoing continuing education in alternative medicine because of excessive expense, resulting in poorly trained CAVM practitioners and in pet owners seeking alternative treatments from lay practitioners. I am sure this is NOT what the AVMA would want.
[note: contact information removed to protect privacy]

Topic: Continuing Education

Description:

More CE is being offered, yet it's harder and harder to get people to come to a convention or even a day of training, no matter if it's surgery, medical, practice management or wet labs. I did just attend an evening on equine neurology with a packed room, but a pharmaceutical company paid for the speaker to come, paid for an open bar, and paid for a full dinner including dessert. In essence, these 40 equine vets were "paid" to attend. Local, state and national associations can't compete with that, and I don't know that we should. Forecasting the online environment with the values of recently graduating veterinarians hopefully will guide us towards a new or revised CE offering strategy that is highly sought after and less redundant between groups. The competition devalues offerings and dilutes strengths of entities.

Topic: Disposal of dead animals

Description:

Innovative ideas need to be heard for disposal of dead animals, especially large animals. If euthanasia could be humanely accomplished without the use of toxic chemicals, more large animals could be consumed by carnivores at zoos, for instance.

Topic: division of the veterinary field

Description:

with more veterinarians that are not from an agriculture background or understand food animal production, there will be clear separation as what occurred in CA during Issue 2

Topic: education of future veterinarians

Description:

v

Topic: Emerging diseases

Description:

New manifestations of diseases

Topic: Emerging, re-emerging, and foreign animal disease threats

Description:

Veterinarians must be vigilant and qualified to detect the onset of these diseases and to seek the needed expertise to deal effectively with an outbreak.

Topic: Employ our pets in more ways to make our human lives better.

Description:

Service animals have helped thousands of humans live better lives. Diabetics, visually impaired and epileptics are but a few of these applications. We have many, many areas still needing animal assisted therapy.

Topic: Entitlement culture

Description:

Prevalence of the entitlement culture and the belief that goods and services, such as medicine, are rights that can be demanded, rather than items of value which must be earned, is a threat to the viability of all professions.

Topic: environmental issues

Description:

environment as it relates to loss of species diversity, loss of wildlife habitat, maintenance of livestock and companion animals that live outdoors, increased interface between humans, pets, and wildlife

Topic: Ethics in the Profession

Description:

This goes along with my previous comment, but I believe that the profession is also suffering from a lack of ethics, especially among certain practice owners (not necessarily vets) and some younger veterinarians.

Topic: Evidence based discussions and decisions

Description:

Gathering appropriate evidence, using clear definitions, about areas of concern. For example, use the economic definitions of 'supply' and 'demand.' Clarify, when one is speaking of 'need,' exactly what measurement this word reflects. Include total number AND percentage of the overall veterinary workforce one is speaking of, when discussing 'need' and 'demand.'

Whenever ANY controversial or emotion-laden topic is discussed, it is critical to define vague words and also to include measurement and evidence as part of the discussion. (You can measure more than financial data; it IS possible to measure values, desires, etc -- but DO measure them, rather than assume that a few loud voices equals a lot of people!)

Topic: FAD Training for veterinarians in clinical practice.

Description:

They are our first line of defense. While I was still professionally active, a few practitioners would be sent to the Plum Island FADD School.

Topic: first year mentorship programs

Description:

The first year is important to developing efficient skills as a veterinarian, mentorship from your first employer plays a big part in that role.

Topic: Humane Society of the U.S.

Description:

Topic: International presence

Description:

Globalization affects veterinary medicine as well

Topic: Loss of support of the drug companies' support of association

Description:

Small associations struggle without their support

Topic: Make conflicts of interest explicit

Description:

Many aspects. Conflict of interest is a situation of divided loyalties (and not the potential result, or lack thereof-- it doesn't go away with good intentions).

1. The discussions of 'need' should make explicit the interests behind that 'need.' For example, if veterinary colleges receive funding based on state agriculture interests, then those colleges may have a strong interest in making a case for the 'need' for food supply veterinarians (and thus school funding, and thus 'attracting' students with this interest). But, where is the actual economic demand? (i.e., open job positions, in numbers; what % of the overall vet population is this?).

2. In another vein, the increasing numbers of interns is a concern because it a) reflects insecurity of new grads with regard to their abilities; b) Dramatically impacts the debt:income ratio of new grads. The conflict of interest here is the schools' need to increase the number of interns (people to do work at the university), versus its need to 'produce' a graduate capable of joining the workforce. In spite of clear evidence that those completing an internship do not earn more than those who don't do an internship (AVMA data), many in academia continue to tell students they will earn more. This reflects a cognitive dissonance... conflict of interest.

3. Finally, conflict of interest is reflected in the increasing corporate funding of both university and post graduate education. Our profession is incredibly uninformed (in denial?) about this issue; we could learn much from studying the situation in human medicine. Too many veterinarians think that if 'we are nice, and honest too' and 'they are a good company,' then conflict of interest somehow 'goes away.' Yet what do clients think when (if!) they are told, 'our staff gets its CE about nutrition from company X... by the way, we recommend the pet food made by company X.' So much of what is done in vet med does not pass the 'headline test' -- if this were a major newspaper headline, how would it be received?

Topic: Mentoring

Description:

Practicing veterinarian mentoring of students was a great thing when it was first introduced. I participated on both sides back in the 90s at the University of Illinois. Sure, we had Erv Small, but the process of matching and the program worked for everyone. Then it fell off, and now as we prepare to reinvigorate it, there's significant pushback from the students, school administrators, and even association members. I still believe mentoring provides value to both the newbie and the oldie-but-goodie, but it needs a major overhaul. Perhaps we don't even focus on students anymore but recent grads? Give them opportunities to get together with each other and match them with a practitioner who's not their boss. Once upon a time practice visits, dinners, and hanging out at tailgates and football games worked. I have to believe something will work now, in 2010, but it will probably be something different, more social media-oriented. That's fine, but let's provide our young leaders and our seasoned leaders with opportunities to connect and infect each other with wisdom and enthusiasm

Topic: One Health

Description:

In the sense of the interaction between health issues of humans, domestic animals, and wildlife

Topic: One Health Initiative

Description:

Continue to develop and strengthen the veterinarian's role in One Health. Further develop and expand interdisciplinary cooperation and team work.

Topic: One Medicine

Description:

Maintaining momentum regarding One Medicine / One Health and being the lead to enhance veterinarian-physician interactions. Ensuring that AVMA 'walks the walk' and not just 'talks the talk.'

Topic: People medicine/animal medicine synergy

Description:

H1n1 is just one example of how the medical community both human and animal need to have a closer working relationship and level of respect in the years to come. Added in bioterrorism and I see levels of DVM/MD relationships that we have only begun to see.

Topic: Pet Overpopulation

Description:

There are still way too many animals at the shelter that must be euthanized each year. As veterinarians, we need to collaborate to work on this problem even more than we already do. There is no excuse in a first-world country to have such a high pet overpopulation. There needs to be more education in schools about the importance of spay/neutering animals (by the vet community) and more rigid fines that hold those accountable for not being responsible pet owners.

Topic: Population Control in Dogs and Cats

Description:

The overpopulation in dogs and cats seems to be growing, even with the increase in spay/neuter clinics. This problem needs to be aggressively attacked for the good of animal and human health.

Topic: Quality of life

Description:

Add 1 & 2 together to much work.

Topic: Regulation of drugs

Description:

New drugs need to be made available quicker once testing has been done by a highly regarded agency, even if that agency is not located within the US (such as European agencies)

Topic: respect for breeders

Description:

Having come from an equine background, it is amazing for me to hear small animal veterinarians down grade dog and cat breeders. I wonder sometimes what these veterinarians think they would be working on if we eliminated all breeders. This does not imply that puppy mills need to be tolerated, but we should be educating breeders and not making them our enemy. Even backyard breeders can be educated to know the proper procedures. Are we really performing our duties when we automatically assume that every animal on the planet needs to be neutered or spayed. Or when we as a profession look down on veterinarians who do not require every animal that walks through the door to be sterilized. I see to many articles that suggest we not respectable veterinarians if we associate with breeders or pet stores. Is it better to educate or condemn. Small animal practitioners should look at food animal and equine veterinarians where they develop close respect and a trustful relationship with the producers

Topic: The growing divide between companion animal and production medicine

Description:

I see the issues of animal welfare and contrasting priorities between companion animal and production medicine causing a rift in our profession. This was best deonstrated during the California ballot issue in the 08 election, where the California VMA essentially split over the question of welfare for farm animals. We are a small profession, but with diverse careers and knowledge bases. If we divide over this issue, we will lose a large amount of strength.

Topic: unwanted pets

Description:

I think we need to reiterate the importance of understanding that a pet (regardless of size) is a living being and requires personal responsibility. There should be a commitment to keep the animal, and keep it healthy and as pain free as possible. People need to understand this may cost them time (exercise, training, vet visits) and money. If they can't make that commitment they should get a stuffed animal. And saying the kids wanted the dog or cat and now they won't take care of it is no excuse. The responsibility belongs to the parents!

Topic: Veterinarians need to know about overpopulation of companion animals

Description:

I am amazed at the number of Veterinarians who are totally unaware of the overpopulation problems of pet animals. This is something that the AVMA has an obligation to let their members know about. Veterinarians who continue to promote their clients to breed their beloved pets just put more and more mediocracy out into the market. My personal feeling is that breeding of pure bred dogs is something that cannot be stopped, however the objective in breeding purebred dogs is to improve the breed. My feeling is that if a person is not willing to expend the time and money to campaign their purebred animal to championship and to prove it is a good example of the breed (politics considered), then they should have it sterilized. The novelty of the "fashion breeds" should be pointed out, by the Veterinarian to their client, that they are just mixed mutts, in many cases combining the bad points of both of the parents. Veterinarians, in many cases, are not aware of the rescue groups for these animals. Obviously dog and cat Shelters are best known, but there are rescue groups and Shelters for rabbits, guinea pigs, rats, birds, reptiles and more!!!! Of course the horse people are now finding the problem of too many surplus horses and not enough Shelters with the advent of closing the horse slaughter plants. We, as protectors of animal life, should spread the word about "too many surplus animals" to our clients and let them enjoy those that mean so much to them as individuals. It is especially annoying to hear someone say that they want to breed their little "Poopsie" because she is so wonderful and they want a little one "just like her". The powerful retort is "but how many of our children grow up just like us"!!!! A good discussion is in order!!!!

Topic: Veterinary Accreditation Program

Description:

I realize that a lot of recent effort has gone into improvement. I am retired; therefore, I am not in a good position to evaluate the current status. I believe one of the weakest areas is the practitioner's role in the Bovine Tuberculosis Eradication Program. My guess would be there is still a big problem with underreporting of tuberculin responses by Accredited Veterinarians.

Topic: zoonosis

Description:

as things like Swine flu crosses into cats and dogs, as MRSA appear in pets and they act as fomites, as leptospirosis spreads slowly across the US, boundaries between human and animal diseases are getting blurred (I had an immunodeficient child who got "kennel Cough" from his dog) We THINK we are safe aware but I think this is the sleeping giant and more is to come

Topic: Zoonotic Disease

Description:

MRSA, q fever?

Category: Public Perception

Topic: Animal rights activists

Description:

HSUS, PETA and other well-funded groups have the ear of the public and will affect the way we all practice medicine. We need our veterinary organizations to be proactive in providing a counterbalance for the public eye.

Topic: Changing public attitudes toward animals in our nation.

Description:

How does the profession deal with this?

Topic: comprehensive public awareness of veterinary value to society

Description:

This is a key issue to help increase public support for veterinary education, encourage many more people to pursue careers in veterinary medicine, and establish and assure awareness by a wide variety of institutions and agencies that veterinarians can be key participants in their missions, including public health and research as well as clinical care.

Topic: Convey the value of our services to the public.

Description:

It is vitally important that we continue to market our services to the public. In the past few years there has been some erosion of the value that the public has for veterinary services. For example, the Consumer Report's article was damaging to us. Also there are columnists that place a low value on veterinary care in the Wall Street Journal as

Topic: Erosion of Credibility

Description:

Vets are slowly going to be perceived as a "Jack of all trades, master of none" as technology and information continues to surpass our capabilities at the practice level. The strongly independent DVM (Myself falling into this category) only knows what he/she knows. We are used to being 100% in control of the pet owner, making all decisions about their care. We need to adopt technology and a way to standardize some aspects of the care we provide pet owners. We lose credibility when we provide our independent opinion-based "off-the cuff answers" about everything. People now see thru this. We are a jack of all trades, master of none when one considers we go to vet school then enter SA practice to become a Surgeon/Anesthesiologist/Oncologist/Radiologist/Dentist/Pharmacist/Business Owner/HR person et al... This is a tall order, but not impossible to achieve. The solution comes from Laying the foundation for future challenges to these concerns during the Pre-during-post grad. period: (A lifetime of learning) to create not just a DVM with a heavy scientific background, but a LEADER! Leaders in veterinary medicine will adapt and improve the industry. People are smart and will challenge the DVM in practice as the information is readily available on any subject, the DVM must learn how to communicate and research information as their clients do or again they will tarnish their image, lose revenue and erode their credibility and the overall image of the veterinary profession. A final example I see weekly is a pet owner upset because their DVM charges \$25-\$40.00 or more for a Rx found on the Wal-Mart \$4.00 list. - The client leaves the practice forever. The DVM lost revenue and credibility.

Topic: Ethics in veterinary medicine - public education role

Description:

As special interest groups push for changes in how US (and world)society uses and cares for animals, the general public and its governing bodies in the US need to make educated decisions when it comes to a variety of animal-related issues, from agricultural animal use to research animal use, pet welfare issues, food safety and public health, etc. The veterinary profession is a key to helping to define these areas and provide educated perspective to the general public and law makers.

Topic: Expectations of public for medicine comparable to humans but cheaper

Description:

The public expects pet care to equal human care but will/can the public pay for it?

Topic: Fee increases

Description:

Fees are outstripping public's ability to pay. members need to push insurance harder, build more low cost clinics or face skyrocketing euthanasia rates and a lowering of public opinion regarding the profession

Topic: General public's views on different animal uses

Description:

The general public is not well informed about where their food comes from or how medical advances are made. Without this awareness, and addressing people's feelings about these topics, we will lose the public sentiment and the animal rights' agenda succeeds. I have many thoughts as to how to address people's feelings not simply with facts, because that doesn't sway them. Talking to them at their level and understanding their concerns will work best. Facts don't always speak for themselves; that's the way scientists think, and it's not how most people in society think. We need to find a different way to communicate to them, even if it's language we as a profession don't like to use.

Topic: Keeping Doctor Status

Description:

Confidentiality of client-patient information. Being viewed as medical doctors with all of the traditional status, responsibilities, privileges.

(I am practice of one.)

Topic: Loss of public confidence/failure of internal policing

Description:

Issues like #1 are leading to a loss of public trust in our profession, as are the widely varying standards of practice between clinics. My experience has been that state boards are only concerned with willful violation of practice acts, and not standard of care. Boards are not interested in hearing from other veterinarians and only want to hear consumer complaints. Practitioners are also understandably reluctant to point fingers at other practitioners. This leads to a situation of virtually no quality control over the profession and as consumers get better at finding information, the profession looks worse and worse in the public eye.

It is one thing for the AVMA to put out guidelines and statements, but if they aren't followed up to make sure that all practitioners know what they are and the reasons behind them, they only help those who are already practicing at the top. There needs to be a way to get through to those who are struggling to provide services that just get by to learn better practices. This would result in an earned improved public image or an image that doesn't get a black eye from the punch that I see coming.

Topic: Loss of Trust in Veterinarians

Description:

Believe that lawyers may seek to vilify veterinarians and get more people to sue their vets. People are becoming more concerned that their veterinarian is ripping them off.

Topic: Maintain our confidence in our own value to the public

Description:

Veterinarians tend to downgrade the absolute value of the services that we are providing to our clients and to the public through public health work that we do everyday. Whenever a veterinarian deals with a zoonotic problem and educates their clients they are adding to the overall health of the human population as well as the animal being treated. We allow others to downplay the importance of our work because of some feeling of insignificance compared to working with humans. We allow other professions such as physical therapists and human chiropractors to see our patients without referrals from us. This gives the public the impression that ANYONE can treat animals. Yet would they believe that anyone could perform dentistry on a human, with training they got over a weekend course? No. We must protect ourselves by maintaining confidence in our skills and our value as a profession.

Topic: Maintain social relevance

Description:

Veterinarians have a high level of trust today from animal owners and the general public. Public disputes (not discussions) within the profession over animal welfare, use of antimicrobials, alternative medicines are damaging the reputation of veterinarians in the public eye. We must lead in all these areas with science where possible and including social aspects of the case where necessary. It is critical that veterinarians understand and can explain, objectively, the issues that face each segment of the veterinary profession.

Topic: Maintaining public presentation of open minded search for 'truth' when

Description:

Yes, we want decisions based on science rather than emotion; but appearing dogmatic or in denial of the possibility that our previous policies just 'might' be wrong, with attitudes often rooted solely in economic ramifications, can ruin our professional image and credit with the public. Only recently have I heard verbage from the AVMA that we are working hard to determine the 'truth' about antibiotic resistance issues. What was heard in the past was, 'There's no evidence for such a problem, so we don't believe it exists, end of story.' Well, what if we are wrong and are not trying to find the truth? The public has to feel and know that we are open to the possibility that our stand could be wrong, that we are searching for truth and 'will' reverse our policies if we find we need to; but in the meantime, here are reasons why it is so important to be sure before we blindly start making changes that could have larger than expected undesirable results. This has everything to do with attitudes of our spokespersons how they use words to communicate.

Topic: Maintaining public trust

Description:

Our profession needs to maintain the respect and trust of the general population by upholding our high standards of care, including our role in guiding discussions and policies on animal welfare.

Topic: noneconomic damages and pet guardianship issues

Description:

The public is demanding increasing awards for criminal acts, negligence or malpractice that lead to the injury or loss of a pet. The profession appears to be speaking out of both sides of its mouth because we capitalize on the human-animal bond yet we appear to deny its value and state that animals are property when owners seek reparations. Public opinion is growing against this apparent contradiction, yet the profession (in the public's eye) does not appear to be proactively taking measures to address the issue. We say noneconomic damages and guardianship are not the way to go, yet we do not provide acceptable alternatives. The public perception is that the profession hides the frequency of malpractice/negligence and "takes care of its own" to the detriment of the animals and the human-animal bond.

Topic: Our voice lost in the noise:

Description:

Collective professional outreach to the public: To hold our respected position and to recover lost ground we need to open a dialog with the public about the role of animals and help them grasp and accept the compartmentalized paradigm of animal use and how those diverse uses benefit society and are required by society. Companionship, scientific development, draft and food are compatible and not mutually exclusive uses. We need to communicate how and why these can coexist. A failure to do so will see the advance of HSVMA and the like which will divide us from within and cost us the status we collectively hold today. We need to push back, and with reason.

Topic: Over-vaccination

Description:

As more internet savvy consumers realize vaccine FSA comes from vaccines, there's going to be a major public backlash. Too many views on vaccines, half based on revenue, half based on animal welfare

Topic: pet health care costs

Description:

Need to control costs but also improve public perception of veterinary expenses.

Topic: Poor public perception

Description:

There have been multiple articles in the national press over the past couple of years that paint the veterinary profession in an unfavorable light. There was apparently no response by the AVMA to rebut these allegations.

Topic: Professional credibility

Description:

With the advent of much easier access to information via the internet, but without any filtering or gradation of reliability, the pet and/or livestock owning public is likely to use online advice first versus the scientific and evidence based medicine the profession is attempting to propagate. Until there are major events/disruptions such as the melamine pet food scandal, the consumer will not be aware of possible physical damage to an animal, and emotional/psychological damage to an animal owner, that can be done. Media time and training of veterinary practitioners to be more vocal about damage caused by ignorance is needed. This needs to be done at all levels, international via OIE or FAO, nationally by AVMA, and state and locally by the attendant veterinary organizations. Critical to me here is the discussion about antibiotic use in animals and its relevancy to things like MRSA, food safety, and disease control.

Topic: Public Awareness

Description:

Making the general public aware of the role of veterinarians in society. Making the public aware of animal health, zoonoses, importance of and reasons for proper animal health care.

Topic: public education

Description:

I think the public still really has no idea the important role veterinarians play in their lives every day. This can range from research to public health issues to safety issues to health of our companion animals, but this also has more widespread and insidious effects also. Because of a lack of public education about what we do, the public doesn't understand when we have concerns about non-licensed people performing procedures that are considered the practice of veterinary medicine. While the public may perceive us as being defensive, they frequently don't understand that the non-DVM's don't have specific training that encompasses the health and well-being of animals. Infringement on the practice of veterinary medicine not only affects our profession, but can ultimately effects our

Topic: Public image of the veterinary profession.

Description:

Despite the good work done by Dr Herriott and others, public image is of vital importance to the profession, now and in the future. We must strive to ensure that the scope of contributions by our profession to the human, as well as the animal world, is a given around the planet. Most people that I meet have little idea of the enormous, broad range of activities, both military and civilian, in which we are trained and actively involved. There is still a bit too much of (no offense intended) the "Horse Doctor" image.

Anything we can do to raise the public comprehension of the endless contributions we veterinarians make to this world we all inhabit will help us on many levels. From the pet practitioner being scolded for the price of an office call to the university professor applying for a grant. It might be called 'blowing your own horn' but it needs doing.

Topic: Public knowledge of Vet Med costs

Description:

Public Knowledge of Veterinary Medical costs. As the price for vet med services rises, the consumer may feel that the prices are unreasonable. In the U.S., most consumers do not know the cost/price of human medical services (but they may know more soon). Therefore, since vet med services are completely out of pocket, they perceive service prices as high and perceive veterinarians as wealthy. I have found myself explaining human medical procedure cost and veterinary medical procedure costs in more than a few party conversations. I am always amazed how many people believe veterinarians' wages are similar to human medical professionals and they believe are prices

Topic: Public Perception of the Profession

Description:

With increasing attacks from organizations like PETA, the profession is facing a clear challenge to its traditional role in the public's eye as the most trusted profession. Furthermore, efforts by attorneys to seek damages for the pain and suffering of animals are painting vets as cold-hearted and greedy, seeking only to profit from the pain and suffering of pets and their people. And while WE know that such a description fits the LAWYERS to a tee, public perception of our profession is suffering.

Topic: Public's perception of the relevance of veterinary medicine

Description:

The veterinary profession must do a better job of getting the message out to the public regarding our roles in public health (including mental health), food safety, management of zoonoses, and in biomedical (comparative) research

Topic: Reputation

Description:

The veterinary profession has been highly respected and trusted by the public, but lately there have been multiple attacks on the reputation of specific vets and the profession in general. I do not think that enough is being done to fight the message that veterinarians are always greedy, money-grubbing hacks that will add unnecessary charges and markups to the bill. The public is losing trust in us, and that is just going to hurt the profession. We need to figure out a way to keep the respect that we deserve, and somehow convince the public that we cannot provide quality care for free.

People are coming to view veterinarians as less caring and more greedy.

Topic: Reputation of veterinarians

Description:

There seems to be a shift toward trying to pattern veterinary medicine after human medicine. In some cases this is not a bad thing. However we all know how broken that system is and taking everything rather than just the good is not the way to go. I hear more and more comments about how veterinarians at the big hospitals care more about money than the pet. This concerns me. There are ways to collect fees without making it seem more important than the pet.

Topic: Salary

Description:

The nonvet world needs to understand the value of the vet and the uniqueness of a vet in public health and other areas.

Topic: Service to the public

Description:

It is my hope that all institutions of veterinary learning will always stress 'service first' to their students. It is important to have a reasonable income but let us pray that our profession will always be known to have service to the animal owning public to be our primary goal.

Topic: sustaining aide to unwanted animals or populations

Description:

Currently, there is large support for shelters and unwanted horse program. This is very different from years ago and is a move in the right direction. The way these issues are handled in the public light shapes the future of veterinary medicine and the public's image of veterinary medicine

Topic: The veterinarian as the animal health care and welfare expert

Description:

Continue to promote the veterinary profession as the source of knowledge and information on all animal health and welfare issues.

Topic: Value

Description:

Need JOE PUBLIC to get the fact that Veterinary care is the BEST bargain in health care today. Tired of hearing.. "It's more expensive than my care"... obviously that is UNTRUE ... JOE doesn't SEE HIS human care bills.. \$190 for Routine exam... \$700 for specialist... etc

Topic: veterinary professional reputation loss

Description:

Veterinarians have enjoyed being one of the most respected professions, but that is going to change. Media reports are questioning veterinarian's ethics more frequently, and there are increasing quotes from members of the public that imply veterinarians are "in it for the money." Media reports of negligence and malpractice are increasing, and the public perception is that the veterinary boards are "old boys' networks" who look out for their own and do not objectively evaluate the cases. People are increasingly seeking media attention to try their cases in the court of public opinion. Breeders are telling owners not to vaccinate their pets, and owners are believing them and, instead, questioning their vet's motives for recommending vaccination. Animal welfare groups are winning the war of public opinion on many issues that affect veterinary medicine because the profession does not get involved or does not communicate effectively with the public.

Topic: zoonotic disease

Description:

Need to continue to work hard to educate the public on zoonotic disease and how to prevent it.

Category: Veterinary Education

Topic: \$ Inflated education and the need for more specialized vets

Description:

Along the line of Issue # 1 I mentioned above, I see why vet school is so expensive. We have to learn way too much, and most of it gets tossed in the trash as soon as we graduate. This is especially true for large-animal vets like me...I had to pay for an education focused on over 50% small animal (yes, even though my vet school 'tracked', which is a joke to begin with), then face lower salaries due to my selected large animal profession, forget about all the small animal stuff I learned, then still have to pay for all the small animal education. If things keep going the way they are, I think we'll see a day when we'll have to graduate 'Doctors of Equine Medicine' or 'Doctors of Canine/Feline Medicine'. I think that would be unfortunate, as I do enjoy the possible diversity of career paths with holding a DVM.

I think the teaching hospitals need to be put back in check...let's focus on the basics of being a good, practical veterinarian, and cut the cost of vet school by limiting the students' access/exposure to the advanced imaging, surgery, oncology etc. Yes, it is exciting stuff, but don't make every student experience all of it. It costs us money. And those who want to pursue it can do internships and residencies.

Topic: Accrediation of unqualified schools

Description:

Schools such as UNAM producing with highly questionable programs producing graduates that the CoE is considering on par with US veterinary schools. This coupled with the lack of transparency in the accreditation process and preceived corporate infulence jeprodized wages within the profession and risks undercutting the confidence of the public.

Topic: Accreditation of Foreign Veterinay Schools

Description:

The AVMA has to view the effect of foreign accreditation upon the economic standing of American veterinarians. There is a real threat to our profession if foreign graduates, with little to no educational debt are allowed to come into this country and compete with our new graduates (see #1 above). If foreign veterinary schools are to receive accreditation they should have to meet the exact same standards that US veterinary schools have met in the past. Criteria for accreditation should not be changed! Support the profession in the US!

Topic: Accreditation of veterinary educational facilities must be based on

Description:

the maintenance of strong academic core courses, exposure to research and other aspects of veterinary medicine including community practice.

Topic: Active, organized, official AVMA participation in the pre vet areas

Description:

Findlay college in Ohio has a pre vet program which if not still, recently did represent the largest group of those students committed to a specific undergrad learning program. My nephew is currently in this program and he tells me that there is little at the day to day level (not talking about the convention level or college career days) which is official and consistently active on that campus. I am not talking just about an AVMA appointed faculty rep but an active contact mechanism (on site if possible, electronically if not) which will inform and help the pre vet student understand and learn how to get engaged in the many and increasing opportunities for the graduate DVM to find work outside of the traditional practioner areas that in today's enviornment simply gobbles up too much of the interested students time at every level of their higher education in my opinion.

Topic: Acupuncture training

Description:

The support and encouragement of traditional Chinese acupuncture using Chinese medical philosophy is critical in todays medicne.

Topic: advancement of homeopathic medicine

Description:

In the face of antibiotic residues and the growth of organic farming, the education of large animal veterinarians in the proper use of homeopathic medicine is essential.

Topic: Alternative Veterinary Medicine

Description:

I am a veterinarian certified in Homeopathy with the Academy of Veterinary Homeopathy. I am also certified in Acupuncture and Advanced Chinese Medicine with Chi Institute. I feel the public demand for such modalities as well as chiropractic will only increase. It is time for the profession to get behind the instruction and continuing education in alternative medicine in veterinary medical schools as well as continuing education.

Topic: Assault on accreditation processes

Description:

Recent attacks, based on half-truths or less, coupled with long-standing attacks from AAVSB threaten the basic fabric of our time-honored system of quality assurance.

Topic: Availability of competent new graduates (small and large animal)

Description:

Currently, veterinary training facilities appear to instill such a great respect for the specialists teaching in the hospitals that the new graduates frequently feel insecure about their abilities to be authoritative in their first jobs outside of school. A recent new graduate expressed he was left to consider a routine cystotomy as "a referral surgery" after a serious conversation with an instructing surgeon at his teaching hospital. The attitude this surgeon has regarding the nuts and bolts and daily procedures of a primary care facility is inappropriate, counterproductive to private practice, and may explain why an increasing portion of each graduating class desires post-graduate internships over beginning a career. Fourth-year teaching programs should not only sharpen and exercise the skills necessary to become a consistently improving practitioner, but they should give the students confidence in their educations and their own abilities to solve problems and serve clients and patients without the misguided second-guessing that every patient would benefit from referral to a specialist. Primary care will become extinct or "vaccine-only" if this attitude is not curbed.

Topic: Basic medical training

Description:

I hired a new graduate from Penn this year who can't take an ultrasound, let alone interpret it, what did she pay for? This is like not being able to read a basic x-ray 39 years ago. No surgical skills, a spay is a major surgery for them.

Topic: Breadth of training required for new graduates

Description:

Veterinary medicine is too broad a field to cover in a four year program. Change is needed to update antiquated models of training and allow and/or require specialization during veterinary education.

Topic: Business Training

Description:

Our education must include business training: in both the financial and human resource areas of running a business.

Topic: Changes in veterinary education

Description:

Our veterinary schools are struggling with the current model of education and shrinking budgets. The increase in specialization also impacts our veterinary schools and education. Our veterinary schools must change to meet these new challenges.

Topic: college debt

Description:

college debt is destroying many young peoples' dreams of becoming a DVM.

Topic: Communication skills

Description:

So many of the younger generation is obsessed and hooked on the new technology of computers and texting and cell phones and iPods that the fine art of communication with other human beings is becoming a challenge in everyday life as a veterinary practitioner. We need to be able to understand the needs of our clients--both emotional and physical. To do this, it is essential to pick up on cues of body language, voice cues, and facial expressions. Without a life of practice before vet school, our vet students become a "robotocized" as our human specialty counterparts. Emotion and compassion has been the center of our profession for so long, I would hate to see the medical profession part of our business suffer for the lack of human communication skills. Do we need to teach this in

Topic: complementary medicine

Description:

Clients are increasingly aware of the availability, safety and efficacy of complementary modalities for themselves. I practice veterinary medicine using homeopathy, acupuncture, nutrition and conventional modalities as appropriate. Veterinary students need to gain experience in complementary modalities to provide optimal health care to their patients. In many cases, complementary modalities provide a safer, gentler, more effective option, particularly for chronic diseases such as colitis, arthritis and skin conditions. In the case of food animals, complementary medicine can greatly reduce antibiotic use (and therefore both residues and resistance) and is compatible with organic farming practice.

Topic: Complimentary and Alternative Veterinary Medicine

Description:

As a practitioner of CAVM (specifically homeopathy, nutrition, some herbs- and I employ 2 vets who practice TCM, and one chiropractor who is certified in animal chiropractic), I feel AVMA needs to take an active role in mandating the instruction of CAVM modalities in the veterinary schools, and become a more vocal advocate of CAVM education for all veterinarians.

The public is using CAVM (a 2006 study (Lana) showed that over 65% of pet owners use some form of CAVM in their pets diagnosed with cancer)and rely on us for expert advice on it. The AAVSB via RACE is setting up barriers to make the study of CAVM modalities more difficult (I would be happy to provide details on the events of the past year)- a direct conflict with the needs of the public and the profession. AVMA has always been supportive of CAVM, but now needs to take a more active role in actually promoting dissemination of knowledge in CAVM. Specifically, AVMA, working with expert CAVM practitioners in the fields of homeopathy, TCM (including TCM-based acupuncture), homotoxicology, herbs, and chiropractic, should develop guidelines for instruction in CAVM in the veterinary schools and at conferences. (AVMA and NAVC, for example, already have CAVM tracks in their conferences.) These experts can offer guidance in either integrating modalities into established courses where appropriate, and/or teaching the modalities as separate courses, either as an in-depth course or as part of a comprehensive survey course. They can also offer suggestions for CE in CAVM for other conference sponsors.

I would be happy to speak to you further about this, and can be reached easily via email:[note: email removed to preserve privacy]

Dear fellow AVMA member,

I am a member of AVMA in good standing for the past 37 years and love my profession. I have been a practitioner of CAVM for the past 30 years, specializing in Classical homeopathy, nutrition, Bach Flowers, Gemmotherapy, Massage, Aromatherapy, Acupuncture and glandular therapy.

I feel AVMA needs to take an active role in making CAVM modalities a part of veterinary school education, and becoming a more visible in advocate of CAVM education for all veterinarians. The public is using CAVM (a 2006 study (Lana) showed that over 65% of pet owners use some form of CAVM in their pets diagnosed with cancer)and rely on us for expert advice on it. The AAVSB via RACE is setting up barriers to make the study of CAVM modalities more difficult, which is a direct conflict with the needs of the public and the profession.

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I would be happy to speak to you further about this, and can be reached easily via email: [note: email removed to protect privacy] .

Thank you for making this a better place for animals and for all you do to promote veterinary medicine.

Sincerely yours,
[name removed to protect privacy]

Topic: Cost of education

Description:

Cost of education and student debt load - salaries are not keeping up with this high cost making the decision to become a veterinarian difficult financially.

At the current time educational costs may almost outweigh the benefits of jobs available.

The cost of a veterinary education has made it impossible for new graduates to generate enough income to cover their debt. It is not reasonable to ask the pet owning population to support this debt load. It is not a question of charging reasonable fees. The average pet owner will not pay for new graduates to pay down their enormous debt and support their life styles to boot.

Topic: Cost of Education / Loan Debt

Description:

This issue affects everything from who enters the profession to who can afford practice ownership and the services a practice can afford to provide.

Topic: Cost of Education VS return on investment of time and monetary resources

Description:

It has become very hard for me to rec. the profession to potential students , when the cost of "learning" negates 10 - 20 years of debt redemption.

Students can spend 1/4 , to at most 1/2 of the Professional school education costs and get an education in the "trades" to practice their talents - -and make comparable wages.

Topic: cost of veterinary education

Description:

We have to be diligent to support our veterinary schools as they face major funding cuts from all sources. We cannot let costs to students escalate to where they are unable to repay student loans on average starting salaries.

1. Cost to Colleges to present & operate a top quality educational, service and research program.
2. Cost to students to gain an DVM or VMD especially in relationship to earning power when first graduate.
3. Years and demand to gain a PhD in Veterinary Medicine

Topic: Cost of veterinary education to states/institutions of higher learning

Description:

State support for veterinary colleges continues to decrease. This will likely result in closure of some veterinary colleges, while others will be forced to curtail services currently provided. The good news is this may force a rethinking of how to provide a quality vet education using innovative public/private partnerships.

Topic: Cost of veterinary medical education.

Description:

This issue is being broadly discussed in the profession today but it seems we are making little progress toward actionable change. And we need to lead the process to develop constructive solutions because the economic viability of our profession is stake. I believe the ultimate solution will be multifaceted involving not only veterinary medical teaching institutions but also pre-veterinary student outreach, educational lending institutions, and government.

Topic: Costs of education

Description:

Fairly self explanatory.

Topic: Costs of Veterinary Education and Reducing the Student Debt Load

Description:

There has to be a way to educate our students without requiring eight plus years of education to achieve a DVM (or VMD) with the costs incurred over that period of time. The basics that are required to educate a qualified veterinary clinician should not take eight years. It should not take four years of undergraduate education for a student to become qualified to comprehend the veterinary curriculum

Topic: debt load and earning potential of new graduates

Description:

If we don't address this issue, only the very wealthy will be able to afford to go to school and practice without reasonable compensation

Topic: Debt load of new veterinarians.

Description:

If you're \$100K in debt when you get your three letters, there are serious limits as to where you can realistically expect to work. Solve this problem, and you solve local manpower shortages, local manpower excesses, specialty (e.g. FAM) shortages, and graduate education.

Topic: Debt of new graduates

Description:

The cost of college education, and particularly professional schools like Veterinary Medicine, is too high, growing too fast, and ultimately is unsustainable. New DVMS' wages are not adequate to pay their education debt.

Topic: Debt versus salary

Description:

The cost of paying for this education versus your expected salary. There is a large discrepancy between the two, more so than for some other professions where you can have less education and a proportionately higher salary. Is the answer less expensive schooling (unlikely), or increasing what we're worth (real or perceived)? I think that answer is obvious.

Topic: Developing Veterinary Capacity and Infrastructure World Wide

Description:

The "world is flat" and the veterinary profession must recognize it's role in maintaining and developing the gold standard for veterinary infrastructure globally.

Topic: Diminishing financial aid/support to the educational system

Description:

In looking at the recent changes to our educational system, worrisome deterioration of our basic societal values can be observed. There's a lack of funding across all levels of education and this will continue to erode if we continue on the current path. Education is one of the most influential pillars of our great nation. It is the single best investment one can make in terms of future productivity, happiness, and growth. Cuts are across the board and our secondary educational system is experiencing unprecedented hardship. Ironically, the value of US education (arguably one of the greatest nations on earth) is far inferior to most other developed nations and even many developing nations. When (not if) trends continue, the US and the vet profession will suffer irrevocable damage.

Topic: Dramatically increasing body of knowledge

Description:

The mastery of data concerning the different aspects of veterinary medicine will become almost overwhelming. Good, quick search engines and Internet up-to-date information will be a necessity in the future. Journals, books, and other hard copy will become less and less effective.

Topic: Dumbing down to get Food Supply Veterinarian students

Description:

My concern is that in an effort to encourage students interested in Food Supply medicine some will suggest lowering the standards for admission to the colleges. This effort would be by creating a 'quota' of students that focus on Food supply and but did not meet admission criteria otherwise.

Topic: Economics

Description:

The economics of the cost of education and the income received is out of balance. The cost of education/debt must come down and/or salaries must increase.

Topic: Educating veterinarians for near, mid and long-range future

Description:

NAVMEC is a start at trying to determine needs. I fear that the colleges will not respond quickly enough to make a difference, and we may soon be producing veterinarians whose training is not relevant to the needs of society.

Topic: education

Description:

cost of education vs salaries in lower population area

More critical would be to preserve the educational process. Private practice is sucking the best and brightest DVM's away and leaving institutions with less than our best. Too much emphasis on research leaves profs uncomfortable in the teaching role. Politics keep some of our best and brightest out of teaching. There has to be a way to integrate teaching hospitals with private practice so students are given as broad and practical an experience as possible. Bring everyday working DVM's into the teaching hospitals, and bring the students out more into working hospitals. Everybody would benefit.

How do you educate the future veterinarian who could be anything from a small animal practioner to someone understanding how foot and mouth disease could be used as a biological weapon. Thats not easy to do and to pay for the process.

More emphasis in food animal topics in Universities

Topic: Education changes for DVM degree and licensure to meet societal needs

Description:

AAVMC and AVMA and state and national licensing boards are beginning to take leadership to help DVM degree education meet the needs of the future
Congratulations and continue this initiative

Topic: Education costs

Description:

The cost of receiving and maintaining a license must be reasonable in light of compensation. Movement between states to fill local insufficiencies should be promoted.

Topic: Education is unfocused

Description:

Educational institutions need to spend the limited time they have to educate students in the most focused way possible. Too much vet student time is spent on "busy work" during their book work and during their clinical year.

Topic: Education of future veterinarians

Description:

The education of all future veterinarians should include the following topics:

Shelter medicine

Population management

Pediatric spay/neuter

Animal welfare ethics

Investigating animal cruelty and neglect

Laws regarding animals

Each veterinary student should be required to spend time at their local animal shelter - performing physical examinations, spays/neuters, and euthanasias, speaking to people who are surrendering animals and to those who are adopting animals, and riding with animal control officers.

Topic: Education of veterinarians who are practice-ready for general/primary care

Description:

veterinarians are not being empowered by vet faculty to be confident in general practice - being taught by specialists

Topic: Educational debt

Description:

Educational debt has become so great that many people who might consider the profession are going elsewhere

Topic: educational loan burden

Description:

Veterinary school tuition is expensive. So is living in an urban area. I have a loan that will take me a total of 30 years to pay back, and because of that loan, I was not willing to pursue my dream of opening my own practice in my home community. States need to step up and fund the veterinary schools at a higher level, not just provide loan forgiveness programs to a select few. It's the state's desire to have more large animal vets? Fine, fund the school in such a way that they can make the tuition for large animal education much lower in cost or free. Charge high fees for small animal courses. Or create veterinary programs that don't require 3-4 years of an undergraduate degree, to provide a Bachelor's of Veterinary Science in 5-6 years right out of high school, like the British model does. Sure, the graduate of such a program wouldn't be a Dr., but would be a veterinarian!

Topic: educational process has slipped-

Description:

need more than power point presentations- what happened to lectures, dress codes and attendance requirements

Topic: Educational reform

Description:

Research and veterinary knowledge continue to expand at an overwhelming rate. The education system must reform to provide the critical education and separate it from the nice to know information. That may require more specialization and less time in basic science. It may also require regionalization of specific areas of veterinary medicine and licensing by specialization.

Topic: Educational Reforms

Description:

Just read the online April 1 JAVMA News on NAVMEC and the story mentioned how now into the third decade after the Pew Report we realize we should have changed before it was too late. Failure to implement the PEW Report devalued the veterinary degree to where it is now with high cost and little performance capability in graduates without additional training and degrees either to perform clinically or to be competitive in non clinical arenas as was said in both the Pew Report and the KPMG report. Fire Bennie Osburn and get Peter Eyre on the job along with the Drucker Foundation.

Topic: Escalating costs of veterinary education---student debt

Description:

Students are coming out of school with what amounts to a very large mortgage with no place to live. This is especially critical for the lower-paying positions such as government jobs that are already going unfilled.

Topic: Ethics and professionalism

Description:

Veterinary students and practitioners should have regular exposure to education in ethics and professionalism. This will engender a stronger AVMA and local and state associations that will look out for the interests of veterinarians.

Topic: Excessive high debt of our next generation of veterinarians.

Description:

The cost of a veterinary education is way out of line. How can a new grad make it with the wages that we, the private practitioners, can afford pitted against the crushing debts these students have. Professors do not need to make more money than the average practicing vet...they don't come close to having the risks that we have in business. We need to trim down the layer after layer of bureaucrats that siphon off all educational funding. The schools need to know that there is a finite amount that can be spent on pet care by the general public. Wasting money and time on high tech gadgets that will never be seen in private practice is not responsible. The schools need to work with practitioners and not dictate to them how and what they will practice with.

Topic: Finances

Description:

A veterinary education has become extremely expensive and difficult to afford. New grads are emerging with an extremely high debt load, and that affects their ability to choose where/how to practice (rural practices probably can't pay off the bills). It also deters people from entering the profession because the education cost is so high and our salaries do not keep up (partly because we are not charging appropriately out of fear that it will anger or alienate clients who do not budget or have pet insurance).

Topic: Financial Support of Veterinary Schools Budgets

Description:

Vet Schools need financial support to keep quality faculty and improve aging facilities.

Topic: flexibility in vet med education

Description:

Vet med education should reflect current technology and trend for specialized medicine. Also, education should include tools such as electronic resources vs. hard copy resources (texts)

Topic: foreign vet schools

Description:

Absolutely opposed to full certification for Mexican veterinary school

Topic: Funding for Animal Health and Veterinary Public Health Research

Description:

Most research institutions rely on federal funding to support biomedical research. Perhaps there should be more opportunities for companion animal health research as the federal government funds little or none. This would improve veterinary medicine, veterinary medical education, and the veterinarian's role in human and animal health. Similarly enhanced funding in veterinary public health will reap these same benefits.

Topic: Funding for veterinary medical education

Description:

As state budgets continue to be cut, veterinary schools at public universities continue to feel the squeeze. The Federal Government should look at the investment in veterinary medical education as an investment in public

Topic: Funding Veterinary Education

Description:

Vet schools continue to see funding cut and industry can only do so much to cover these losses. This means programs are going to get cut and more schools will have to specialize and offer courses across regions or nationally. We need to either encourage such cooperative efforts or find new sources of funding for vet schools, as the current model is not sustainable.

Topic: general financial awareness and marketing tools at undergrad level

Description:

The record will show that I have had my finger on this matter for years and always got the response from the veterinary colleges (and not just my alma mater) of 'good idea what how and where do we fit it in to the curriculum which is already bulging?'
Being retired now for several years it is perhaps better addressed but when I see informal polls (raise your hands if) and requests such as this one from the practitioner perspective it is still near the top of their "we need more" list!?

Topic: General Practitioners of Excellence

Description:

New graduates are ill prepared and lack the confidence to rapidly become productive practitioners without extensive medical/surgical mentoring and client relations and business training. Colleges need to review and rethink courses of study with this in mind to adequately prepare new graduates to be general practitioners of excellence upon entry to private practice. They will rapidly become productive members of practice and their compensation will be better aligned with their financial needs.

Topic: good mentorship and work environments

Description:

i am disappointed when i see many recent graduates unhappy in their chosen profession

Topic: Greater delineation of agricultural and companion animal training

Description:

The goals, tools, practices, and fundamental philosophy of agricultural and companion animal medicine are worlds apart and growing more distinct. Attempts to train veterinary students in the same way for both fields dilutes the effectiveness of this training. We should consider greater separation between the training, and perhaps licensing, of veterinarians practicing clinical medicine in companion animals and production medicine in agriculture.

Topic: Growing cost of veterinary medical education and shortage of LA vets

Description:

The cost of education is prohibitive to the graduation of new veterinarians who desire a career in large animal practice. The ROI of small animal practice is much more attractive and can retire student debt much more quickly. However, federal student loan money comes with strings for the colleges of vet med and I believe that the AVMA should encourage private donations to help with student debt, especially for those students who are interested in large animal practice.

Topic: Herbal Medicine

Description:

The profession needs to recognize the IMPORTANCE of herbal medicine and the critical need for continuing education with herbal topics,

Topic: High cost of Veterinary Education

Description:

Payment of loans requires high income which comes from higher costs to clients.

Topic: High costs of attending veterinary school, DVM's don't come near MD's in

Description:

The outrageous cost of attending veterinary schools, DVM's don't come near MD's earning power, however college fees are not too far behind medical school costs. Starting private practices are financial burdens, we don't have facilities ie hospital units provided by some tax agency or charity's

Topic: High debt load/too many new graduates

Description:

It appears that the veterinary schools are only looking at their survival and padding their pockets and not what is best for the profession. Veterinary schools need to look at what dental schools have done to curb the influx of so many new graduates into the job market.

Topic: High educational expenses and student debt.

Description:

Needs no explanation. Also contributes substantially to Future Critical Issue #1.

Topic: Improve Humane Education in Veterinary Schools

Description:

We need to address the topic of humane education more seriously in veterinary schools.

Topic: Inability of schools to prepare grads for practice.

Description:

I have recently been trying to hire an associate. The most frustrating thing in this has been that new grads do not have any in depth knowledge of feline medicine and are genuinely frightened of surgery. Several have even asked me if it is possible to practice without doing surgery. Perhaps we need to start putting students into track systems again and/or start letting them know that they should expect to spend at least a year in an internship similar to human medicine.

Topic: Income level of new graduates

Description:

New graduates will face an increasing debt load and will need an income available to service the debt load. Vet schools must produce a product that can produce in a practice setting so that the new graduates will be worth to a practice what they need to earn in order to service debt.

Topic: Increased Federal Support for Veterinary Schools Nationwide

Description:

Perhaps, considering the current economic collapse and the fact the "Washington Doesn't Work Anymore", this is "pushing a rope". But, somewhere in the future the federal government must realize the importance of supporting and expanding the veterinary academic arena.

Topic: Influence of money on medical research, publishing and guidelines

Description:

We need our professional organizations to be more adversarial in pointing out the numerous conflicts of interest and publication bias that riddle our publications and continuing education. Studies that don't show positive results for interventions or that show negative side effects are far less likely to get published, so our whole literature base is biased toward the interventions studied. Even if we succeed in getting good quality evidence based research, we are left with the problem of negative evidence being left unpublished due to economic interests.

Then we end up with well meaning guidelines based on biased evidence. Guidelines themselves are negative for the profession and only encourage litigation against us. At least stop calling them guidelines and call them literature reviews, which is what they are and usually very good ones. Language matters very much with lawyers and in courtrooms. A judge and especially a jury who hears you didn't follow a guideline isn't going to listen long to the detailed exceptions in the guideline.

Topic: Insuring standards for post-degree training

Description:

To follow the comment before, as more and more new graduates seek further training, the AVMA will need to step in and make sure these internships, both small, large, equine, food animal, etc are actually helping new veterinarians advance their skills and not using them as cheap, willing labor. Standards made for each type of internship (large,small, equine, etc) may be required and evaluation of how each facility meets those standards to maintain an AVMA accredited internship program will be needed.

Topic: Is the field of veterinarian medicine too large to be covered in 4 years?

Description:

Does training and licensure need to be restricted to the species(s) you receive training for?

Topic: Ivy League Instruction

Description:

Too much of veterinary education is for ivy league/college procedures and the students do not understand the economics or logistics of using those learned procedures in the real world.

Topic: Keeping Diplomates in Academia

Description:

Academia needs to be competitive with private practices and keep diplomates in specialty areas to teach students state of the art medicine and surgery. This allows the practice of veterinary medicine to advance.

Topic: Lack of avian/exotic experience in schools

Description:

This is an area where there is a serious lack of education and experience for the student and continues for veterinarians in the field. It seems to gain this type of expertise, one must almost serve as an apprentice, and finding a suitable mentor can be quite challenging. This is particularly concerning when you consider that exotic animal ownership and smuggling is on the rise, as well as the public health risk this presents.

Topic: Lack of funding for vet med in the universities

Description:

Leads to poorly trained DVM's who require extensive mentoring before they become competent.

Topic: Lack of proper training/mentorship in new grads

Description:

New graduates are not prepared for practice and once in practice, the lack of mentorship causes not only poor medicine and surgery skills to be practiced but stress and burnout. Many young doctors rely too heavily on labwork and don't know how to do a physical exam nor how to operate equipment like anaesthetic machines. Many new grads are disillusioned with the profession within a year.

Topic: lack of training for integrative veterinarians

Description:

As mentioned before, the public demand for nutrition, homeopathy, acupuncture, chiropractic, etc. is burgeoning.

Many clinics are now advertising "alternative" therapies but have little or no training (sometimes just a weekend course). To me, and my (hopefully) well educated clients, this is just not acceptable. That's akin to allowing an untrained person to "practice" on our patients.

AVMA should start promoting advanced education in these fields. Many conferences already have lectures on these subjects, so why not take it a step further?

Develop an AVMA approved method for objectively quantifying training in integrative veterinary medicine. This could be similar to what is in place for advanced training in internal medicine, surgery, etc. Most of the CAVM organizations already do this, so adoption by AVMA would be very easy.

Thank you so much for allowing me to air my opinions.

[name removed to protect privacy]

Topic: Lifetime earning potential compared to education time and cost

Description:

Potentially or actually, young people are comparing starting salaries and/or lifetime earnings against the length and cost of education to become a veterinarian. The best candidates may be choosing other careers because of the negativity of both sides of the equation.

Besides economic viability, this also negatively affects the diversity of the profession.

Topic: Limited licensure

Description:

State licensure that would limited practice by species or discipline that would require less time spent in the classroom for courses that would not be required. An example would be an education and resulting licensure that would only involve companion animals or bovine animals. A means for an individual to go back and "retrain" in another species or discipline would have to be developed.

Topic: Loan burden of new graduates

Description:

Many students get through vet school putting off the inevitable: facing debt once they graduate. It is such a depressing burden to deal with once graduated and starting in this profession. Vet schools need to make it a priority to teach students how to handle debt.

Topic: Loan repayment concerns

Description:

DVM student loans are sky rocking! This may decrease the pool of candidates entering our colleges of veterinary medicine.

Topic: Loss of the general practitioner

Description:

Our schools are losing sight of the art of veterinary medicine. New graduates are taught to use referral and technology rather than their brains and their hands. It is at the point where anything more complicated than a rabies vaccine is supposed to be sent off to the referral practice. Once again, the fees are high and many pet owners cannot afford this level of care. We must teach our graduates that small, clean lacerations can be repaired for under \$1500. That is an accurate quote from a local emergency/specialty hospital in the NY Metro area.

Topic: Maintaining a relevant veterinary profession in a rapidly changing world

Description:

Focusing on appropriate veterinary medical education challenges (including the need for NAVMEC to succeed) as well as working toward a diverse applicant pool (gender, interests, cultures) and recognizing and understanding the profession will need to remain flexible and dynamic in the coming 5-10-20 years.

Topic: Mentoring new grads

Description:

As a new grad who could only find relief work, I was primarily trained by technicians. Not a bad way to start, but I would have liked to have had a mentor. It took me so long to feel minimally confident. How can we help those grads who graduate and don't really feel like they can call themselves 'doctor'?

Topic: Need to attract more men and ethnic minorities

Description:

I am a woman in academia. I feel that the veterinary profession is not well served by being dominated by women. (it is not dominated by women in academia, but it is in our student population). In our society any profession that is dominated by women is devalued. I feel that if the economics of the profession were better then more men would select vet med as a profession.

Topic: New grads with limited animal ownership experience

Description:

New grads since approx. 2002 increasingly have little or no personal experience as owners of animals, thus their client interactions are awful at times and animal care suffers. The prerequisite for admission to vet school used to include personal experience. What happened?

Topic: New graduate debt

Description:

As the cost of education grows and public support dwindles, there is a real risk of a decrease in quality of applicants to the profession and of a loss of veterinarians to other fields. Dissatisfaction with personal lifestyle because of insufficient income to manage education debt may be reflected in decreasing quality of service. The AVMA must continue to explore means of decreasing the cost of education (species licensure; year round classes to decrease number of months to graduate; greater use of supervised extern- and internships), increasing financial support of students (expand and publicize opportunities for successful practitioners to donate to scholarship funds; expand national and state lobbying efforts to decrease costs of education), develop innovative ways of forgiving debt (expand program forgiving debt in exchange for work in areas of need; work to identify opportunities to contribute beyond geographic parameters--consider such things as spay-neuter programs, wildlife rehabilitation, disaster training and support, etc., as activities that can reduce debt).

Topic: New Graduate Debt & Ability of new grads to earn a reasonable salary

Description:

Topic: No clinicans at University Level, all in private referral practices.

Description:

The clinical training students get is pure negligence!!What ever happened to students having animal credits to graduate. They are suppose to learn \$60-80,000 their first year because they have a large college loan to pay and we are suppose to mentor them for two years and build their confidence.

Topic: Nutritional Education for Veterinarians.

Description:

In the human medical literature it is becoming clear that many of our diseases, especially our chronic diseases, such as cancer and diabetes, are due to problems with the food supply and our dietary choices.

Unfortunately in our companion animals most of our training in nutrition is provided by the pet food companies. These companies are financially motivated to make sure that all veterinarians are feeding the processed foods that they provide. Unfortunately if we as veterinarians are trained only to provide processed foods, then we are not trained in how to balance a real food diet for our patients.

This becomes a critical issue when more of our clients are feeding raw diets, or home cooked diets. Thanks to the internet, convincing a raw diet feeder, that this may not be the best option, is nearly impossible. It is made worse, because in fact the patients often are clinically better, and look better on a real food diet, vs the processed food diet.

If we as veterinarians, are not prepared to work with these owners, we leave our patients open to nutritional deficiencies, which will harm them in the long run.

We also need clinical research in nutrition, that is not based on processed foods, and provides more accurate knowledge of nutritional needs of individual patients. In clinical medicine it is clear that a doberman will be susceptible to different disease processes than a chihuahua, and that dogs are not cats. The incidence of cancer and allergies are also rising in our patient populations at an alarming rate. Yet nutritionally we have not fully described how these patients are different from the healthy patients. If we knew more about the nutritional needs of these patients, we might better be able to prevent some of these diseases from occurring.

Topic: One Health: the changing role of primary care veterinary medicine

Description:

The One Health initiative has focused almost exclusively on an academic approach to public health. The primary care veterinary practice is where the One Health rubber meets the road. The Veterinary Family Practitioner has almost as much effect on the health and well-being of the human members of the families as she does on the pet members of the families. Not only do pets have a well-documented role in maintaining human health, but the visit to the veterinary family practice provides an opportunity for identifying and addressing social and health issues affecting clients--issues related to aging, disabilities, domestic violence, education, etc. Veterinarians (and their staff) must be trained to deal with the new responsibilities that accompany the evolution of the human-animal bond.

While pursuing the One Health Initiative, the AVMA should identify the new skills and knowledge necessary for veterinary family practitioners to be effective in their roles as a part of the community health care team. Once identified, the means of obtaining these skills and knowledge must be included in veterinary curricula and CE programs. Topics would include human psychology, a familiarity with social welfare programs and services, advanced communication skills (including leadership, media training, conflict management, etc.). Interactions with other members of the community health care team should be encouraged and facilitated.

Topic: Personal debt of graduating veterinary students

Description:

If debt requires more than 7-10 years to pay back post graduation, the veterinary profession will suffer in ability to add leadership to communities and society.

Topic: Post-degree training

Description:

As the knowledge base continues to increase, the number of graduate seeking additional training after graduation to feel competent will need to increase. And the opportunity to further clinical skills will need to be made available to ALL students not just those with the grades or resume that affords them a prestigious internship.

Topic: Providing training in Complementary Medicine In All Vet Schools

Description:

Owner's are currently looking for Veterinarians providing Complementary Alternative Medical (CAVM) Care. Currently students in our vet schools are not trained in what conditions can be addressed with different CAVM modalities, nor what is appropriate training for veterinarians providing such care. The vet schools will not be able to provide comprehensive training for these modalities (which takes years of training), but the students should be literate in the CAVM modalities. This would include which modality to choose for which disease and what training is required for at least basic competence in the individual modalities.

Owners will continue to request such care and if veterinarians are not trained in how to refer, and who to refer patients for quality care, they will search for practitioners on their own. Alternately they will use advice from the internet to treat their own pets. If vets are not trained in how to evaluate CAVM care, they will not be able to answer basic questions on safety that owners will be asking. If owners lose confidence in their vets, they will seek answers from lay practitioners, who will be practicing veterinary medicine without a license and who will not be able to identify when there is a significant problem that may need to be addressed with more conventional care.

Topic: quality of food animal veterinary education

Description:

Many veterinary schools are cutting their faculty for food animal education. The students are forced to get their own education through externships and preceptorships. One solution is to allow food animal students more time in their senior year to have more externships. Schools are allowing practitioners to train the students, which is fine, as long as the students have ample opportunity to be with practitioners.

Topic: Recruiting and retaining talented veterinary college faculty

Description:

Many veterinary colleges are having difficult attracting and retaining talented teaching faculty.

Topic: Relevance of veterinary medical education.

Description:

I attended the AVMA VLC in Chicago this past January. One of the many takeaways from that experience was a fact presented by Dr. Rick DeBowes in his "Mini-VLE" sessions: the length of a veterinary medical education from the inception of our profession has remained 4 years despite all the changes we have experienced in all this time. I see widening gaps between what today's veterinary graduates need to be successful in their careers and what is being taught (or not) in many veterinary medical curricula. Specifically, I believe it is imperative and mandatory to include business management skills as part of this education as it relates to Future Critical Issue #1 above given today's cost of a veterinary medical education. I also believe we need to refocus veterinary curricula on building excellent clinical skills (including physical examination and diagnostic skills) in the general practice arena where most veterinary medicine is still conducted. I believe we have swung too much emphasis on the high-end, referral, specialty areas of veterinary medicine and that there needs to be a better balance and an instillation of the worthiness of general medicine and surgery in the minds of the veterinary student (and faculty) population. I also believe we need to refocus HOW we deliver veterinary medical education such that the learning process is more conducive to building the confidence of veterinary graduates: the fact is that now and for the foreseeable future that most veterinary students are female and learning styles are often very different for females vs. males (hence the validity of all female undergraduate teaching institutions). The "boot camp" sink-or-swim suck-it-up (like a man) edge that often seems to pervade our teaching institutions may not be the most conducive to developing a cadre of confident, competent, young female veterinary professionals.

Topic: Repayment of student loans

Description:

As jobs become harder to find for new grads, and funding a veterinary education is as costly as ever, how are graduates supposed to realistically pay down staggering vet school debt?

Topic: Returning to the Complete Physical Examination for Information

Description:

"If you don't know what normal is how will you ever recognize abnormal?" I fear the CPE has become a lost art and an exceptional amount of valuable and economical information is being overlooked.

Topic: Rising Cost of Student Debt

Description:

At what point is student debt going to become too high to pay new graduate veterinarians fairly?

Topic: Rising student debt/ Vet Schools' irresponsible activities

Description:

Veterinary schools need to realize that they are sending out into the work force young doctors that are unable to produce per the amount of income that their debt dictates that they produce. In this economy especially, the incomes will not be going up. Veterinary Schools need to find a way to keep the student debt low and to educate financially "producing" doctors (i.e., a more practical education is needed!). Otherwise they will continue to produce graduates that are "too pricey" to find employment!

Topic: Standardized education (NAVMEC)

Description:

bettering our veterinary education

Topic: State Boards

Description:

It is more difficult than challenging to practice veterinary medicine without a proper veterinary education. There is no doubt veterinary schools prepare graduates via classroom learning and fundamentals. However, there is a critical dearth of practical experience.

Most medical school grads (human) go on to 4 years of post-grad preparation under the tutelage of numerous experienced doctors. While they may be doctors and responsible for their actions as such, they have guidance during that time. The day vets begin practice they are expected, by law, to practice veterinary medicine and surgery without incompetence and across a broad spectrum. That is to say about 90% of veterinarians choose this path, private practice.

State boards must recognize this and do so without evaluating cases presented to them with testimony from a university veterinarian. There is a disconnect when comparing university care to private practice in a suburban area on so many levels: level of care, available funding, resources, trained personnel, immediate access to experts, and more.

Solution: It would be impossible for veterinary schools to educate and train veterinarians in the same manner as MD's following vet school graduation. Training in private practice is constrained by many factors: practicing solo, an owner who is too busy, experienced vets who practice defensive medicine, and even expected payment from colleagues in the same practice for veterinary medical advice. State board investigators must take these (and more) factors into account. Local veterinarians must take a more pro-active role and provide expert advice to the board. The board must ensure confidentiality and anonymity of the accused and the veterinarian providing expert advice for the local level of care.

Topic: Student Debt

Description:

The cost of a DVM education is totally out of touch with the usual revenue possibilities.

Rising tuition costs are not sustainable. New graduates bear a tremendous burden with a \$130,000 anchor to carry into their career. By modifying curricula and licensing requirements future graduates will be better prepared, more confident, and have the ability to earn a higher wage. Schools will be able to more efficiently turn out a confident and competent graduate at a lower cost. The public will be served by a better trained DVM workforce. All resulting in our profession attracting more and better qualified applicants.

Students seem to work and save less for college, willing to take on debt without considering the financial consequences at graduation. Universities have had to tighten their budgets and raise tuition faster than the cost of living. Practices struggle to eek out a respectable profit and pay the salaries students need to live on while paying back student debt. If this cycle continues we will see lower quality and fewer applicants to veterinary school and a decreased quality of life for practicing veterinarians. The majority of veterinarians I know today steer their children away from veterinary medicine and into other more lucrative careers. When you look at the cost of 8 or more years of college verses the return on that investment in veterinary medicine one would question why anyone would consider veterinary medicine if they plan on being the primary bread winner in the family.

need to lower debt to attract good entrants

Debt loads for graduating veterinary students will severely impact their future in veterinary medicine. Debt will affect their choice of career and their ability to buy practices. It will also prevent many qualified candidates from considering a career in veterinary medicine.

Due to the privatization of public higher education, the costs for a veterinary medical education have increased over 50% in last 10 years. This has lead to increasing debt of graduates with serious financial implications for the profession.

Increasing student debt shifts new graduates toward higher-paying jobs in companion animal practice and away from some under-served areas of veterinary medicine. We need to try to contain the rising rates of tuition and see that pay is more equitable across all branches of vet med.

Topic: Student debt load

Description:

Please see JAVMA 208:340. 1996 and the letters and replies responding in subsequent issues. Nothing has been accomplished to date beyond further federal subsidies for veterinary education. The colleges and licensing boards have failed to respond in any substantive way. Our future colleagues are being unnecessarily impoverished. Relying on federal support for veterinary education debt relief is hazardous to the future of the profession and may become increasingly untenable as US indebtedness increases and scrutiny of programs with limited support takes hold.

Topic: Student debt reducing the pool to select students from

Description:

My concern is that the ever increasing student debt and insufficient salary of graduate DVM's will result in the best and brightest students going somewhere else when selecting their profession

Topic: Student Debt vs Salary

Description:

This continues to be a major issue for students as the tuition rates continue to increase while salaries are not increasing at the same percentage rate. The need to raise tuition does not arise from the high cost of teaching veterinary students but occurs because the other parts of the academic enterprise are not adequately supported by state and federal appropriations. The large faculties are needed to support the biomedical research enterprise and the post-DVM training programs. Unfortunately, extramural grants do not support the full costs of these activities.

Topic: Student indebtedness and educational costs

Description:

This is the biggest detriment to the profession and it is getting worse.

Topic: Student loan debt

Description:

The rising cost of education and student loan debt is extremely unbalanced with the salaries of a veterinarian. This is discouraging students on a whole from applying and affecting their post graduation career decisions. It is also creating a widening gap between the rich and the poor and dictating that only the wealthy are entitled to a professional education.

Is getting out of control. Perhaps tracking in school would shorten the duration of schooling required to be a vet and fewer loans would have to be taken out. We might be more apt to attract more qualified candidates that way

Topic: Student Loans

Description:

The amount of money, especially in private student loans, that we are carrying is ridiculous. Sure our education is as valuable, and probably more so than a medical doctor's, however, the salary difference is quite dramatic.

The payment on my private loans I make per month is greater than a decent house payment. I know this is an article of discussion, but I feel it needs to be dealt with now.

Topic: student success

Description:

I worry that the student debt load is now so severe, that it will not become practical to study to become a veterinarian, since few practices could pay a realistic salary to compensate.

Topic: Subspecialist by species in vet school

Description:

Allowing vet students to opt out of coursework that will prepare them for all species is a mistake that may cost them job opportunities.

Topic: Support NAVMEC

Description:

We have a difficult job at AVMA. We need to serve the members of our association, many of whom are more introspective and myopic when it comes to global issues. How do we continue to meet their needs while also moving AVMA forward and maintaining our stature as the most prestigious veterinary medical organization in the world, to remain relevant and credible in areas of the power of the human-animal bond, animal origin food production, animal welfare, educational accreditation, and international influence of world veterinary medicine? NAVMEC is our best shot at updating (adjusting or changing) our educational process so it is cutting edge, relevant to global needs (not just United States needs), affordable, and accessible for the highest level of entry level competency possible as we look forward to future decades, so we are able to command a high level salary (\$150,000/yr) for the value society sees in our services? How do we reach the vision of every parent in the world wanting their child to go to veterinary medical school as their number one choice as a career for their children, rather than medical school, because of the impact they will have on human and animal health anywhere in the world, no matter what their race or socio-economic status?

Topic: Support of veterinary medical colleges

Description:

Drastic cutbacks in state funding coupled with much greater economic potential in the private sector will severely limit the recruitment and retention of top academic veterinarians. This will result in less qualified instructors to train the next generation of veterinarians, low caseloads at veterinary teaching hospitals, and reduced veterinary research. Undoubtedly, a decline in the quality of veterinary medical training and the resultant less-capable product of that education has deleterious effects throughout the profession. More emphasis must be placed on supporting the colleges of veterinary medicine or the consequences will be disastrous.

Topic: Support reasearch on animal vaccine duration of immunity from current

Description:

Valid scientific support of duration of immunity from a credible source and then disseminating that information to veterinarians as well as pet owners who can then make decisions with integrity on excellent peatient care. Vaccine producers are not anxious to support this due to loss of sale of product. Many veterinarians fail to support it because of the fear of loss of income.....the focus needs to be on highest quality patient care and the profitability

Topic: Sustainability of current educational system

Description:

4 year program covering all species doesn't seem sustainable at the current rate new knowledge is being discovered

Topic: The cost of a veterinary education.

Description:

Have no further comment nor solution.

Topic: The cost of veterinary medical education

Description:

The debt of graduating students is insurmountable. The debt to income ratio is discouraging potential students.

Topic: The trend toward restricted licensure

Description:

Veterinary education has, for many years, provided students the opportunity to explore all of the many facets of the profession. To allow a more restricted form of educational exposure will deprive many students of the opportunity for that experience. Students in their formative years should have as wide a base as possible to allow them the opportunity to go in one of many possible directions. How many of us in maturity find ourselves in the same career that we imagined ourselves as students? Let us continue to provide a broad base on which to allow students to build careers.

Topic: The veterinary school curriculum

Description:

We need to ensure that the curriculum includes topics that reflect current issues in the profession. Although the curriculum is already full, a close examination of subjects should be undertaken to ensure that material presented meets the needs of the graduating veterinarian.

Topic: The widening gulf between companion animal and food animal interests

Description:

I am truly dismayed at the chasm that has developed between companion animal practitioners and their understanding of food animal production practices and husbandry and those views of mixed and food animal veterinarians. This issue rests rather squarely on the curricula of the veterinary colleges and their lack of emphasis on basic principles of food production.

Topic: To much government regulation impeding research

Description:

Select agent regulations are one example. The regulations have become so restrictive that a lot of academic institutions and biologic companies choose to not even have these organisms on their premises and therefore will not be doing research on important diseases. There are many disease organisms that are on the select agent list that don't make much sense. Why make an organism a select agent when the country you live in has endemic disease from this organism (e.g. bluetongue virus)? This simply makes it much more difficult to work with this agent and develop new vaccines, for example. Bluetongue and BSE are political diseases in a sense that they have such a big impact on international trade. Regulations by FDA and USDA are also becoming more burdensome.

Topic: Tracking of Veterinary Education

Description:

There is too much information within the veterinary curriculum to be digested in 4 years. It is time for limited licensure to be developed so that students only practice within given areas of species (sm. animal, exotic, equine, production etc.). By doing this, schools can cut down on time spent in the classroom, decreasing tuition and thus slowing down the "pricing" of new graduates out of jobs due to the simple need to pay back their student loans. If a particular student wants to be mixed practice, they can make the decision to stay in school longer and incur more debt, if they feel that is necessary. Veterinary medicine today and in the future is now developed enough that cross-training in every species is not needed. It is a nice benefit, but in terms of other problems currently facing the veterinary profession, it is time to sacrifice that benefit.

Topic: Training for non-clinical careers

Description:

There is still insufficient recruiting of veterinary students, and training provided to them, for non-clinical careers to meet the needs of research, public health, food safety, emergency preparedness, laboratory science, etc. The federal support to address underserved geographic and clinical areas such as large animal medicine also needs to be extended to these underserved important specialties.

Topic: Training of specialist and students, then decline of the university

Description:

The decline of the university caseload and disappearance of the clinician scientist is obvious everywhere. This starting to effect student and resident training particularly in equine but also in other elements. I am hoping the AVMA will lean on the universities to improve this and encourage them to creatively find ways to hire the best and brightest clinicians. This will require a significant investment but it will pay off. There are many disadvantages of specialist and students getting trained in the private sector. Ideally the university should do this and currently the quality of training is eroding at an alarming pace. The case loads are decreasing which tightens the budget, which decreases money available to hire the best and brightest which in turn further decreases the caseloads which are necessary to adequately train our students and residents.

Topic: Tuition and student loans.

Description:

These factors are shifting student body to upper middle class and away from food animals.

Topic: Tuition expenses and student loans

Description:

Students are facing larger amounts of debt upon graduation any may not be receiving the best debt-management counseling. The ratio between student loan debt and salary may make the profession unappealing to some.

Topic: Tuition cost of vet school

Description:

No description necessary

Topic: vet school training in response to society's needs

Description:

vet schools currently have a set format that is not conducive to adapting to new demands on the profession. what is reinforced within vet schools are traditional territories.

Topic: Vet student recruitment into large animal practice

Description:

There are many programs getting attention and that needs to be continued.

Topic: Vet. schools influenced by outside sources

Description:

The veterinary profession as a whole is being harmed by the undue and unhealthy influence of outside groups that have neither the knowledge nor the sense of responsibility to ensure proper education of future veterinarians. I've only been out for 10 years and I already see new grads that have no surgical skills and are frankly afraid to learn. Vet schools need to get a "Stiff upper lip" and become more aggressive about the trash that is promulgated by our enemies such as PETA and the HSUS.

Topic: Veterinary curriculum

Description:

The growing body of veterinary knowledge and insufficient time to accrue it in the present educational model leads to shortcomings for new graduates, placing an additional burden on private practice and shortchanging clients and veterinarians alike. Either the education must be lengthened (more choose internships each year to augment their education), or material must be trimmed. Limited licensure solves the latter possibility by excising courses that have no relevance for the modern graduate with narrow practice focus.

Topic: Veterinary Economics

Description:

Continued rising cost of education in the face of less public sources of funding available to the veterinary medical colleges coupled with rising student debt load which is out of proportion to the current starting salaries for recent graduates.

Topic: Veterinary Education

Description:

As more advancements occur in all areas of veterinary medicine, it is becoming increasingly obvious that it cannot all be covered in 4 years. I think the time of specialization has come - veterinary schools should have tracks which begin in the first or second year (such as small animal, food animal, equine, public health, etc.). When students graduate, they will be licensed according to the track they chose. This will help control shortages of veterinarians in certain areas (such as food animal) as vet students won't be able to easily switch plans during the curriculum (I know of many students who gained admittance to vet school because they said on their applications that they were committed to food animal practice who then changed their minds during 4th year and went into small animal instead - likely due to salary issues.) This will also produce more competent practitioners as they will have more knowledge and more practical experience in their chosen field by the time they graduate - lessening that horrible period of "trial by fire" that new graduates now undergo where they have to handle things all alone that they have never even seen before (or maybe only read about).

Manpower and debt issues continue to be a problem. A recent report cited that more veterinarians are choosing advanced education to go into specialty practice. Is there really a demand to meet the future supply of all of these specialists? Meanwhile, there continues to be a shortage of rural/large animal practitioners, and a dearth of people interested in pursuing public health, research, pathology, and other areas that benefit from or require veterinary input. Will companion animal medicine go the way of human medicine, where everyone wants to see a specialist, and the generalist will become a quaint has-been from a by-gone area? Are our graduates truly prepared to enter practice the day they walk across the stage and receive their diplomas?

Topic: Veterinary School Expense

Description:

Just too expensive and not a good value.

Topic: Veterinary School Funding

Description:

The constant cutting of veterinary school funding is a huge problem and is a potential public health hazard waiting to happen.

Topic: Veterinary students incurring higher tuition bills

Description:

Veterinary students tuition keeps increasing resulting in large debt load by graduation.

Topic: Weak practical problem solving skills

Description:

New graduates and young veterinarians have mastered an outstanding body of information but generally lack the skills for practical application. This appears to be creating a pattern of interaction with clients that is lessening the traditional bond between veterinarians and clients. Developing effective strategies that involve high functioning practitioners in the education process may be beneficial. Practice experiences during the veterinary education should be at least partially structured.

Topic: Zoonotic Disease

Description:

Just as communicable disease is spread from one person to another, the same can be said for zoonotic disease. Instead, the disease is transmitted to man from animals or vice versa. With global travel we have shrank the earth so that exposure to a disease can travel from continent to continent in just a few hours. Add to this the growing complexity of both bacteria and viruses to mutate into new and deadlier organisms, it becomes a serious problem that we must deal with now and in the future. Veterinary Medicine should take the lead in ferreting out these diseases before they become deadly pandemics. This means that veterinary schools should be teaching a School of Wildlife Medicine and Diseases. Recently, a grant of \$25,000,000 by the Gate's Foundation to Washington State University School of Veterinary Medicine will help researchers study existing zoonotics and shed light on impending ones. I would challenge all veterinary schools to actively teach and research zoonotics. Notice how the H1N1 influenza virus spread so rapidly and it became a race to supply enough vaccines in time. But, H1N1 is not nearly as deadly as other organisms in nature. Should they become of epizootic nature, then there would be precious little time to plan preventative measures and/or develop antibiotics to battle the disease. Not only should we be alarmed by the diseases effecting man, but also their spread to our domestic animals. We cannot afford to have our food supply devastated by disease either.

Category: Veterinary Services

Topic: "Animal Rescue" organizations

Description:

Animal rescue organizations providing subsidized or "charitable" veterinary medical services are attracting more than poor people. Everyone wants a "discount" and will use/abuse these services at the expense of the local practitioner who is providing legitimate service and benefit to the community. This loss contributes to Future Critical Issue #1 above.

Topic: A growing mis-informed public

Description:

As the internet continues to grow, the availability of information to the public also grows. It is becoming harder and harder for veterinarians to stay current as well with the information available to the public and thus clients with questions. The partnership with WebMD is definitely a step in the right direction, but I think more can be done for veterinarians. Ex - just keeping up with various pet food products is very challenging. I think trying to work with pet food companies to provide the research behind the products to veterinarians in a "clearing house" would be wonderful.

Topic: AAVSB is unprepared to evaluate quality of CAVM training for Practitioners.

Description:

Currently, on the RACE committee, there is only one person trained in a single modality of CAVM (Medical Acupuncture.) This is only a small aspect of CAVM. In fact acupuncture is only one branch of Traditional Chinese Veterinary Medicine, which consists of 4 separate branches, including acupuncture; traditional chinese herbal therapy, food therapy and Tui-Na (Chinese medical massage.) All of these have scientific research and medical research which support their validity. This is but one branch of CAVM, which also includes Western Herbalism, Chiropractics, Homotoxicology and Homeopathy. All of these have medical literature supporting their validity, in both human and animal studies. It is clear that a single practitioner would be unable to be fully qualified to evaluate the quality of CE in all of these, and other modalities. Nor is it possible for a single practitioner to be familiar with all of the medical literature addressing these modalities, not to mention the quality of some of the minor modalities, some of which may be of questionable value.

An additional problem, is that time of evaluation of CAVM CE in the RACE committee has increased from the standard of 45 days, to in some cases more than 11 months. More evidence that this is more than a single individual can handle, no matter how well trained.

If we do not provide appropriate CE for veterinarians in CAVM, fewer veterinarians may seek training. This will be a major problem, as the public's demand for trained veterinary practitioners already is greater than the trained practitioners available. I and other well trained practitioners see this in our practices regularly. I currently have a 2 week- 1 month wait for new client appointments. If we as the veterinary community do not provide veterinarians trained properly in these modalities the public will go to lay practitioners. This will be detrimental to our patients.

Topic: Ability to perform humane euthanasia

Description:

Part of the reason I joined in veterinary medicine was to end needless animal suffering. With the changing of the animal ethic, I fear that well-meaning people will decide that euthanasia is no longer acceptable. The U.S. voted to ban equine slaughter and now our unwanted horses are either wandering the countryside, turned loose by owners no longer able to care for them, or are being shipped live to Canada and Mexico. People mean well and dislike the thought of euthanasia and equine slaughter, so they get rid of what they dislike. I cannot stand to see animal suffering and it is hard for people to understand, but there is no cure for old age and that sometimes it is just kinder to put an animal out of its misery than it is to prolong its suffering.

Topic: Abuse of antimicrobials in food animals

Description:

no scientific data to support abs and growth hormones in our meat supply lack of direct vet involvement OTC sale of abs to farmers drug resistance

Topic: Animal rights

Description:

My concern is that radical animal rights legislation, pushed by organizations such as HSUS and PETA will interfere with the practice of veterinary medicine and the Veterinary-Client-Patient relationship. This is of special concern within the context of Food animal practice where those who have limited knowledge of good agricultural practices portray all modern agricultural practices as inhumane. Legislation which restricts or limits procedures which are currently often done by or under the supervision of a veterinarian will then likely be done "underground" by lay personnel, resulting in animal suffering. The same is true of companion animal elective surgical procedures.

Topic: antibiotic resistance

Description:

get to the bottom of the ongoing battle between animal health and human health viewpoints....one health

I believe there will be a push to remove antibiotics from the livestock industry for prevention of disease and antibiotics will only be able to be used for treatment. This is due to the rise of MRSA infections in humans.

If we don't take some ownership of this issue and admit that we are part of the problem, we will lose credibility with the scientific community

Topic: Antibiotic Resistance and Use

Description:

Not sure if considered future, but will continue to be an important issue in the future. Since this has become a hot issue within the human medical field it seems like the easy out is to put a lot of the burden on to Veterinarians and other animal stakeholders. We really need to focus on doing more and better research on this topic and ensure we representation when these matters are being discussed.

Topic: Antibiotic resistance and zoonosis

Description:

Continue to fund and investigate how we can slow this down

Topic: Antibiotic restrictions for production animals

Description:

This issue stems from debate over antibiotic resistance. We need to continue the judicious use of antibiotics in production animals and fight for the right to keep certain drug classes available for use in food animal medicine.

Topic: Antibiotic Usage in Animals, Specifically Livestock

Description:

The scrutiny of using antibiotics in veterinary medicine, especially livestock is growing. While vets have the training and education to make justified decisions, US Congress may make that decision for us. Traceability is important, documentation of why we make decisions, how we make decisions and what those decisions are is important. But we should still have the freedom to make the decision for our clients unless scientific justification

Topic: Antibiotic use in food animals

Description:

The profession should be a leader in efforts to vastly reduce the use of antibiotics in food animals and work against the confinement and feeding practices that lead to the use of these.

Taking away feed grade antibiotics for food producing animal would be tragic. Good, commercial producers do not overuse Abs and the evidence of human resistant organisms from meat is lacking or non-existent. If FDA is serious about the overuse of ABs in food producing animals, they should address the issue of OTC products that anyone can purchase at their feed or tack shop. This is more serious to me than feed grade antimicrobials.

Topic: Antibiotic use in livestock

Description:

The reason we have to use antibiotics routinely in livestock feed is because we place them in intensive conditions. They are severely overcrowded, and waste is not properly managed for the density of population. If we reduced stocking density, antibiotic use might not be as necessary. The public is concerned about this use for their own health and safety, and I think the veterinary community will soon come under intense pressure from the human medical community to reassess this practice, and in turn, reassess factory farming procedures.

Emergence of more and more resistant germs

Topic: Antimicrobial drug restriction

Description:

Concerns about public health impact of use of AMD's in animals may lead to restriction on use of AMD's in animals

Topic: antimicrobial resistance

Description:

increased resistance of bacterial infections to available antibiotics causing a growing threat to food animals as well as pets and humans

Topic: Antimicrobial usage in food animal production

Description:

AVMA needs to support all science based usage of antimicrobials in animals. This is an area where it is very important to rely on science and research.

Topic: antimicrobial use in animals - pets and food animals

Description:

it is imperative that we use science to determine true risks to humans from antimicrobial use in pets and food animals, and encourage our human counterparts to do the same thing with human uses of antimicrobials - having said that, we need to demand that any restrictions are applied equally across all species and for production of any imported meat/food products or else the field isn't even

Topic: Any law stating that pet owners can sue for emotional damages

Description:

At this point, animals are considered property. I love them like my human family, but I'm afraid that we will not be able to practice vet. medicine if our liability insurance premiums are too expensive. And, the premiums will skyrocket if people can sue for emotional damage. We will either have to raise our prices too high (and not many will be able to afford pet care), or we will have to stop practicing for fear of being sued for millions of dollars.

Topic: Attempts at deregulation of veterinary medicine by lay people

Description:

The practice acts of many states are being challenged by lay people and lay organizations. They seek to deregulate the practice of vet med so that lay people may practice medicine without an education or a license. This places animals and people at risk of harm. To respond to the challenges after the fact is a recipe for disaster. Legislators and state VMAs must be educated and supported by the AVMA with a strong, clear message before the challenges are instituted. As we've seen in Oklahoma recently, one politician who owes favors to his or her political supporters, can succeed in the progressive disassembly of a weak practice act. The AVMA needs to be proactive on a state by state basis to avoid losing these challenges.

Topic: Availability of antibiotics

Description:

AVMA needs to continue to defend the appropriate uses of antibiotics in animal agriculture. Need to develop a strong position to limit extra-label use as much as possible. Need to support antibiotic use only when prescribed by a veterinarian - eliminate other sources for obtaining antibiotics.

Topic: Availability of antibiotics for use in food animals

Description:

I'm greatly concerned about the health and welfare of food animals as well as food safety in regards to the push to restrict the use of antibiotics in food animals. Low level antibiotics in the feed have been used to prevent disease for decades with no indication that this results in antibiotic resistance in humans. I'm concerned that a very valuable therapeutic antibiotic (Baytril) was removed from the market because its use in food animals might lead to antibiotic resistance in humans - Baytril is still safely used in the EU in food animals. I'm concerned that pharmaceutical companies will not pursue new antibiotic claims in food animal species due to increasing requirements to demonstrate a lack of risk for antibiotic resistance in humans. I'm unaware of a single case of antibiotic resistance in humans linked to the consumption of USDA inspected meat.

Topic: Availability of drugs

Description:

Appropriate drugs need to be available for the practice of veterinary medicine. The regulatory environment is infringing on the practice of veterinary medicine by dictating what are appropriate uses for particular medicines.

Topic: Availability of nutritional supplements

Description:

Nutritional supplements in doses above the minimum requirements have been shown to help various disease processes. For example, lysine for feline herpes, omega 3 fatty acids for arthritis and dermatological conditions, and vitamin E for dermatological conditions. If the codex alimentarius is passed and approved, these will only be available through pharmaceutical companies. If they do not choose to manufacture items that do not give them a high return, then we will lose promising items which have minimal side effects.

Topic: Availability of alternative and complimentary medicine

Description:

There seems to be an effort by RACE not to allow any CE credits for Complimentary medicine. Since there are many long established organizations out there that present quality CE I don't understand this. The therapies are in demand and if veterinarians are not going to supply them lay people will. It should be part of the AVMA's mission to find and encourage the best programs out there for those of us who practice different modalities. If we do not keep these under the realm of vet med they will become unregulated and animals will suffer. I practice chiropractic, and homeopathy and would not want these done by a non-veterinarian who does not know species differences. There are now some states that allow certain therapies with no veterinary involvement at all. All animal cases should have some veterinary input to monitor the health and safety of the animal even if the veterinarian is not directly doing the therapy.

Topic: Back to Basics

Description:

Given our nation's economy, I feel strongly that many private practitioners need to take some steps back in diagnostics recommended, extensive/expensive surgical or medical therapies for pets, and intensive care advised when not necessarily needed. We can still provide high quality, thoughtful veterinary care for our patients without robbing their owners blind. A dog would live just fine without a tooth or 2 versus a couple root canals.

Topic: Bovine Leukemia Virus

Description:

Bovine Leukemia virus BLV has been overlooked for over 40 years and with the rising number of cattle having the virus we need to remove this virus from the herd. Cattle that are slaughtered and found to have BLV and have visible lesions are condemned and a chemical is sprayed on them and then they are rendered for dog food and cat food. The cancer and the chemical is rendered too. Do we want this in our food chain. Since over 95 % of dairy herd in the US have it and their has been link with human breast cancer we have to do better I have been in touch with Dr John Clifford head of APHIS today and he asked why the veterinary profession has not wanted to do more research in this area.

Topic: Canine and Feline vaccination issues

Description:

The public would be very confused about the vaccine guidelines and practices that vary by veterinarian. There needs to be a consensus to do all possible vaccinations 1 or 3 year. I do not think there is a consensus at the present time.

Topic: Challenges of providing high quality veterinary medicine

Description:

As the field of veterinary medicine expands, the knowledge base also expands. Standards of diagnostics and treatment in veterinary colleges and teaching hospitals are thus being raised in response to the growing base. However, smaller individual practices face large economic challenges when trying to provide the most current and recommended diagnostics and treatment modalities.

Topic: Competition from non-profits

Description:

In my area, the local humane societies have virtually taken the spay/neuter business away from for-profit veterinarians. It is hard to compete by offering standard-of-care services that include pre-anesthetic bloodwork, intravenous catheters and fluids, pain relief, and full monitoring with discount outlets that provide bare-bones procedures. The consumer accuses us of "overcharging" rather than realizing the less-than-optimal care provided by many low-cost outlets.

Topic: Competition with online pharmacies

Description:

Stop the illegal and unethical guys. I'm ok competing against the good guys.

Topic: Complementary Alternative Veterinary Medicine

Description:

I am writing to you as the president of the Academy of Veterinary Homeopathy and on behalf of its board. A growing demand exists from the public for Complementary Alternative Veterinary Medicine. Holistic veterinarians not only have to keep their license current with respect to conventional practice, but also have to take yearly continuing education courses in alternative medicine through the various holistic associations: AHVMA, AVH, AAVA, IVAS. This represents many hours of conferences and a great deal of expense. We find it VERY distressing that now RACE is rejecting CE Credits for CAVM courses that were previously approved- and this after undue delays in reviewing the applications. For the protection of the public, we think that a well-respected organization like AVMA needs to take control of the continuing education approval system. We fear that CAVM practitioners will start forgoing continuing education in alternative medicine because of excessive expense, resulting in poorly trained CAVM practitioners and in pet owners seeking alternative treatments from lay practitioners. I am sure this is NOT what the AVMA would want.
[note: contact information removed to protect privacy]

Nowadays there is a growing demand from the public for Complementary Alternative Veterinary Medicine, a more gentle approach. I have been a Veterinarian since 1976 trained in Conventional Veterinary Medicine. I also have been certified in Veterinary Homeopathy and Veterinary Acupuncture since late 1980. I am now the president of the Academy of Veterinary Homeopathy and I have served on the board of the American Holistic Veterinary Medical Association. In 1984, I began looking for alternative approaches, when I saw the limitations of Conventional Veterinary Medicine in Chronic Diseases. I have taken yearly Continuing Education Courses in Alternative Medicine through the various associations: AHVMA, AVH, AAVA, IVAS and also in Conventional Medicine through the DC and MD local Veterinary Associations, to maintain my license in Veterinary Medicine and in the different Modalities that I use in my practice (mainly Homeopathy and Acupuncture). This represents many hours of conferences and a great deal of expense. I found it VERY distressing that now RACE is rejecting CE Credits for CAVM courses that were previously approved. For the protection of the public, I think that the AVMA needs to regulate or take control of the RACE approval. Otherwise CAVM practitioners will start forgoing Continuing Education In Alternative Medicine, because of excessive cost. It unfortunately is already happening in Veterinary Homeopathy as the 2009 annual AVH conference attendance did reflect. I am sure this is NOT what the AVMA would want.

Topic: Complementary and Alternative Veterinary Medicine

Description:

CAVM is a growing field within both human and veterinary medicine. Many aspects of CAVM are helpful to our patients. The AVMA needs to recognize the importance and validity of CAVM and assure that veterinarians have access to quality continuing education in this area. Currently RACE is making this difficult.

Topic: Complimentary and Alternative Veterinary Medicine Continuing Education

Description:

There is a growing number of organic livestock producers across the United States, that by NOSB standards, are not allowed to use conventional veterinary medicines. They rely on expert advice of CAVM veterinarians. The AAVSB via RACE is setting up barriers to make the study of CAVM modalities more difficult. In the past year, continuing education opportunities for alternative medicine for veterinarians have come under attack by the RACE committee. Opportunities that were supported for over ten years, such as Academy of Veterinary Homeopathy Annual Conference and Animal Natural Health Center Annual Meeting for veterinary homeopaths have been denied RACE credit. Since September 2009 RACE approval has been denied for various lectures offered by AHVMA, IVAS, and AVH, all modalities that are sought after by organic livestock producers. It is not easy, or in some cases a financial burden, for the solo large animal CAVM practitioner to attend CE conferences, let alone be forced to attend both the CAVM CE needed to stay current in the alternative specialty(s) AND attend conventional medicine CE in order to gain the credits they need to maintain their veterinary license. It may discourage the large animal practitioner, who has the unique knowledge of animal physiology and anatomy from pursuing CAVM, while non-veterinarians offer their services in acupuncture, chiropractic, herbal medicine, homeopathy, etc., without the benefit of veterinary training. I would like the AVMA to embrace the livestock producer's increasing use of CAVM by supporting veterinary research, training and continuing education of veterinarians in these modalities.

Topic: Complimentary Veterinary Medicine

Description:

It is important to provide options for clients and their pets or livestock. It is important that veterinarians providing these services are properly trained (as determined by their holistic specialty organizations) and certification training be available and contribute towards state CE requirements.

Topic: Conservation and bio-diversity

Description:

Veterinarians are the best trained to take a leadership role in this area. We need to "step up to the plate".

Topic: consolidation of industry and less species specific research

Description:

With the consolidation of the medical and veterinary industry I am afraid there will be less emphasis on veterinary specific products. This could dramatically impact the way we practice medicine.

Topic: Constant drug recalls, pulling products from the market

Description:

Ketamine recall, Vetsulin FDA alert, lidocaine recall-its like you never know whats available and for that matter what is safe. Is it really a problem or just over response to minor issues

Topic: Continued decline of veterinary involvement with livestock agriculture

Description:

It seems clear that the veterinary profession is becoming more and more populated with members whose sole interest is pet medicine. Although this trend may be fulfilling a growing demand for these services, it also indicates a declining demand for veterinarians within livestock agriculture.

Professions are defined, in part, by the special public interest they fulfill. Our special public interest has long been related to livestock agriculture. In fact, other than objective assessment and reporting of zoonotic disease or vicious animals - I am not clear what other special public interest we provide in pet medicine.

The veterinary profession's implied involvement in food safety is easiest for people to understand when we emphasize our role in promoting livestock welfare (i.e., health and well-being) and livestock health. But, with the profession's diminishing role in the private sector of livestock agriculture and its diminishing involvement in livestock welfare debates, our clear and compelling justification for a true profession is in peril.

Clearly, some of the reasons for diminished veterinary involvement in livestock agriculture are out of our control (e.g., increased concentration of the livestock industry, corporate structures with vertically integrated organizations).

But, the profession seeks growth in livestock agriculture by standing firm on two issues that might influence the future of this industry. These issues are animal welfare and pharmaceutical use.

If the profession establishes an ethical higher-ground with respect to livestock welfare, it is possible that opportunities will develop for increased veterinary involvement in livestock agriculture. If the profession demands control over the use of ALL pharmaceutical products in livestock agriculture, then a similar increased involvement of our profession seems likely.

Alternatively, if our profession does not act on these ideas, it seems likely that others will control the welfare debate and our involvement in therapeutics and prophylaxes for livestock will further decline.

Topic: Continuing education

Description:

Should be standard across states. DO WHAT TX DOES! Make people sign in to get their credits. I have colleagues that haven't actually attended CE in years but get credit because of the way their state does it. Why should this important requirement be relegated to the states when they don't care?

Topic: Corporate Medicine

Description:

With the ways that things are in the economy it is concerning that only the larger corporate practices will thrive. Smaller 1 and 2 doctor practices, which have traditionally been the backbone of small animal veterinary medicine are becoming a thing of the past. Many corporate practices are buying out larger private practices and eventually will be in every neighborhood. As well there will be one in every Petsmart soon. The small animal veterinarian/practice owner is going to become a thing of the past except for in rural areas where large corporations do not see enough profit incentive to build. It's unfortunate what corporate medicine is doing. In California, some organizational boards (public veterinary boards) are composed of only corporate veterinarians because they get a bonus in their salary for holding positions on such boards. I bet they are not there to push corporate agendas either. It's a shame.

Topic: Corporate ownership of veterinary practices

Description:

And consequent ownership of veterinarians and veterinary practice standards

Topic: Corporate Practice

Description:

redefinition of individualized, independent practice to more corporate image of the veterinarian. Higher standard of care??? Less attention to specific patient/client needs??

Topic: Corporate practices

Description:

Corporate practices, like Banfield, with their "cookbooks" for medicine, focus on computer models and paradigms over knowledge and experience. For example, a client's puppy, clearly with pruritis and lesions associated with Sarcoptic mange was refused medicine for the condition because a skin scrape failed to demonstrate the mite. The client, by the way, also had lesions herself from this zoonotic disease.

Clients also get confused and turned off by the service package deals similar to what you would previously get for something like car maintenance.

I am concerned about huge veterinary businesses (Banfield comes to mind) taking the business of smaller private practices.

Topic: corporate standardization works for and against us

Description:

I love seeing the standard of care go up every year but I worry that new grads in the corporate world will not learn how to think and process when there is a written protocol for every situation and all must be dealt with in the same way. I think that turns us into glorified technicians

Topic: Corporate Veterinary Clinics

Description:

Cookbook medicine. Improper care.

Topic: Cosmetic surgery

Description:

More and more localities are banning cosmetic procedures

Topic: Cost of care

Description:

With all the new technology the cost of veterinary medicine is getting so costly many people are not able to afford routine things that have increased to help pay for the rest.

Topic: Defining Scope of Practice for individual veterinarians through QA and CE

Description:

Veterinary Medicine is very diverse profession with a very broad licensure. Limited licensure would involve opening 57 Practice Acts- a extremely difficult and lengthy process- to be avoided. However, Quality Assurance Programs which ensure that a veterinarian's continuing education reflects their scope of practice- and continues to reflect their scope of practice (through targeted retraining as necessary) as their career evolves, can be refined and improved.

Topic: definition of what constitutes veterinary practice

Description:

Equine dentistry, chiropractic, acupuncture, embryo transfer, breeding soundness exams, etc are being and will continue to be removed from the practice of veterinary medicine. These services being done poorly will erode the perceived benefit of the service in the client's mind and lead to less use these type services and likely other veterinary services.

Topic: Deregulation of veterinary practice acts

Description:

Many states are removing duties from their veterinary practice acts such as equine dentistry and embryo transfer. This trend is further eroding rural veterinary practice as less work means even less income.

Topic: developing evidence-based medicine

Description:

development of evidence-based medical protocols and standards of care are vital to promote the standing of veterinary medicine in the medical community and to ensure best care for our animal patients (not necessarily in that order)

Topic: Development of Evidence-Based Veterinary Medicine

Description:

Many clinical practices are based on tradition, individual clinical experience, or expert opinion. These are no longer acceptable bases for clinical decision-making in human medicine, and they have been largely replaced by solidly evidence-based medicine. To become a mature health science, veterinary medicine must establish in veterinarians the expectation that they will base clinical decisions on the best available evidence, and it must establish mechanisms for developing this evidence and making it accessible to practicing veterinarians.

Topic: Dissemination of information that affects animal welfare

Description:

Because animals are used in research for many purposes, they are also dosed with a variety of compounds or substances. A frequent issue related to the safety and welfare of animals concerns the vehicles or excipients used to dose those compounds. Many individual institutions are trying to address this issue by collecting their own information. If this vehicle safety information by species and route were collected into a international database that could be accessed by any number of people, the same information could be available to many researchers. This could potentially eliminate the repeated use and dosing of vehicles by dose, route or species that are toxic and cause side effects in an of themselves. Not knowing the effects of the vehicle also interferes with interpretation of study results. Are the effects of the dosing due to the compound being tested or related to the side effects of the vehicle. A more concerted unified effort to consolidate and make this information accessible would contribute greatly to animal welfare and safety.

Topic: Drug Availability/complicity of distributors

Description:

Too many animal owners are able to bypass a client/patient/veterinary relationship and obtain pharmaceuticals and vaccines; by the time an owner calls a vet the situation is often complicated by owner treatment and progression of disease. My biggest frustration is a neighbor treating a horse, or shipping an animal to a local Amishman for castration without anesthesia.

Topic: economic viability

Description:

I worry that public opinion will force legislative groups to expand the practice of veterinarians to allow many more laymen to participate and collect fees for this service.

Topic: Economics of Veterinary Medicine

Description:

The pressure on the Veterinarian who owns a small hospital by corporate Veterinary entities.

Topic: Education (for both veterinarians and owners)

Description:

By far this is the biggest issue I see. There is a big disconnect between what is known to be scientific veterinary medicine vs. what local veterinarians and owners practice.

The best example of this is the vaccination issue. Another huge area that needs improving is the dramatically growing demand by pet owners for integrative veterinary medicine, and the lack of knowledge by most veterinarians of this field. Many pet owners are therefore getting counseled on nutrition, supplements, chiropractic, acupuncture and homeopathy by lay sources. Especially prevalent is pet owners making decisions based on advice from internet sources, pet and healthy food store employees, etc.

This can be ended by having sufficient veterinarians trained, and preferably certified, in these fields (similar to AAVBP). Several organizations, e.g. AVH, IVAS, etc. already are doing this BUT this is not recognized by AVMA as a "specialty".

To add insult to injury, RACE has stopped allowing CE in complementary veterinary fields of study. This can only worsen the problem.

Topic: Education in Complementary and Alternative Veterinary Medicine

Description:

Pet owners use herbs, acupuncture, supplements, etc. for their pets. Vets who don't believe this just haven't asked their clients about this in a non-threatening way. If a vet says "stop using them" they just stop telling the vet, rather than stopping the herbs etc. I know this because I am a holistic vet, and they tell me. Those who come to me often get their info off the Internet. I advise them on what to use/not use with various diseases and drugs, and this may be the only intelligent advice on the subject that they get and will listen to. Internet info can be harmful, but they feel like they have nowhere else to turn. I also advise veterinarians, including board-certified veterinarians, who refer their clients to me if they have questions on herbs, supplements, etc. We need intro courses in holistic vet med taught in vet school, giving concrete advice and not just cautionary tales. We need a committee of veterinarians who are trained in the various modalities to be advisors to state boards, and to the AAVSB. We need quality CE in these fields available to veterinarians. (This year the majority of these items have been rejected for approval for CE by the AAVSB RACE committee, by a screener with no training in most modalities she rejected. This has never happened before.) We need to have the RACE committee tell us WHY an item is rejected rather than just yes or no, and give us a chance to respond. If vets can't learn and are not exposed, then lay practitioners will take over. That has happened in my state (California), and I have seen animals poisoned by a so-called "herbalist." I saw a cat poisoned by a chiropractor, also. I also have seen 2 animals with broken backs which were permanently paralyzed by chiropractors who did not take an x-ray before adjusting their "subluxation" which was actually a fracture. This happened because these people had nobody else to consult, they did not believe their own veterinarians who had no training in the subject, and they believed that holistic methods were the best. AVMA does offer this type of CE in their annual meeting, but AVMA also needs to be pro-active in other ways: promoting holistic education for veterinarians and vet students. Being reactive against holistic vet med prevents education in these modalities and encourages pet owners to go elsewhere for inferior information.

Topic: Embrace evidence-based practice.

Description:

Veterinarians have been extremely slow to practice medicine based on scientific evidence rather than anecdote or personal intuition. The concept of "art" vs. "science" in medicine has become ever less important as science has become ever more specific. Yet veterinarians cling to their belief that they have some personal intuition that supercedes scientific evidence in precision and utility. This is most blatant in the proliferation of "holistic" practitioners. This is abetted by the AVMA by condoning special interest groups whose practices are marginal at best and quackish at worst. The Journal tends also to continue to support a preponderance of reports that utilize retrospective studies and case reports instead of prospective, randomized, blinded trials. The AVMA needs to decide if it is to be an organization of science-based professionals or a guild.

Topic: Emerging zoonotic disease, antibiotic resistance: impact to animal owners

Description:

The concern over emerging zoonotic diseases has been well documented, and forms, at least part of the background for the "One Medicine Initiative." Currently, much of the focus has centered around the alleged risks created by the concentration of large numbers of animals raised for food, in confinement operations. However, similar, or perhaps, more substantial risks may result from the co-housing of humans and companion animals. In fact, the risk of the transmission of antibiotic resistance bacteria may be greater in a household where pets and/or humans are treated with antibiotics, and then interact in ways that promote the transfer of resistant pathogens or commensal bacteria. While the FDA is aware of this potential, they are not focusing on the issue at the present time. Certainly, small animal practitioners might be more tempered in their condemnation of the use of antibiotics in livestock, if they believed their livelihood may be threatened. From a public health perspective, it is difficult for a veterinarian or physician to decide whether or not to treat a specific patient with antibiotics, out of concern for the public good.

The surveillance and study of zoonotic diseases and the issue of antibiotic resistance, is imperative for the overall health and safety of animal and human health. However, the scientific community must understand that the information generated for the betterment of animal health has been, and will continue to be, used by animal rights organizations to threaten the existence of animal agriculture. Companion animal ownership will follow.

While officers at the AVMA understand these issues, the members, increasingly small animal oriented, do not.

Topic: Equine Dental Care

Description:

The AAEP needs to really take the issue very seriously and come up with a workable solution to encompass all various trained folks offering equine dental care and how they should be utilized and what the equine owner population is willing to accept and pay for over the next five years.

Topic: Erosion of Veterinary Practice Acts on the state level.

Description:

I practice in Oklahoma, where a concentrated effort to erode the power and wording of the Veterinary Practice Act is underway. The Practice Act was enacted to protect both animals and consumers, not to allow Veterinary Medicine to enact a business monopoly (the implication on the part of the enemies of the Practice Act). Ironically, there is also a current drive to legislate increased regulation of "puppy mills" to protect those same consumers. Why is it okay to increase regulation on one industry in the name of the consumer, while simultaneously eroding regulation of another industry in the name of the consumer?

Topic: Ethics

Description:

Veterinarians should be mandated reporters of animal cruelty in their practices, without fear of liability or lawsuit. Veterinarians MUST be required to remain current on changes in medication use, vaccine protocols and best surgical practices. Continuing education has to be required in every state. Veterinarians who make their living from an industry - such as dairy cows, racehorses, polo, rodeo, eventing, swine production etc should be ancillary to all governing bodies of ethics and guidelines. They should be experts in the subject matter but should encourage other veterinary opinions. Veterinarians must work together to enhance the perception of the profession - the public will continue to be educated by organizations dedicated to humane care of all animals - the AVMA must have a voice that doesn't appear to be clouded by industry concerns.

Topic: Expanding regulations

Description:

In MS, the pharmacy board is making us fill out separate forms if we script out a controlled substance. This should be covered under our veterinary and DEA licenses. Who asked the pharmacy board to step in. There are already too many regulations. The AVMA should centralize the regulations.

Topic: Failure to embrace and self regulate internet technology.

Description:

Our profession has completely ignored or outwardly resisted the use of the internet to distribute veterinary products. We should have created a veterinary pharmacy agency to regulate the sales of products and we should have bridled these companies that now own the veterinary product sales distro net. Our only hope now is let the Federal government do it, and I think we all know how well that's going to turn out.

Topic: General Practitioner

Description:

What will happen to the general practitioner since so many people are utilizing specialists now. It seems like young people coming out of vet school that all they are taught is to refer everything and not think and work up a case

Topic: General practitioners completing advanced procedures instead of referral

Description:

General practitioners completing advanced procedures instead of referral

Topic: governmental interference

Description:

overregulation

Topic: Government interference.

Description:

Get the government out of my back pocket and get them to stop reading over my shoulder. As it stands the OK pharmacy board has made virtually impossible for me to script controlled substances and when told about this their response was "oops! did not realize this would affect vets". As a profession we are supposed to be self-policing.

Topic: Government regulation

Description:

The potential for new and bizarre regulations by radicals in the Federal government relative to pets, farm, laboratory animals, even wildlife is higher than it has ever been before.

Topic: Government regulation increase costs in small business

Description:

Many new laws have the effect of driving up of costs with little benefit to the majority of the population.

Topic: Governmental regulation

Description:

Governmental oversight, regulation, the burden of regulatory compliance plus the fees incorporated into the regulatory process will increase the direct and indirect cost of doing business, decrease practice efficiency, result in increased personal liability, all leading to decreases in job satisfaction and making veterinary care less affordable.

Topic: Homeless companion animal population

Description:

Euthanasia of a large number of healthy animals in our nation's animal holding facilities is still prevalent and is of great concern. Although shelters are doing their best to implement 'safety net' programs (so that animals can remain with their owners), spay/neuter programs, and encourage adoptions, veterinarians in every community need to take an active role in assisting with this problem. Surgical sterilization before the time an animal can procreate is imperative. Educating clients about animal training and behavior issues is also extremely important. Learning about effective population management strategies in an animal shelter and offering assistance to local organizations is vital. Learning about the humane management of free roaming cats (including how to spay/neuter such cats in the clinic setting) is also important.

Topic: HSUS and PETA

Description:

These organizations are trying to force the veterinary profession to treat all animals for very little money, and are changing laws to change the way we practice medicine. I am in Ohio, and there is a law being debated currently about humane farming. I have no problem with humane farming, but I do have a problem with non-veterinarians telling me how to practice medicine, and I am afraid that this law is a foothold leading to that. The declaw bans in California show that state and local governments do not respect the medical judgement of veterinarians and are trying to limit and control the practice of veterinary medicine. I would like to see more support of the AVMA for state organizations that are fighting to protect the profession.

Topic: increased attacks on profession by lawyers/lay press

Description:

Seems to be a growing trend in profession that we are easy targets for lawyers in malpractice suits. Lay press seems to gravitate toward horror stories about veterinary malpractice. We need guidance on how to better protect ourselves and our practice from litigation.

Topic: Increasing Feline Care

Description:

Data shows cats get to vets much less frequently than dogs.

Topic: Increasing treatment capabilities with decreasing ability of clients to pay

Description:

Our ability to use more sophisticated diagnostic and treatment equipment continues to grow (robotic surgery, placing stents, etc). How are clients going to be able to afford this sophistication of care? Is insurance the answer?

Topic: Informed Consent

Description:

An example of veterinarians failing to obtain informed consent is for most declaws where clients are not told what the surgery actually involves and that there are alternatives.

Topic: Integrative medicine

Description:

Alternative therapies are an important part of veterinary medicine and should be practiced by veterinarians only. There are several excellent organizations offering such training (acupuncture, chiropractic, etc). Integrative medicine works and such therapies are being increasingly sought by clients. Allowing laypersons to practice them is not in the best interest of either the patient or the profession.

Topic: Integrative Veterinary Medicine

Description:

When we talk of ONE medicine and healthcare reform integrative veterinary medicine needs to be on the table. As a member of AVMA for over 35 years and being a holistic veterinarian as well I have seen the such positive benefits of integrative care. To incorporate acupuncture and herbs into a case makes it HEAL faster than without. To use homeopathics ,ozone therapy and hyperbaric oxygen increases healing in head injuries.It goes on and on. We need both research and course work in many areas of holistic CAVM care. Giving the animal owner all their options for their pet is critical and they can demand that from their personal healthcare as well. As a lecturer at the AVMA for 3 years ,the alternative medicine lectures were well attended. We need the support of the AVMA to make these lectures available throughout the conference We need the AVMA to see the value of veterinarians providing these services and being able to refer to others that have the skills and knowledge to give these services.

Topic: Internet pharmacies

Description:

Lack of oversight by a pharmacy board in certain states makes this issue confusing. Veterinarians are expected to carry drugs and compete with pharmacies who sell drugs at little to no mark up. Also it seems prescriptions that are filled at these pharmacies have unlimited refills -even if the original prescription has 0 to 1 refills listed. Clients seem to be able to get also drugs that aren't even listed on the prescription. Which is wrong

Internet pharmacies need to be better regulated as far as where they purchase drugs and how they handle prescription requests.

Loss of clinic control over where pet owners obtain their medication, lack of regulation over veterinary pharmacies. Also, veterinarians getting upset when the normal product cycle transitions to bigger players and the income they generated from product sales is reduced. Get a life.

Topic: Internet sales of drugs

Description:

The internet sales of commonly used heartworm preventives, flea medications, and other antibiotics causes the veterinarian to be price competitive often not able to match or meet the price due to overhead of the building and employees. People will visit the clinic less often and the total bill will decrease in size.

The internet sales of commonly used heartworm preventives, flea medications, and other antibiotics causes the veterinarian to be price competitive often not able to meet the price due to overhead of the building and employees. People will visit the clinic less often and the total bill will decrease in size.

Topic: Lack of a universally recognized minimum standard of care

Description:

Every day in the United States, there are veterinary patients treated with methods and technologies that rival the best human hospitals. However, on that same day, and often on that same street, there are animals that are treated with methods and technologies that belong in the dustbin of history. There are veterinarians who never advance a day beyond when they graduated from veterinary school, and who deceive their clients into thinking that they are providing high-quality care through personal charm and comparatively low fees. Clients often don't know any better because they do not have the benefit of the training and experience that veterinarians have. Patients cannot blow the whistle on poor practices because they cannot communicate in ways that we understand. How long must we tolerate patients suffering, not because there is nothing we can do for them, but because we turn a blind eye to the outdated practices of our own colleagues? The public has entrusted us with the authority to police our own profession, and we are failing them by refusing to coalesce around a universal minimum standard of care and then discipline veterinarians who fail to live up to this standard. Every day we fail to live up to our potential is a day that those who would disparage our profession as being a less honorable pursuit than our that of our physician colleagues are proven correct.

Topic: Lack of Science Based Medicine and Related Issues

Description:

Since so many ads bombards the public with testimonials of their product (non-FDA approved), more and more people are questioning science-based medicine. Government needs to stop even "natural" products from making claims not FDA approved.

Topic: Lawsuits

Description:

It is a sad reality that we live in a society where lawsuits are pursued for every tiny thing. As veterinarians we have been somewhat immune to this, however with a push towards "animal guardianship" and record awards, malpractice and license defense are going to overwhelm the average private practice veterinarian and will likely result in some clinicians choosing to leave the field.

Increased liability

Topic: lawsuits, liability, emotional damages

Description:

The constant push to allow for emotional damages awarded for the loss of a pet will eventually bear fruit if we are not ever-vigilant as a profession to educate our lawmakers on a local, state, and national level of the detrimental effect it would have on affordable veterinary care and on the veterinary profession

Topic: Lawyers targeting veterinarians

Description:

Law schools are teaching how to go after veterinarians, so we will be practicing defensive medicine more and more

Topic: Lay personnel performing veterinary procedures

Description:

There are an increasing number of instances where lay personnel are performing tasks which come under the heading of what a veterinarian is licensed to do, namely diagnose, prescribe medications and treatment, and perform surgery. State licensing boards too often look the other way or do not want to get involved. Sometimes the response is that they don't regulate lay people, only veterinarians. Unless there is some enforcement, this trend will continue, resulting in animal suffering and an eroding of veterinary income.

Topic: Legal Issues

Description:

Unfortunately, we are facing the same issues that the human medical profession started facing years ago, and we are not learning from their example. Currently, several legal firms / organizations are offering short courses to lawyers on how to successfully succeed in law suits against veterinarian. As everyone is aware the major costs in human are for medical malpractice insurance and increase in diagnostic procedures that are considered CYA procedures. Such as are you liable if you do not send every radiograph out to be reviewed by a board certified radiologist There is no way that the government or anyone else is going to lower the costs of medical care without addressing these issues. In the veterinary profession we are experiencing a significant increase in CYA type procedures in cases where the doctor is afraid to prescribe a course of treatment / surgery with out the added expense of doing what may be considered marginal CYA testing or CYA procedures. Do directly to the fact that they is a significant increase in the number of law suits being submitted. Unfortunately our clients can not in most cases just use insurance to cover the added expenditures. Therefore, animals are being euthanized. We need to look at what happened to the human medical field and do what we can to stop frivolous law suits, otherwise we will be in that same situation where people can not afford our services.

continued development of procedures
prohibition. Demands for DVM,s to report even what is precieved as cruelty.

Topic: Legal Issues, Malpractice complaints

Description:

We in this profession value and promote the human-animal bond and most of us view our own animals as members of our family. The legal profession has openly stated that they want to exploit this view so they can get large emotionally-based monetary awards for pet loss. We cannot and must not allow the legal profession to change the laws governing the status of animals and convince the courts to award pain and suffering damages for the loss of our domestic animals. In my opinion this will be devastating to our profession. I euthanize many animals because the owners cannot afford veterinary care now and this will only worsen if attorneys start suing for large monetary damages. There is a very effective system in place in the form of our State Veterinary Boards which deals with complaints and malpractice issues. We only need to look at our human health care system to see what a disaster our profession would come if we allow monetary awards for pain and suffering.

Topic: Legal status of animals

Description:

Pets are treated as legal property, but this legal treatment is continually challenged. At some point the legal status of our patients will likely be modified to be more valuable than property. Will affect how veterinarians are seen as litigation targets and how malpractice insurance rates are measured.

Topic: Legislation

Description:

Laws/regulations, practice act and overwhelming regulations and the rural practice

Topic: legislation by special interest groups

Description:

As more and more special interest groups introduce legislation to regulate our duties and responsibilities, and, in so doing they define animal welfare and standards. I have witnessed our profession via state and national organizations (AVMA & state VMA's) have to jump in at the last minute to lobby to change &/or stop much of this legislation. I would much rather see our organization step forward and be the "go-to" group to define the issues on the behalf of animals! By waiting until a much better funded, and organized group--- usually a special interest group--- raises an issue, and we respond, we look as though we are aligned with only producers, or that we are against the "better" welfare of OUR PATIENTS! Our clients see us as leaders, it is too bad that we don't see ourselves as such, nor do we accept this role, let alone seek it! For us to be seen as the leaders to define and protect the welfare of animals, WE should be the group to initiate bills on behalf of animals, and therefore control what goes into it instead of waiting to see what comes next, and then try to change it into something we see as "more reasonable" of a compromise! To keep doing as we have, we negotiate from already being behind instead of leading the debate. AVMA does a great job of keeping state VMAs apprised of what bills are coming up in their own states, what if we had templates of example bills ready for state VMAs to use to initiate in their own home state legislatures?

Yes, I realize there will be a group of us that will cry "why are we stirring the pot!?!- leave it alone and don't bring up the issue, things are fine as they are." But I see where this is going, and I'd rather stir the pot and have more say in the outcome, that to wait to try to alter the outcome "once the pot is under a full boil".

Topic: legislation that controls/limits the services we can provide

Description:

Loss of freedom - ie declaw bans, forced sterilizations, dictates and precedents regarding analgesia or a supposed "standard of care"

Topic: Legislative attempts to limit lawful practice.

Description:

I disagree with municipal and state attempts to legislate out lawful practices such as declawing of cats. Not only does this impact my ability to make a living, it creates a nightmarish confusion of what is/isn't allowed in one city/state to another. One nation/one medicine as regulated by licensing boards should be the rule.

Topic: Liability Insurance

Description:

I fear this could rise as lawyers increasingly target vets as an open target. Especially if the value of pets changes in regards of emotional value, etc.

Topic: Liability issues

Description:

We must not become like the physicians who are leaving their profession as a result of becoming targets for high liability claims. We are vulnerable to animal rights issues and pain and suffering issues.

Topic: Licensure requirements among the several states are archaic.

Description:

While there have been sluggish and nominal moves toward reciprocity, the various state licensure requirements serve, fairly blatantly, to protect the interests of the local practitioners rather than those of the client and patient. In our increasingly mobile world, it is long past time for the veterinary profession to develop licensure that reflects a national rather than a parochial posture - as have most human health professions.

Topic: Limitations on the use of antibiotics in food producing animals.

Description:

People have always been concerned about where their food comes from, and reasonably so. However, to raise food "all natural" without the use of antibiotics will limit how much food can be produced and with the constant growth in the population, we are going to need a steady food supply. If corporate America has its way, there will be a choice few cattle producers who will own the cattle from birth to slaughter, which will affect American beef producers. If another country can produce beef cheaper than the U.S., our nation's meat supply will be in the hands of another country. By limiting our ability to use antibiotics to raise the massive amounts of beef we produce in America, it will change the way beef is raised and potentially allow for another country to take over feeding the world

Topic: Limited Licensure

Description:

I am opposed to any form of limited licensure or such limited specific tracking that graduates cannot pass the licensing procedure for basic knowledge of all major species. I believe that specialization should come after graduation of 4 year professional curriculum.

Topic: Litigation

Description:

More and more I think we are working in a 'cover your butt' world. It doesn't make for the best treatment or a completely lawsuit life

Topic: Litigation Against Veterinarians

Description:

It will be sad day if we reach the point where veterinarians must deal with litigation as much as human doctors. Guards must be put into place to protect our profession from unjust and undue professional liability prosecution.

Topic: Livestock industry and global trade

Description:

As developing nations build their industries for trade and people in the US start gravitating back to locally produced products we need to explore this topic more to understand what kind of effects this will have and does have on our industry and what can we do to help minimize disease appropriately for the different farming systems as well as meet public expectations.

Topic: Maintain control over our own profession

Description:

This is in regards to maintaining our own method of investigating malpractice claims and policing our own profession. If we start allowing non veterinarians to have the majority decision making power on state veterinary boards we are unable to protect ourselves and our profession from huge liability claims. In addition we must maintain our own ability to make medical decisions for our patients without interference from non veterinarians (excluding the animal owner).

Topic: Maintaining credibility as the source of expert information for animal health

Description:

People have so many options for obtaining information and that is a good thing, but they need to have easy, clear, concise information available from our profession to compete with all the blogs, pet shop employees, breeders, etc. We need to be available and credible.

Topic: More support for CAVM

Description:

I am a clinic owner of a practice that specializes in CAVM. Between the two doctors here, we offer homeopathy, chiropractic, TCM/acupuncture, western herbal medicine, osteopathy, cold laser therapy and nutritional therapy. There is a great demand by the public for these services, and a need for the profession to be able to offer these modalities by trained licensed veterinarians so that the public will not be forced to seek these services from unqualified individuals. Nevertheless, the profession has provided little support to practitioners such as myself in this area, either in the schools or in approved continuing education offerings. In fact, lately RACE has been actively working against CAVM practitioners by not approving good programs in continuing education in CAVM modalities, programs that had routinely been approved in years past. I need to have approved continuing education in the type of medicine I actually practice, just as any other specialist does.

Topic: National licensure

Description:

The current licensing process for new graduates is a constraint on the individual veterinarian and the profession at-large. Designated or limited licensure would allow for stronger educational models over the current system in which true tracking cannot occur. We need to stop trying to produce veterinarians in the model of James Herriott, when that paradigm exists for less than 3% of veterinarians.

Topic: Need for licensed veterinarians only in CAVM

Description:

Clearly the public is interested in seeking alternative and complementary therapeutic modalities for their animals. I feel the AVMA must be more proactive in ensuring that veterinarians be the only professionals who offer these services. We are the ones trained in conventional medicine and are the ones able to help clients navigate when alternative/complementary therapies are beneficial and when conventional therapies are preferable. It is in the public's best interest for our profession to promote the highest quality veterinary care. If interest in complementary and alternative modalities forces the public to seek diagnostic and therapeutic services outside of the veterinary profession they will receive limited options for treatment. If we continue to demand that complementary and alternative modalities remain solely within the realm of veterinary medicine (practiced only by licensed veterinarians) the public will be able to make appropriate health care choices for their animals based on informed advice and personal preferences. Furthermore, it is nonsensical for the veterinary profession to desire that these complementary and alternative modalities be performed by licensed veterinarians when proper training and accreditation programs are often not recognized by licensing boards. licensed veterinarians need the AVMA's support in furthering their own continuing educational needs when attending the programs that offer relevant training in complementary and alternative modalities. Likewise, the AVMA should play a more active role in promoting complementary and alternative medical education in our veterinary schools to ensure that those students interested in offering these modalities have access to proper training programs.

Topic: need for other states to recognize the right to practice

Description:

the national exam should be enough to practice in all states

Topic: No CE requirement in Michigan

Description:

I began my career in Florida and we had mandatory CE. Now I live in Michigan and I know veterinarians who have not been to a CE meeting in over 10 years. Things change so fast and these doctors are not keeping up with the

Topic: Non veterinarians practicing

Description:

Non veterinarians should not be able to treat animals in areas such as acupuncture, massage therapy, dentistry, chiropractic treatment, etc.

Topic: non veterinarians practicing veterinary medicine

Description:

Equine dentistry performed by lay teeth floaters who are not regulated and perform sedation. This is the practice of veterinary medicine in most states. We are going to lose this battle in state legislation unless veterinary groups find a more powerful lobby than the lay teeth floaters seem to have.

The lack of the ability for state organizations to be able to prevent non licensed individuals from practicing veterinary medicine. And, yet, we veterinarians are easily stopped from practicing on humans. I feel that the AVMA should step in and help the state organizations in preventing this situation. This is especially a problem in the area of Alternative Medicine.

Topic: Non-licensed people performing veterinary procedures

Description:

Some states are approving non-professional people to perform medical procedures such as chiropractice, acupuncture, dentistry, etc. I feel this is a slippery slope by starting to allow this. I've seen many animals injured by non-professionals but it goes un-noticed and un-punished because there are not regulations. At the very least these lay practitioners need proof of training, have regulations for testing and knowledge, and be supervised by a veterinarian.

Topic: Non-veterinarians practicing on animals.

Description:

We are seeing more non-veterinarians (such as chiropractors, etc.) doing more work (spinal alignment, dental work, homeopathy, acupuncture, etc.) that has traditionally been in the realm of a DVM. We need legislation to outline exactly what is permitted.

Topic: Non-veterinary practice

Description:

States regulators do not understand the need to keep medical diagnosis and treatment into the hands of licensed veterinarians. For example, equine dentistry and the use of medications by lay practitioners is a critical issue.

Topic: Non-Veterinary Practitioners

Description:

Chiropractors, lay-dentists, groomers/pet store associates who give medical advice, "alternative medicine" types who are and will continue to practice on animal species. Many states have been fighting with these groups, especially chiropractors. We need help to convince our legislatures that veterinarians carry these capacities as sub-specialties and that is the way it should remain. We also need more teeth to legally punish "lay-practitioners" who do everything from equine dentistry to acupuncture and herbal therapy. These people do not have to answer to a board, carry liability insurance (arguable), etc. At most, they simply get a letter telling them to cease and desist.

Topic: nutrition

Description:

There are certain antigenic components, such as animal digest and animal by-products, which do not belong in any pet diet, let alone prescription diets. When vets prescribe these, for lack of any option with high quality ingredients, it is not optimally beneficial to animal health. These prescription diets and prescription nutritional supplements should not contain sub-standard ingredients.

The veterinary profession needs to investigate the value of raw diets, rather than condemning them. Many of my clients, and myself, have seen the benefit of these diets, and the profession at large has done little more than warn that they are inherently dangerous. There are concerns, true, but the profession can address the concerns of imbalance and potential bacterial contamination while realizing the benefits of this method of feeding. Many clients simply do not tell their vets that they are feeding raw because of the irrationally strongly negative views of the profession. Again, this makes the profession appear under educated.

Topic: Only Veterinarians have the training to care for animals

Description:

Lay professionals still purport to provide better care to animals than Veterinarians. That needs to be continually addressed. It is part of the basis of lay consumer groups claiming primacy over Veterinary organizations as better advocates for animals.

Topic: OPEN EUROPEAN AND CANADIAN MARKETS TO AMERICA'S PETS

Description:

Unfortunately our European and Canadian colleagues have access to drugs that we do not.

Topic: Over Regulation by Boards

Description:

State Veterinary Medical Boards are designed to protect the public and more importantly the animals for which we provide services against gross negligence. Several state boards have taken it upon themselves to regulate the way that veterinarians practice. For example I have heard of a Board which investigated a veterinarian for the complaint that she was performing a feline declaw procedure with a blade instead of a using laser. In another state an investigation was made because a specialist recommended a different procedure, even though the procedure that was performed was done correctly. I am also concerned that some of the board members may not have the proper training to evaluate all situations. a board might be asked to evaluate a new procedure that a veterinarian has been trained in, yet the board members may have never performed the procedure. As we become more sophisticated in or quality of medicine is increased it is unrealistic to think that a board can maintain up to date knowledge in all areas. In several states the Veterinary boards fall under the same department as contractors, hair stylists, etc while the human medical board has their own department. there is a big difference between regulating veterinarians and hair stylists.

Topic: Over the counter sale of drugs

Description:

The sale of veterinary products without a prescription or sale to the public by some of the drug manufactures

Topic: Over vaccination

Description:

We as a profession need to stop over vaccination of animals. There is no medical reason to vaccinate even every three years with canine and feline core vaccines. We all learned in vet school the the immune system has memory. The public is learning the truth. This will only hurt our image if we don't do the right thing.

This issue has been well studied and written about. The problem (that of annual revaccination using multiple vaccines at once, and overuse of noncore vaccines) is only slowly improving. It can be traced back to lack of education by veterinarians in private practice. This is one area where clients are often better educated than their doctors.

Topic: Paraprofessionals taking traditional roles from veterinarians

Description:

Chiropractors, veterinary dentists and others treating animals with little to no training or certification process.

Topic: Pet insurance issues

Description:

How do we avoid the current "indemnity" type of pet insurance from becoming the debacle of human health insurance?

Topic: Pharmaceutical trends

Description:

What impact are online pharmacies and possibly other pharmacies going to have in the future? Will major chains such as walgreens, CVS begin to sell Heartworm preventative, veterinary specific medications.

Topic: Political bodies making rules re. practice

Description:

Politicians and the uninformed public are making emotional decisions on animal welfare, sometimes preventing us from practicing medicine as we are allowed to by law. For example the declaw ban issues in California.

Topic: Poor attention to standards of practice

Description:

See above

Topic: Poor pay

Description:

Non profits such as spay/neuter clinics and government agencies such as Animal Control are in direct competition to private veterinarians in our area. The playing field is not level yet veterinarians get painted as "money

Topic: Potential lawsuits for pain and suffering

Description:

If the lawyers get the legal go ahead to sue veterinarians for emotional damages on behalf of clients who feel they have been wronged, or pain and suffering for the animal itself then we will have to practice CYA medicine like the MDs and the cost of veterinary care will skyrocket.

Topic: Practice Ownership

Description:

What is the role of Corporative ownership of Veterinary Practices. Many have no real input from licensed veterinarians. I recently sold my practice to a corporation.

Topic: prescription drugs

Description:

outsourcing and online pharmacy sales continue to have an impact on veterinary income

Topic: Professional Standards

Description:

Really need to establish some standards that all veterinarians need to honor if they are to be called veterinarians and if you want to keep laypersons from practicing in the field. One Medicine maybe should work both ways with human doctors treating animal problems. By the way you lauded a human cardiologist treating primates at the LA ZOO in Oct 15, 2008 JAVMA News. I really believe we need to get human clinical specialist MDs involved in treating animals.

Topic: Professionalism & keeping Veterinary Medicine high quality

Description:

We need to encourage all veterinarians to present themselves as top professionals in what ever they do. This is being eroded by giving cheap service, advertising, Corporate profit comes first & etc.

Topic: RACE approval for CAVM

Description:

In order for me to continue learning different techniques, etc is some of these CAVM modalities (and to keep my certificate in some), I need to take continuing education classes. I have spent thousands of dollars and hundreds of hours taking these courses. If these are not going to be allowed RACE approval, then I am limited into what classes I can take and then must spend more money taking other classes that are RACE approved to maintain my CE requirements for some states. I think some of the veterinarians (particularly Dr. Narda Robinson) who decide RACE approval are trying to hinder many vets and have their own personal agenda. There seems to be courses being approved that line up with certain philosophies yet others that disagree with these are not allowed. Is this the United States of America or are we suddenly in a communist dictatorship where certain individuals are now going to dictate what is "allowed", what is "valid" and what treatments can be used? This thinking can not be allowed and will create a chasm between rather than a unification of veterinarians in this country.

Topic: Regulation

Description:

Outside interests, i.e. Humane Organizations, trying to regulate how animals are handled and how veterinarians can practice. Examples 1) Prop # 2 in Calif. 2) Banning procedures like declawing cats.

Topic: Regulatory pressure

Description:

Continued increase in regulations requiring financial and other resources to be diverted from primary animal care issues. These include animal rights legislation, non labeled drugs, states passing regs against veterinary procedures (declaw, etc).

Topic: Respectability due to revelations in equine dentistry issues.

Description:

We have lost "face" due to some of our veterinary colleagues' actions in the matter of equine dentistry by non-veterinary equine dental practitioners.

Several instances can be cited recently in which horse owners felt it necessary to defend their choice of utilizing services of non-veterinary equine dental practitioners in legislative hearings (most recently in Oklahoma and Texas).

Our colleagues acting in such manner have been claiming that their actions are an attempt to prevent harm to horses. This does not stand up to any factual analysis by anyone familiar with the facts of the status of equine dentistry in the veterinary practitioner world.

The reason that the public has chosen to demand the legalization of the non-veterinary equine dental practitioners is simple: they have observed the difference in the procedures involved when performed by the non-veterinarians and also the lack of interest in all but a few of our veterinary colleagues, plus lack of knowledge/capability in this part of horse health care, due largely to the absence of significant exposure in our veterinary colleges.

As the veterinary boards of the states continue to endeavor to monopolize these procedures, their actions are justly viewed by many horse owners as mere attempts to cartelize equine dentistry primarily for financial gain, as opposed to equine well-being.

The concept of veterinarians being capable of offering competent services in fields in which they have not received adequate training, especially coupled with being LEGALLY allowed to do so, is seen accurately by the public as more evidence of over-reaching on the part of veterinarians.

The "compromise" of allowing non-veterinarians to do equine dental procedures under veterinary supervision is often ludicrous due to the observations that the veterinarians involved in such are obviously attempting to pick up some knowledge from the "lay dentists" and/or are relatively clueless as to the procedures being performed by the non-veterinarians.

Some of our colleagues are excellent at equine dentistry. Most are not, and are not even knowledgeable enough to be making decent recommendations to the horse owners about these matters.

If I can be of assistance in these matters, please let me know.

Sincerely,
[note: name removed to protect privacy]

Topic: Responsible use of pharmaceuticals.

Description:

I personally get tired of going to clients or farms that have antibiotics, sedatives and controlled substances given them by some good ol'boy vet. Then our profession is surprised when drugs may be removed from our use.

Topic: Scope of Practice

Description:

There seems to be increasing state legislative actions allowing for non-veterinarians to perform veterinary activity. This includes not only livestock practices (AI, pregnancy determination, horse dental floats) but may even involve small animal practice issues of which I am not aware of. It is important that we remain vigilant on these actions not only on a national level, but locally as well, to preserve the practice of veterinary medicine. And to follow up on that, we need to be actively involved in being proactive to prevent such legislation.

The influences attempting to limit the scope of practice are growing in numbers and political strength. The profession needs to do a better job of providing examples (not anecdotes) about the health and welfare implications to animals and the public when the practice of veterinary medicine moves farther from the control and supervision of veterinarians.

Topic: shortage/recalls of medication

Description:

For example, what happened to production of ciprofloxacin, immiticide, ketamine, insulin...

Topic: small animal immunizations

Description:

increasing intervals between immunizations may affect client compliance for annual wellness exams

Topic: Specialty Medicine

Description:

I worry that with the growing number of specialists that we as general practitioners are going to lose our value to the public and be forced to offer referral on anything short of a vaccine or neuter.

Topic: standard of pain control and legal issues

Description:

Lack of standard of care for pain control is appalling. As a relief vet, I see a lot of things that supposedly went out in the dark ages. Yet, many clinics i'm at don't use any pain meds for Sx, or use Torb, once, and think they're following standard of care. Guidelines published by AVMA or AAHA saying, you really should be using an appropriate NSAID/opioid both pre/intra op and post op would be helpful and at least give clinicians a basis to say, that's the standard of care. Torb once isn't. Allowing/encouraging the owner to decline isn't. the days of elective pain meds for any invasive surgery are over when generics are so cheap

Topic: Standards of Care

Description:

School to school, vet practice to Vet practice there is an unacceptable amount of variation in quality of services. I believe we need to police ourselves before legislation is enacted to do it for us.

I am in small animal 5 doctor practice. We have 5 Vet clinics in the surrounding towns that all charge within \$10 on most procedures, but with a few "shoppable" procedures we see up to 100% variance. Unfortunately, uneducated clients believe that a cat dental is a cat dental. We do our best to provide what our "dental" includes to help with comparisons. What is frustrating is when a person goes to another vet clinic for a less expensive "cat dental" (\$95 compared to our \$165), and then their cat goes into renal failure and the other clinic doesn't see emergencies so we get them in after hours when the cat is failing. This has happened 3 times in the last 6 months with another area clinic. No IV used, no IV fluids, no blood pressure measurement, and moderate amounts of metacam pushed cats with normal kidneys at the time of dental into severe renal failure. Now we end up explaining to them how that happened on a Friday night or weekend.

That is a specific illustration of a broader problem. We as a profession have not designated minimum standards of care. We are left to find them out if we are pulled in front of the state board of Vet Med when a complaint happens. Wouldn't it be better to outline when the basic expectations are? Ie.. 1. all spays and neuters are done with autoclaved instruments (not 1 cold packs used on 10 dogs in one day without cleaning). 2. Teeth cleaning must be done with appropriate hand or powered instruments (not toilet bowl cleaner like one vet), 3. When doing general anesthesia oxygen must be available in the building.

This can be true of large and small animal. There really should be some basic standard that we can all expect from each other. It shouldn't be necessary to have to report someone to the State Vet when they didn't even realize they were not practicing within today's "standards of care"

Our profession is highly regarded, but a few Vets who are not practicing in the 21st century can undermine that very fast. Do we really want to have someone else step in to oversee us, or can we agree to set a basic standard of care we can all live with?

Topic: state & local legislation to control veterinary practice

Description:

Legislation from "animal welfare" interests (i.e. declaw bans, OVH mandates, farm animal husbandry practices, and on & on) and to change from animal ownership to guardianship, and many fronts that threaten the way we practice. Proactive mobilization of veterinarians to contact legislators by the AVMA & state VMA's is essential. Our Iowa VMA has done an outstanding job in that regard.

Topic: State Control of Surgery

Description:

States passing laws that ban surgeries like declaws.

Topic: Status of Veterinarian

Description:

The veterinary profession must contain the widespread and illegal engagement of veterinary related services by unlicensed, unregulated and unaccountable persons. The veterinarian must maintain his/her status as "the animal health professional".

Topic: Sustainable business model for clinical practice.

Description:

Continue to emphasize medical services, with less reliance on product/pharmacy sales for revenues.

Topic: the maintenance of high standards

Description:

Veterinary medicine in the US must continue to represent a high standard of care for its patients and clients.

Topic: The need for reciprocity within the whole nation.

Description:

Standardization of care and education would and should allow us to work in any state (after application) without additional board exams for each state. After 30 years in practice it is hard to pass the boards in some areas and yet I have more clinical and surgical knowledge and expertise than some young whipper snapper fresh out of school that can pass these boards with minimal difficulty.

Topic: The way animals and animal ownership are regarded by the legal system

Description:

If animals are no longer being regarded as property and lawsuits with very high pay-outs are then permitted, the likelihood of frivolous lawsuits will increase, the price of malpractice insurance will increase, and with it the public perception of trust in a veterinarian is likely to decrease. Overall, cost of practicing will go up and the market may not be able to handle this. Recent rulings against vets such as cases PLIT cites (euthanizing stray with critical condition then later finding out there was an owner; suits requiring vet to be responsible for whether a pet passes smoothly for international travel, whether the husband or wife owns an animal / who has permission for consent forms) are already making practicing hard because of legal quagmires rather than the initial task of helping a patient.

Topic: Tort

Description:

Our society is becoming more litigious, not less.

Topic: Uniform standards of practice

Description:

All practicing vets should have to meet a uniform minimum standard of practice.

Topic: Usurpation of practice act by local governments

Description:

In my state (California) some cities and counties have enacted bans on declawing cats, no matter what the reason. We can't even legally declaw an extra toe with nails that grow into the pad. These bans are done for humanitarian reasons, but the people who write these laws do not understand the full ramifications. The practice of veterinary medicine should be a state matter, not modifiable at the whim of a city council.

Topic: vaccination

Description:

Many vets still vaccinate pets without regard to their future exposure risk, such as Corona in adult dogs, Lepto for indoor pets, and annual vaccination for all individuals. This may be good for the practice's bottom line, but it is not beneficial to the immune system of the pet. As clients become more knowledgeable, an irrational approach to vaccination soils the reputation of the profession, by making it appear that the vet's income is more important than the pet's health.

Topic: Vaccination schedules

Description:

As a profession we need to agree and follow a what is best for the pets in our care policy, not give every vaccine available as often as possible. We need to move into good preventative care and wellness and hold up our oath to above all else do no harm.

Topic: VCPR In Food Animal Production

Description:

Food animal medicine is different than individual animal medicine. We are forced to treat the population in order to control disease to provide a healthy food supply. This is true whether the population is one of 10 or 10,000.

Topic: Veterinarian vs layperson treating animals

Description:

This is another huge issue which the AVMA and all states need to play a big role in. There are many laypeople who are diagnosing and treating animals, both small and large. Many and most of these people are using complementary treatments such as acupuncture, chiropractic, herbal and massage. Some of these are health professionals that normally treat humans but feel they can treat veterinary patients because they are "just animals". Some of these patients have been hurt or were given inappropriate medications by these non-veterinarians. Some of these "practitioners" are groomers, breeders, or vet techs who think they know more than veterinarians and even have websites dispensing herbs, supplements, etc to patients they often never even met (for eg. <http://www.thewholedog.org/drjeannie.html>)

There is even a "school" in the Caribbean which teaches these treatments to non-veterinarians (<http://www.kcnh.org/school-of-natural-animal-health.html>) and entitles them to become doctors! More and more clients are using these non-veterinarians for treatment for their pets and relying less on veterinarians. Some use these laypeople because they did not know that there are VETERINARIANS, such as myself, who practice these modalities but are veterinarians who understand the anatomy and physiology of many different animal systems. If non-CAVM using veterinarians would refer to CAVM-using veterinarians and if the AVMA would support the use of CAVM more (both in the eyes of the public and to other veterinarians), then there would be less people searching for answers to their pets' ailments on the internet or from their own health practitioners. The AVMA and state legislations need to make practicing veterinary medicine without a veterinary license unlawful. Now one exception to this rule, however, may be in animal chiropractic. In this modality there are chiropractors who teach these courses and those who take the legitimate courses taught to work on animals. Most of these are serious about the use of this modality to help animals and are taking the necessary instruction to learn more about the anatomy and physiology of animals and realize that they are not veterinarians and know when to send the patient to a veterinarian. Without many of the chiropractors, we would not have schools of animal chiropractic to teach veterinarians this modality and many of the chiropractor students taking these courses are some of the best animal chiropractors in this country.

Topic: Wide variations in practice quality and lack of oversight thereof

Description:

There is no guarantee of quality service; anyone can set up a veterinary practice and cut corners to make a profit. Clients assume the practice is high-quality unless some adverse event happens.

Category: Veterinary Workforce

Topic: Advocate for veterinarians in public practice!

Description:

Continue to provide the undergraduate with a wide ranging education that allows them to move into many roles in public life. However, AVMA needs to advocate and support those that will take additional training for roles in government at all levels in both human and animal health. Given the public attitude toward cleaner and healthier life styles, veterinarians should be properly situated to provide professional advice and leadership in these areas. Will require constant monitoring and visibility to both those who might enter this profession for those reasons and a strong push to those already enrolled. Veterinarians need to be encouraged to utilize their skills and training utilizing their minds and intellect rather than their hands in one on one patient work.

Topic: Aquatic Veterinary Medicine

Description:

As wild fish stocks caught for food are decreasing, farmed fish for human consumption will be increasingly important. Veterinarians need to be involved now so that they are not left out of this industry in the future.

Topic: attracting top candidates to the field

Description:

This issue continues to be of concern in light of problems in the area of veterinarian salaries. Money certainly isn't everything, but given the time, energy, and money spent in reaching the degree, then the time, energy, and "heart and soul" most veterinarians invest in their profession, compensation needs to provide adequate return on that

Topic: Avoid the move to become a "pink ribbon" profession

Description:

The move to a profession dominated by women is a mixed blessing. Many women prefer to not make an equity investment in a practice and are happy to work part-time for sub-standard salaries, as one of my colleagues noted they are being paid what they are worth.

I am an elected member of the Institute of Medicine of the National Academy of Science. I have a lot of interaction with leaders of the Nursing Profession. I was recently discussing the changing demographics of the Vet Med profession with the Dean of a major Nursing School. She said, welcome to a pink bow profession. I said what does that mean, she responded--Most of all low income.

Topic: Better positions

Description:

Particularly higher educated veterinarians in the areas of shortages

Topic: Broadening the vision of opportunities for Veterinarians

Description:

In my opinion, the AVMA elected leadership, AVMA staff and the leadership of most of the Veterinary Colleges have FAILED to develop a broad vision of employment opportunities for DVMs. They are stuck in the 1950s and 1960s. Most are private practice centric. They seem to have no appreciation of the opportunities for well trained DVMs in biomedical research. There are fantastic opportunities for DVMs with Boards in Laboratory Animal Medicine and Pathology and the American Board of Toxicology (the ABVT is stuck in dark ages). I am amazed at the push for DVMs in large animal medicine when a realistic assessment will indicate that needs could be met with the graduates of ONE CVM recognizing that large animal DVMs can not make a living in most of the areas viewed as having shortages. I know the AVMA will have come of age when at least a few officers come from outside of private practice and CVMs.

Topic: Changing demographics of the profession

Description:

Because more women are in the workforce, we need to address the needs of women as leaders in the profession. We need to better recruit men and other minorities to enter the workforce by starting in elementary school and extend that into college. Children are impacted by what they learn when they are young as to what professions are available. I have many thoughts on how to educate children about the value of the veterinary profession as a career

Topic: Changing role of food animal practioners in agriculture

Description:

Shift away from direct involvement in livestock operations to a consulting role or managerial oversight of Veterinary Technicians. Fewer farms located farther apart creates increasing travel costs and logistical problems in

Topic: Continued shortage of Veterinarians

Description:

As older Veterinarians retire it will be harder for the Vet schools to keep up with the number of DVM's needed to maintain the demand.

Topic: Control the number of graduates entering certain areas of the work force.

Description:

To expand enrollments and open new veterinary factories to produce more spots simply because there is a demand from those wishing to attend will not service the profession well in the long term. If we wait until the marketplace determines solely who will survive in companion animal practice down the road will likely erode the kind of respect and favor the public has for our profession today.

Topic: Creating more opportunities in public practice and research

Description:

Creating more opportunities in public practice and research; and educating veterinarians to fill those roles.

Topic: Declining Applicant Pool

Description:

Despite the popularity of veterinarians, veterinary medicine is not a career widely sought by young people with strong scientific backgrounds. During the past 10 years, the applicant pool has remained stagnant.

Topic: Decreasing number of veterinarians with food animal/mixed animal interests

Description:

Whether it be financially driven or the result of a generational "gap", this is very important to the livestock industry and food supply safety. If veterinarians are not available to perform services for livestock operations, non-veterinarians will do the work, legislation will dictate that they are legally allowed to perform veterinary services, and this can severely harm agricultural practices as well as national biosecurity. This issue HAS to be

Topic: decreasing numbers of rural/large animal veterinarians

Description:

As a part-time small animal, lab animal, relief and consulting vet, I make my own hours, though still putting in 40hrs/week. I left full-time single-place practice because of the difficulty in achieving reasonable work day lengths and time off. I see this as a quality of life issue, especially with rural/large animal veterinarians. The pay simply isn't worth the hours put in and vice versa. There's more to life than work. Plus, in today's economy, farmers simply can't afford our fairly-priced services.

Topic: Defend state and federal Veterinary positions

Description:

Going into the public realm needs to be a career choice that suggests reliable employment so that bright veterinarians will elect it. Underpaying and layoffs make it a career path that nobody respects. The remaining people are hard pressed to do the quality of work that they are capable of.

Topic: Demographic disparity

Description:

I would like to see veterinary medicine encourage students of under represented groups to see veterinary medicine as a viable career opportunity. The population of veterinarians should look more like to population as a whole.

Topic: Determine true need in food animal agriculture for veterinarians

Description:

While many "surveys" and the AVMA charts show counties with large food animal populations and few or no veterinarians, are these areas where it is realistic to expect a new graduate to make an income that allows them to have a decent life style and pay off their student debts. If the retiring veterinarian has existed on very low fees, this may not be a realistic option for new graduates.

Topic: developing mandatory internships for new graduates

Description:

I think a mandatory internship for new graduates would greatly benefit the profession. This would give graduates more self-confidence and would insure the public that a competent person is caring for their animal. The internship would need to provide benefits and a living wage in order for this to appeal to new grads.

Topic: Developing more food animal practitioners

Description:

Changes in veterinary college admissions requirements and policies as well as the changes as recommended in the first two issues above would encourage and welcome more young people interested in food animal practice into our profession. .

Topic: Difficulty in transferring license to other states.

Description:

With different licensing requirements in individual states and lack of reciprocity, it can be difficult for those of us that were licensed in 1 state many years ago to relocate to another state.

Topic: Disproportion of men to female graduates from our vet colleges

Description:

This probably responds to critical issue 2 also I'm sure. I realize we need to get the number of male applicants up to match the women applicants.

Topic: Distribution of manpower

Description:

Factors such as low pay and longer work days will continue to affect the numbers of professionals entering rural practice. Admissions into veterinary schools may have to be re-examined to encourage those students who are motivated to rural practice more opportunity for entrance into the professional programs.

Topic: Diversification of profession

Description:

1. Gender issues
2. Specialization
3. Corporate VM vs private
4. Promoting all careers open to DVM

Topic: diversity

Description:

Profession is overwhelmingly white, non-Hispanic.
We need to look like our clients

Stop playing politics and get on with economics and science. We get enough race/ethnic baiting from the Federal Government

I had few women in my class and no blacks or hispanics..or asians. When I applied to vet school prior to Title 9 I was told there was a "quota" for women, jews,blacks (yes, believe it). We need to help Tuskegee be the best in can be and recruit from all over the country.

The profession and the public that utilize veterinarians does not represent the population of the United States. There needs to be more effort to encourage the pursuit of veterinary medicine by minority students.

There also needs to be an effort to encourage the utilization of veterinary services by minority groups.

Topic: Diversity in the veterinary workforce & organizational leadership

Description:

We continue to have an underrepresentation of minority groups in our profession, and this disconnects us from the population that we serve. Recruitment needs to start at the high school level, and should continue in the application process to veterinary colleges. The leaders of many veterinary organizations (including AVMA) also do not reflect the changing dynamics of our workforce-- becoming younger and predominantly more female.

Topic: Diversity in Veterinary Medicine

Description:

We need to encourage student from different ethnic backgrounds to consider the field of veterinary medicine as a career. This can look like a great challenge but in my opinion can be as simple as being a participant in a high school career day and answering question about the benefits of veterinary medicine as a live long career. Having more under represented minorities in the field of veterinary medicine will offer new perspective about cultural attitudes toward animal welfare.

Topic: Diversity of the student population

Description:

Most of the discussion on diversity focuses on racial or ethnic diversity while we continue to see a shrinking of the male student population. We need to understand what has moved the mix of incoming students so far in the direction of the increased numbers of female applicants. Has the emphasis on grade points contributed to this situation?

Topic: Diversity of the veterinarians in practice

Description:

Veterinary schools need to improve recruitment of men, minorities and people from rural backgrounds. We have a deficiency of veterinarians to fill certain roles within the workforce. We seem to have an abundance of women who want to work in small animal practice - this needs to change or our food supply is going to suffer.

Topic: dvm shortage / overabundance

Description:

There are conflicting accounts of whether there are too many dvms or too few. Either one is bad, and someone should analyze and help correct the problem.

Topic: Economics

Description:

Let's stop funding supposedly objective studies declaring a shortage of veterinarians while we have colleagues going bankrupt in this economy. These studies are funded and performed by organizations with serious conflicts of interest, i.e. the veterinary schools who need larger classes to justify their existence and the corporate chains who want a cheap supply of labor. The only true shortage is in the agricultural sector.

Topic: Education

Description:

What kind of students are we graduating? No doubt these students are smart and scientific, but what has become of courtesy and civility? An organization recently granted a large number of scholarships to students with an equine interest. Only one student responded with a thank you note, and that student was from Canada. We need to improve interpersonal skills in both veterinarians and students to improve the public perception of veterinarians as kind and compassionate both to animals and humans.

Also, there is no structure in place to help older veterinarians gain employment as a result of sickness and injury. Veterinarians in their forties and fifties who do not possess Diplomate status are very limited in their search for employment, particularly if they are Large Animal Exclusive.

Topic: Education of those interested in food animal practice.

Description:

Hard work, long hours and poor pay can't keep those interested in food animal practice. Subsidizing pay and other incentives may be necessary to allow these hard working veterinarians to lead a reasonable life.

Topic: Encroachment of nonveterinarians into practice areas traditionally served by

Description:

Topic: enough food animal veterinarians

Description:

Lack of money, long hours make this a thankless job.

Topic: Establishing a Foundational Identity of a Proud Veterinary Profession

Description:

Veterinary Medicine is very diverse profession with a very broad licensure. The breadth and diversity of our profession can be divisive. It is important to identify and establish Foundational Competencies or Roles which are shared by all Veterinarians- which establish our common strengths. Establishing a strong shared identity will empower each veterinarian to appreciate the diversity of their colleagues. Foundational Competencies or Roles of Veterinary Medicine are shared by all other effective Health Care Professionals- 1) Veterinary Comparative Medical Expert, 2) Communicator, 3) Collaborator, 4) Manager, 5) Public Health Promoter/One Health Advocate, 6) Life Long Learner/Scholar/Educator/Researcher, and 7) Professional Leader. We recognize the roles as the strengths we see in veterinarians we respect. All veterinarians have the foundational competencies in all roles- the extent/ratio to which each role is expressed varies by where we practice and by stage in career. For example, a small animal clinician may mostly work in role 1-2-3, but has the competencies to develop more 5 through additional CE if that becomes a societal need. Another example is stage of career- a new graduate may concentrate on 1-2-3 and self-management, but at a later stage of the career, may develop more 5 and 6.

Topic: Face of the profession

Description:

The recruitment of diverse individuals should be a priority. The long-term ability of our profession to thrive in a changing world and remain relevant is a serious concern. The pipeline to veterinary school is filled with young white women. Why such a demographic? Exposure. Veterinary medicine needs more exposure to the public-at-large so that the possibility of career development is explored by individuals of various backgrounds.

Topic: Failure to attract candidates into the field of veterinary medicine

Description:

I think we are not attracting enough candidates to enter the field of veterinary medicine. When most students think of medical careers, they often do not consider veterinary medicine. We need to be more active in recruiting into the profession at all levels of education (elementary schools through college).

Topic: Female Veterinarians

Description:

Too many of the current and recent veterinary classes are female and that is changing veterinary medicine in unfortunate ways.

Topic: few vets in non-private practice areas

Description:

More vets needed in non-private practice areas

Topic: field of large animal veterinarians

Description:

Need to find a way to make it desirable and profitable for large animal veterinarians.

Topic: Filling jobs in food animal and large animal production medicine

Description:

There is a demand for more veterinarians and there is a need to fill food animal and large animal production positions, however, the perception is that the most lucrative positions in veterinary medicine are in companion animal medicine. We need really good incentives to start bringing folks back to those positions.

Topic: Food Animal Agriculture

Description:

1. Perhaps a solution to the lack of food animal veterinarians is to recruit students who are already interested in animal agriculture, not necessarily animal medicine. It may also help to finally separate pet animal from farm animal veterinary medical education, or, at least, have some sort of specialization by the third year.

This might involve providing some means to change one's career in the future if one decides to go back and switch 'species'. Maybe a couple veterinary schools could set up programs to do this.

Because only 1% of people are from farms today, food animal medicine is a tough sell. It may have to start via campaigns to educate the public or potential veterinary students on how important animal agriculture is, in the US and the World.

2. Another issue is the rise of small farms, with which I have become familiar. Small farmers usually have no ag background nor ag training. They have no appreciation of biosecurity, want to do their own 'veterinary work', and think government regulations are for large operations. This is a potential concern for both animal welfare and animal disease. It is an area that food animal veterinarians need to find an efficient and cost-effective way to address.

3. A re-organization of FSIS-USDA to more effectively use veterinarians may result in attracting and retaining veterinarians.

Topic: Food Animal DVM need

Description:

Veterinary schools need to encourage the training and education of DVM students interested in livestock veterinary medicine and surgery. Some type of loan assistance could be offered by the AVMA for those wishing to pursue Ag Animal medicine.

Topic: Food animal industry veterinarians

Description:

Due to the lack of veterinary students having farm animal background and exposure, we have created the deficit in students with interest in large animal medicine

Topic: Food Animal Medicine

Description:

The number of farmers retiring or going out of business.
The price farmers are paid for their products not the number of food animal veterinarians. Less farmers equals less need for food animal veterinarians.

Topic: food animal medicine future

Description:

with less veterinarians performing food animal medicine; fearful that food supply will be either unsafe or animals will suffer because of lack of care or worse, care provided by people who are not veterinarians

Topic: Food Animal Practitioner Shortage

Description:

Food animal and mixed practices are continuing to run short on veterinarians, and I think a great deal of this goes back to recruitment of students into veterinary colleges from agricultural backgrounds and experience, and promotion of a work-life balance in practice. Additionally, mentorship is extremely important.

Topic: food animal Veterinarians

Description:

low number of graduates to care for farm animals.
Legal constrains on medicine procedures and medicine use.

Topic: Food Animal Veterinarian Population

Description:

There appears to be a trend that is limiting the number of Food Animal Veterinarians that are available for actual practice.

Topic: Food Animal Veterinarian Shortage

Description:

The shortage of food animal veterinarians could potentially have a huge impact on the entire country including food production, cost, safety and availability and also the importance of monitoring for foreign animal diseases and other aspects of disease in food animals and wildlife. The veterinary field is attracting more and more to companion animals and equine in part due to the lifestyle and salaries.

Topic: Food animal veterinarians

Description:

Too many urbanites in vet school, not enough folks wanting to practice (or even have any clue about) food animal medicine

I feel that Veterinary Colleges need to base entrance on more than just grades and that we need to recruit men into the profession. Although most of the men wh are accepted only want to work 5 days a week from 9-5.

Less and less veterinarians are willing to work in rural areas with food animals.

Our profession is facing a critical shortage of food animal veterinarians, which is only going to worsen in the coming years if we do not quickly address this issue.

Topic: Food Animal Veterinary needs

Description:

Need recruiting methods to explain, to young people such as FFA, 4-H and other rural groups, the many opportunities available in careers in Food Animal Veterinary Medicine.

Topic: Food Animal Veterinary Supply

Description:

Recruitment and education of prospective students for food animal careers. Consider also programs to recruit, retrain (transition) or update licensed, practicing veterinarians (currently focused in other clinical disciplines) into food animal careers.

Topic: Food animal, regulatory, and diagnostic veterinary medicine work force

Description:

The AVMA has been active and successful in this area, and should continue to promote the federal program that provides support for veterinarians entering these fields.

Topic: food safety

Description:

shortage of food animal and public safety veterinarians

Topic: Food supply veterinary stewardship and leadership

Description:

As population growth continues upward, the food supply oversight will need many veterinarians that at the current dynamics of graduates are severely unavailable.

Topic: Full time veterinarian shortages

Description:

With the large number of female graduates that only want to work part-time, finding a full time associate and potential partner or person to buy me out at retirement has become a challenge.

Topic: Gender balance in veterinary students

Description:

We must figure out the reasons so few males are interested in Veterinary medicine and move toward more gender balance.

Topic: Gender in the Profession

Description:

I have no problem w/ women in the profession ; but many of them are getting their professional degrees and "staying " in the metro areas where they were educated. No real problem there , but most do not want to leave "metro " areas , due to a spouse or significant other coming "on the scene" during the student's schooling .This "spouse" usually makes a significantly high wage- -making relocation very hard.

Topic: Gender shift in veterinary classes continues

Description:

The veterinary profession needs to balance gender numbers in veterinary schools a bit better. Why are men less attracted to the veterinary profession than they use to be?

Topic: Gender shift in Veterinary Medicine

Description:

There are many explanations for the feminization of the profession and I won't go into them here in detail. The 1999 KPMG study did, however, state that the study indicates, "income of women veterinarians is seriously below that of their male colleagues. There is additional evidence that women work fewer hours, and are less likely to be practice owners and may price their services below that of men. There is concern that these factors may be reducing the income levels of all veterinarians". We are becoming, in my opinion, what can be considered a "lifestyle" profession. Dennis McCurmin, DVM, LSU stated in Veterinary Practice news that "The gender shift and generational differences seem to make today's graduate more likely to seek work that has controlled hours, nights and weekends off, and mentoring and benefit programs. These prerequisites are often not provided in smaller private practices. Since the larger corporate practices were introduced 15 years ago, the opportunity to have a controlled work week, minimum management duties, retirement plans and benefits has changed the employment picture for both new graduates and specialists". We, as a profession, have to embrace the desires and needs of new graduates and accommodate the desire for a balance between work and home. We have to provide lifestyle, income, flexibility, security and again, and most of all, income to achieve the lifestyle they deserve. We cannot rely on government intervention to retire student debt as is occurring sparingly in the large animal side of veterinary medicine. We need to be proactive and find other ways to support the new veterinarian. We must address income and new ways to accommodate our new graduates such as flexible schedules, maternity leave, more controlled hours, no night call, better mentoring and benefit programs, etc.

Topic: Gender transposition

Description:

understanding veterinary medicine as a second job

Topic: GLBT issues

Description:

As a lesbian veterinarian, I can speak personally to the rampant discrimination against GLBT veterinarians by our fellow colleagues. Veterinarians, by-and-large relate to financial conservatism perhaps because many are small business owners. This, however, is not an excuse for social conservatism, especially when it results in workplace discrimination. To meet me on the street, you'd never know I'm gay. I don't fit the stereotypes seen on TV or the movies. Most of my friends and my partners friends are straight. I don't wear a rainbow cape; there's no rainbow bumper sticker on my car. Nevertheless, I have been pushed out of two jobs because I am gay. (I'm not secretive about my sexuality, but I don't make an issue of it either.) In the past eight years as a practicing veterinarian, I have seen practice owners decline interviews to potential hires because they are gay. Most veterinary clinics don't have a protocol in place to put domestic partners on their client information sheets and no training exists for cultural sensitivity in many vet practices. Staff members don't know what to do when Fido has two mommies and sometimes try to set up separate accounts for each lesbian pet parent whereas husband & wife co-own their pets. Can the AVMA provide a non-discriminatory stand and some materials for cultural sensitivity training for veterinarians and veterinary hospitals? This should pertain to GLBT issues, but also prevention of discrimination on the basis of religion, race, ethnicity, etc.

Topic: Global and Food Animal Veterinary Medicine

Description:

The lack of food animal veterinarians domestically and within the borders of foreign trading partners is immense.

As an example, I will use the country of Haiti since it is fresh in everyone's minds from the recent earthquake. Currently, veterinary education is nearly completely lacking in Haiti, a country of 9.5 million people. There are two expatriate veterinarians working in Haiti with Christian Veterinary Mission. Although the effort may seem simply humanitarian in the public's eyes, one of these veterinarians helped the USDA and the Haitian government identify and eradicate a fly larva problem that was hindering the export of mangoes from Haiti to the U.S. Because Haiti does not have any veterinarians working in the public sector, they do not have the technical capacity to inspect foodstuffs of plant or animal origin to approve them for export to other countries. This hinders Haiti's economic growth in an acute way.

We need to provide education for these poor countries, especially ones with a vested export industry that can benefit the U.S. in an economic way. This is after all the only way to get anyone's attention in the U.S. How can we make money out of it? Isn't it?

We need to consider how we can help poor countries increase production in small ways to improve standards of living. This includes husbandry and identifying feedstuffs for livestock. Poor countries cannot hope to reach production levels noted in the U.S. nor do they need or want to. They simply need to produce enough food to increase their caloric intake by 1,000 more calories per day. How is it that this is not deemed important by the AVMA?

Topic: How veterinary medicine will change with more than 70% of vet school being

Description:

How is veterinary medicine going to change over the next 20 years with most of the veterinarians coming out of school for the last several years being women?

Topic: Impact of less large animal veterinarians

Description:

How will the shortage of large animal vets be addressed? Maybe the answer could be making a large incentive for existing veterinarians to transition over.

Topic: income,

Description:

too much competition in suburbs, none in rural areas

Topic: Increase Number of Food Animal Veterinarians

Description:

Need financial stimulus to get recent grads to move back to rural areas to protect food sources.

Topic: Increasing Food Animal Practitioner Supply

Description:

The emphasis on recruiting existing veterinary students to become food animal or even mixed animal practitioners in a rural practice by offering educational debt relief programs is a short term solution to the supply problem.

Long term solutions need to be developed to make a significant and sustained increase in the number of food animal veterinarians.

The authors of the article "Future Demand, Likely Shortages, and Strategies for Creating a Better Future in Food Supply Veterinarian Medicine" JAVMA, July 1, 2006, provided some controllable factors that affect the future supply of food animal veterinarians.

The major controllable factor is to reconsider how colleges of veterinary medicine select, recruit, retain, and educate students for food supply careers. The current emphasis on student selection mainly upon GPA scores has significantly contributed to the shortage and an increase in students from urban backgrounds that do not want to live and work as a food or mixed animal practitioner in the rural job locations.

The colleges can address non-controllable factors, such as the economic and lifestyle opportunities posed by rural job locations, if the selection criteria includes the applicant background, rural or urban, and breadth of animal exposure, as this rural background and long term animal exposure has a profound influence on the direction of their career path.

The second major controllable factor on supply is to increase emphasis on food animal practice in veterinary colleges. The college should offer significant and meaningful experiences in food animal practice.

This includes appointment of more food animal faculty that are not necessarily board certified and utilizing food supply practitioners in training veterinary students.

If a college cannot, then they should partner with colleges that are Centers of Food Animal Excellence located within the major food animal areas. A student pursuing a food animal career could complete their last year of education at one of these Centers of Excellence.

While no college wants to give up a program, providing negative food animal student experiences during vet school due to "disinterested faculty", "less emphasis on food animal practice", "little exposure to food supply career options", "lack of food animals within the college practice area", and "lack of food supply practiced-related externships" is detrimental long term to the profession.

Topic: Increasing number of specialists

Description:

I am very much for the extension of veterinary medical training toward a specialty (via residency and board-certification). I am starting to pursue this road myself. It is a concern of mine that when I finish attaining board certification, there will be few, if any, jobs available for the specialty I am most interested in (for me, large animal internal medicine). From what I have learned so far, people need to achieve a greater number of credentials in order to consider applying for faculty positions (e.g. multiple board certifications instead of one, PhD or MS versus no research degree, etc.). This may not be a critical issue now, especially since there are some specialties that are underserved, but I think it is one that we need to keep in the back of our minds as more board-certified specialists emerge in private practice and veterinary school areas.

Topic: Increasing numbers of veterinarians with decreasing numbers of pets to treat

Description:

We are increasing the numbers of veterinary graduates and specialists while the pet population in the USA remains stable or even decreases.

Topic: Integration of veterinary professionals into allied and public health fields

Description:

vets have a great skill set that doesn't get utilized as globally as leaders in problem-solving on a broad scale

Topic: It's the economy stupid

Description:

1. Educational costs relative to manpower needs.
-how do we supply food animal veterinarians to the locations they need to go where these folks will be unable to pay for their educations?
2. New economic factors affecting what clients are willing and able to pay for veterinary care.
-this will affect the level of specialization that has occurred in the profession
3. The economic affects of Wall Street induced interest in the pet industry and how well the veterinarian will maintain their professionalism in the face of corporate pressures.

Topic: LA DVM's

Description:

Veterinarians willing to service rural areas

Topic: Lack of available rural veterinarians

Description:

Recruiting quality veterinarians for rural practice has been an ongoing problem. This issue limits practice growth, impacts on the quality of care that can be effectively delivered, reduces the quality of life for practice owners and associates, and negatively influences practice values. It is important to continue to identify ways to create incentives for young veterinarians to enter rural practice. In addition, finding methods to intellectually and emotionally support existing rural veterinarians is vital.

Topic: Lack of consistency.

Description:

I could have used the word diversity, but it's overused. What I mean is what the AVMA has noted; that is, 78% of new grads are women and many areas of the country are in critical need of large animal vets. Duh! Wonder why that is? Most of my years have shown the small animal vets have been higher paid than large animal vets. There is another reason. So, if salaries for large animal were increased (supply and demand should take care of that...hopefully), the problem would be reduced but I'm not sure if it would ever go away. Also, I believe I read that paying off student loans by the gov't could be used. Then go to the schools and advertise it. Maybe you are.

Topic: Lack of continuing education in non-clinical areas.

Description:

There is a scarcity of courses offered at most conferences offering CE to veterinarians practicing in non-clinical areas. At the same time we need to better advertise the job opportunities that are non-clinical--those with industry, research, government, etc.

Topic: lack of enough large animal veterinarians

Description:

More veterinarians wanting to either stay in academia, specialize, or go into small animal practice rather than equine or food animal practice.

Topic: Lack of Food An. and Equine Vet.

Description:

The market demand is economic and the consumer is always looking for ways to avoid the professional and the costs associated. Therefore, the AVMA needs to establish a task force to see where the consumer is willing to spend for quality care and production outcomes and then focus the veterinary school curriculum on those areas and be sure the future graduates will be able to make a living in the field or all will seek the plethora of other options in our field and more lay people will be servicing the Food An and Equine areas of care.

Topic: Lack of food animal and rural veterinarians

Description:

After much talk to new graduates and veterinary students, more would like to be in these settings but cannot afford to due to low pay and debt load.

Topic: lack of food animal practitioners

Description:

while not necessarily in my area, but my state there is a lack of new veterinarians going into food animal medicine. I see this due to lack of pay in that field, and overwhelming education costs, also antifemale attitude

Topic: Lack of food animal veterinarians

Description:

Even with incentive programs there is a lack of veterinarians interested in the food industry.

Topic: Lack of food animal veterinarians is a myth.

Description:

I don't think there is truly a shortage of food animal veterinarians. I think the problem is that you can't make a decent living anymore in the country side calling on a sick cow here and horse vaccination there. I think there are plenty people who want to do that work for the backyard folks, but veterinarians literally cannot charge enough to make that a viable living. people cannot pay enough to have the veterinarian out, so there is a perceived shortage of FA veterinarians. what there is a shortage of is veterinarians who are willing to work for small wages that most backyard people are willing to pay.

Topic: lack of gender balance, vet school acceptance , lack of interpersonal skills

Description:

topic says it all-

Topic: Lack of general practitioners

Description:

Since medicine is so specialized these days it's hard to find a vet who can practice quality medicine and surgery in general practice.

Topic: Lack of large animal care

Description:

Very few veterinarians seem to want to practice mixed practice these days. Most new graduates want a 9-5 M-F job with no overtime or weekends. This has created a real drain from our profession in people who want to do large animal. I personally started in mixed practice but over the last 10 years have gone to an small animal exclusive practice. Without large animal vets, food animal production would be in jeopardy

Topic: Lack of large animal DVMs

Description:

This shortage is going to hit us hard in the food inspection sector and food producing area, as well as other areas.

Topic: Lack of large animal practitioners

Description:

I am small animal only, but have been a mixed animal vet for many years. I realize the need is great in this area.

Topic: Lack of large animal practitioners

Description:

There are many underserved areas in the US. This is recognized by most states as well as the AVMA.

Topic: lack of large animal veterinarians

Description:

Given the difference in salaries and on call duties, how can we possibly attract veterinarians to these areas? How can we follow through with the One Health Initiative if we only have companion animal veterinarians?

We need to encourage more young people to go into large animal vet med.

Topic: Lack of large animal veterinarians in rural areas

Description:

self explanatory

Topic: Lack of large animal vets

Description:

Speeding up the failure of small landowners to farm the land and raise livestock which leads to large corporations that do not follow proper care for animal welfare and food safety.

Topic: lack of new graduates that want to do mixed animal practice

Description:

The percentage of new graduates that want to do mixed practice continues to decline.

Topic: Lack of non-companion animal vets

Description:

Lack of students and vets going into non-companion animal fields. Students often go to vet school thinking that they'll pursue bovine, equine, etc., medicine, only to change their minds later in vet school or early in their careers.

Topic: lack of regulatory and production veterinarians

Description:

Everyone wants to do pets, because that's where the money is, but is that really in the best interest of public health.

Topic: Lack of rural veterinarians

Description:

rural veterinarians, in particular food animal vets, are becoming more scarce.

Topic: Lack of trained Laboratory Animal Veterinarians

Description:

With the increase in demand from pharma, academia, and industry for this type of expertise, the lack of trained laboratory animal vets will force those entities to hire inexperienced veterinarians damaging the reputation of the profession and putting research at risk.

Topic: Lack of veterinarians to take care of livestock

Description:

Large animal vets get paid peanuts and are expected to work twice the hours of a small animal vet. Since I already stated that it is hard to get any young person to work for peanuts and none of them want to work more than 40 hours a week, where do we think these people are going to come from?? There needs to be some way to help increase the pay for any one who wants to go into this field.

Topic: Lack of vets who want to work hard

Description:

Veterinarians that graduate these days have an attitude that they should not have to work over 40 hours a week. Nor should they have to do emergencies. "Real doctors" that work in hospitals certainly know what is expected of them - they have to work 60 - 80 hour weeks. Why should veterinarians be any different? Yes, I know I am from the old school, but I find it very hard to get my vets to work a late night (till 7:30pm) once a week. Certainly do not ask them to handle emergencies after that hour. All the money rides down the road.

Topic: Large animal care shortage

Description:

Again, not enough money to attract candidates. It would take a very optimistic vet student to devote the time for specialist training in this field without an assured job market. Forty years ago the student was assured of a good job in an area familiar to them. Forty years ago the student was returning to his home town.

Topic: Large Animal Clinician shortage.

Description:

I commented earlier about this subject. The AVMA should look closely at the Physician Assistant program as this related to a shortage of MD's in the mid 70's

Topic: Large animal medicine

Description:

As a one time large animal practitioner as well as an instructor in the field at Cornell, I see a growing problem in the future ability to deliver a much needed service to our farms. It was never an easy path to follow, but with the feminization of the profession, less graduates will not choose it to be their lifes work. This and the take-over of agriculture generally by megacorps will continue to be a problem.

Topic: Large Animal Practitioner Shortage

Description:

Excepting students based on their academics soley and not their committent to the profession. I have practiced for 39 years and my 4 associates, all women can't practice more than 4 days a week, 2 only three.

Topic: Large animal practitioner shortage for high-need areas

Description:

This has been widely talked about but new grads are frankly not prepared either financially or experience-wise to open a practice on their own, even with debt forgiveness. Outside of that, there are few available jobs advertised. Just check the JAVMA listings!

Topic: Large animal services being performed by laymen

Description:

Fewer large animal veterinarians will lead to more being done by lay people leading to less veterinary input.

Topic: Large Animal Shortage

Description:

As a mixed animal practitioner, I am 55 and a foreign graduate. Although I do not want to retire, I am forced to do an ECFVG exam to "prove" my capabilities if I retire in a state that requires ECFVG. I would love to work part time but it is not worth the time/stress/expense of ECFVG to continue on in the profession. Maybe 25 years plus activity in the profession should prove worth? Re-evaluation in all areas to keep the older mixed animal vets going rather than force us into retirement.

Topic: Large Animal Svc

Description:

Lack of interest by veterinary students to enter large animal practice. Maybe government could add incentives by extending payments of loans to 30 years as for a home mortgage

Topic: Large animal Vet supply

Description:

It is much easier and safer to make a living in Small animal and the trend will continue.

Topic: large animal veterinarians

Description:

need more

Topic: large animal veterinarian shortage

Description:

Although, this may be more of a problem for society/farmers/homeland security than the veterinary community.

Topic: large animal veterinarians v. non-professional treatment of animals

Description:

I see the biggest problem with the lack of large animal veterinarians is that livestock owners must rely on 'lay' persons for veterinary care. This can be seen both in the large commercial operations (thousands for cattle, tens of thousands for pigs, or 100s of thousands for poultry) but also for the smaller producers and hobby farmers. If we don't provide qualified and available large animal veterinarians, then we are ourselves guilty of stimulating the use of non-trained persons to provide 'veterinary' care.

Topic: Large Animal Veterinary Shortage

Description:

Self explanatory

Topic: Large Animal Vets

Description:

There is a recognized shortage of food animal vets. When I was in school (1976-1980), we women were discouraged from food animal medicine. Are there recruitment efforts? I know of 2 large animal vets, one board certified, that cannot find jobs where they live or the jobs pay so little.

few people wanting to go into large animal, especially food animal, and older vets physically can't manage it

Topic: large-animal vet shortage

Description:

The difficulty in attracting vets to the large-animal field will create hardship & affect many industries

Topic: Livestock Veterinarians

Description:

A severe shortage of livestock/mixed practice veterinarians is developing.

Topic: Loss of rural veterinarians

Description:

Fewer practitioners entering rural practice, in particular food animal practice. Having lay people move in to fill this void.

Topic: Low numbers in veterinary work force

Description:

Low pay, high debt, lack of interest have resulted in shortages in certain fields in veterinary medicine

Topic: Male veterinarians

Description:

It is nice that the AVMA has worked on the diversification of the profession, but what are they doing to increase the numbers of males entering the profession? An all female profession is not going to be any better than what an all male profession was a few years ago. How can the profession get back to a 50%-50% level that is good for both the AVMA and the profession?

Topic: medical care for large animals

Description:

More and more veterinary students come from urban/suburban areas, and want to go back into practice in those areas. Rural areas face a scary shortage. Vet Schools should concentrate on accepting rural students. Schools located in vibrant urban areas, while ideally situated to 'recruit' a large, specialized small animal caseload, have two major problems. One, it's difficult if not impossible to 'recruit' a sufficient large animal caseload to train large animal veterinarians, and two, they also risk habituating their rural students to city living, with the end result that many of their students (even the rural ones) want to stay in that city or other cities. The third problem that veterinary schools face in urban areas is high costs-- of real estate, of goods, of staffing, etc., which make their way into the costs of tuition.

Topic: Men in the Profession

Description:

Something needs to be done to attract men back into the profession. A balance of the sexes would be a lofty goal. For years we pushed for more women to become veterinarians and we got what we wished for. But we need to find out what issues prevent men from entering the profession and address them.

Topic: Men in Veterinary Medicine

Description:

I am not a sexist! Women make excellent Veterinarians however, the profession is becoming out of balance with less than 50% of the students in Veterinary Colleges being Men. We have to be objective and look at the statistics. Women quite often are part-time workers so they can incorporate time for family responsibilities. This creates an actual shortage in available Veterinarians for full time employment and Practice ownership. We need to use stronger recruiting efforts to get men back in the profession. Twenty years ago it was the other way around and that wasn't right. Let's try to make it even now, which will be fair and insure we have adequate numbers of full time people in Veterinary Medicine.

Topic: mixed animal vets

Description:

Keeping people interested in mixed/LA practice

Topic: Mixed practitioner shortage

Description:

More and more graduates think they have to specialize and do internships before entering practice. While the profession has identified food animal as the critical shortage area, I believe that market forces will take care of that issue. Fewer and larger farms need fewer fire engine veterinarians - the dairy industry will go the way of the poultry and swine industry - served by industry and consultants, with routine work done by farm employees. The problem of the future will be finding graduates who want to do mixed practice in small towns.

Topic: more farm vetg

Description:

More men with farm background need to be admitted to vet school even tho there are women applying with a higher GPA. They may need help getting thru vet school but we obviously need farm vets

Topic: Need for more large-animal doctors

Description:

I'm strictly small animal, but I see a great need for more large animal doctors in some geographical locations, and more profitability to make large animal practice more attractive.

Topic: Need for veterinarians in public health practice

Description:

Entering public health practice has been my goal since my second year of veterinary school. However, now I wonder if I will be able to leave private practice due to the pay cut I would likely have to take. My student debt load is very large and the salaries of most public health positions are far lower than private practice.

Topic: Need for vets in public health

Description:

We need to attract more vet students with an interest in non-practice types of jobs, including public health. Increasingly, starting positions in vet PH require experience and/or advanced training.

Topic: need or full time vets

Description:

gender balance is the issue

Topic: No men in incoming classes

Description:

self explanatory....

Topic: Not enough farm / food animal veterinarians

Description:

I am a mixed animal practitioner and I enjoy this diversity of my animal patients. The most common comment I get from new clients is that they wish there were more field veterinarians to visit farms and check farm/food animals. We need to encourage new graduates and explain that farm animal veterinarian can have a rewarding career as the small animal practitioner

Topic: Not enough food animal, public health veterinarians

Description:

Affect on our food supply, world health.

Topic: Not enough schools to keep up with demand

Description:

Now that it is becoming an all women field and many are not working full time, we need even more just to maintain the status quo, let alone get ahead of the shortage. One new school in twenty years while the pet population has doubled or tripled.

Topic: Number of veterinarians

Description:

There are areas where we have too many veterinarians in private practice and other areas where there are not enough. This is exacerbated by the high number of women receiving their DVM degrees, as a large number will not continue to practice for an entire career (many will marry, become mothers, etc.).

Will there be a shortage since so many are women now and a lot of them do not want to work full time. Also who will own the practices as young people do not show a big interest in this.

Topic: Number of veterinarians graduated

Description:

A recent study indicates that the number of graduating and practicing veterinarians exceeds the population they serve and the problems this causes. One of the problems being the ever decreasing compensation which also has an impact on the new graduate's ability to service his/her educational debt load. Our veterinary schools need to look at this issue seriously and consider the number of veterinarians they graduate every year.

Topic: on going analysis and long term prediction/planning of the gender shift

Description:

While the AVMA has published on going studies on this especially in the area of gender comparative economics and niche career choices and health concerns peculiar to the female veterinarian of reproductive age, I have not seen much in the way of the obvious added stress of the multiple roles placed on the female practitioner: wife mother, primary family care giver, to name a few. Their unique, God ordained role in human life undoubtedly puts greater continuous stress on them and greatly (consciously or unconsciously) influences their choices and implementation of their professional life and as they assume the majority role in the profession population, on the profession itself. Studies need to be developed and implemented to bring light on this reality to properly address the educational process and realities of the market place now and as it changes in the future. For instance we increasingly read of the alarming lack of graduating veterinarians electing to enter the market animal area, how to what degree has the gender shift impacted this trend?. Another area that I have informally monitored for several years through the AVMAJ recently deceased members monthly published list and have the distinct impression that on average the female dies younger than the male in the practitioner area at least. If this is really so then I feel it should be published and some study should be given to what MORE the AVMA should do or say to assist the female veterinary practitioner in her philosophy of practice. I realize that there are those rare people who can make this work for years but that is not the average by any means. This would not only help the women vet but her potential husband as well and should be so presented to our profession for both their sakes as well as any children they produce.

Topic: Over- supply of small animal practitioners

Description:

Too many small animal practitioners that make inadequate salary to pay student debt or to attract qualified students to our schools. We need to decrease enrollment in our schools or have graduates qualify for only regulatory or research work etc. Seems to me that this recession is going to go on for more than 5 years and a new crop of graduates are going to have a hard time even finding jobs let alone well-paying jobs.

Topic: Over supply of veterinarians

Description:

I know that we are constantly being told that there are not enough veterinarians. We are also told that the number of client visits to small animal veterinarians is dropping. The problem seems to be a mismatching of supply and demand. Economics should drive graduates to areas of need. Graduating more veterinarians will make more small animal practitioners and specialists but will not make more mixed and food animal practitioners. Until pay and life style are addressed, these positions will go unfilled.

Topic: Overabundance of Small Animal Veterinarians

Description:

self-explanatory

Topic: Overall veterinarian labor shortages

Description:

With the trend toward increasing female enrollment in veterinary schools (who often tend to work fewer hours due to being a mother) combined with the trend for younger graduates (male and female) to want to work less hours, as many of the older veterinarians retire in the next 5 to 10 years, fewer "man-hours" will be being worked. This does not go along with the reported increasing demand for veterinary services.

Topic: Oversupply of veterinarians in desirable areas.

Description:

My area has seen a great influx of veterinarians moving to the area and opening new practices based on "it's such a nice place to live" rather than demographic realities. The base population growth has been stagnant for years, with the result that veterinarians are having to cannibalize other practice's clients to survive. Many veterinarians seem to have no economic sense to assess a region's ability to support so many veterinarians. Rather than purchase an existing practice, the trend is to add more start-ups. The result is that both new and established practices struggle to survive in these economic times.

Topic: Producing interest in food animal and public health tracts

Description:

There is much press around the impending shortage of veterinarians focused on food production and public health. While I'm not convinced it's as bad as the media may indicate, I do believe it's an issue that needs to be addressed. Paying off student loans can be a step in the right direction, but I'm not sure we'll keep people in these fields unless something is figured out to address the poor pay for hours of work input (and the physicality of the work). No easy answer or direction on this one....but something that should be discussed / debated.

Topic: promoting job opportunities other than clinical practice

Description:

JAVMA is packed with ads for jobs in clinical practice, but for those who would like to work in a veterinary related field other than private practice, little is known about what is available if you do not have an advanced degree. Please encourage more companies/organizations to advertise in the journal or get the word out to us somehow about what else is available.

Topic: Providing economic viability to large animal/equine veterinarians

Description:

It is with sad regret that I am very concerned about the current state of large animal/equine veterinary industry. Due to the current model of practice, there are a large number of young veterinarians and future students that moving out of this segment practice due to the inability to provide a quality of life while providing a good income. There is money to be made in the segment of practice, however it requires a large sacrifice in lifestyle, particularly family. I am boarded large animal surgeon who has realized this in today's economic downturn. I have begun to expand my horizons to include small animal surgery and am in frequent contact with numerous colleagues who are in my shoes as well (general practitioners and specialists).

Topic: Public Health

Description:

There is much talk about the supposed shortage of veterinarians in public health, but not much information out there on how a veterinarian in practice can move into this area. I earned an MPH degree after I had practiced as a vet for a few years and planned on changing careers, but have found no interest from those who actually do the hiring for public health professionals. Most of those in public health have no clue of what veterinarians even do - one person expressed surprise that I had first been exposed to public health in vet school (he was shocked that a vet school even offered a course in public health and quite frankly couldn't understand why it would) - and this man was responsible for all the public health hiring in my state. There needs to be some major education of current public health professionals in terms of what veterinarians can offer. I honestly don't think there is a shortage of vets who want to be in public health - there is just a shortage of those willing to hire them.

Topic: Public health/public sector jobs

Description:

How to encourage local, state and federal agencies to hire vets, and/or offer compensation/debt repayment

Topic: Reaching out to children, as early as elementary school

Description:

particularly children who come from veterinary families
looking to children who attend schools which have active farm and work programs like Northfield Mount Hermon School or Berry College for example

Topic: reconciling the changing student demographics with forecast profession gaps

Description:

Increased discussion has highlighted gaps in professional need versus interest, training and mentorship. High level recognition and endorsement of these events are needed before changes can be effectually realized. Who is the driving force? Currently it's the market and basic economics. Until these are aligned in our capitalistic society, the ebb and flow of qualified applicants will always lag perceived need.

Topic: Recruiting graduates as large animal practitioners

Description:

A shortage exists in many areas that need good, hard working practitioners. Efforts should be made to offer as much exposure to new graduates and students of the up side of rural and semi rural practice and life style. The risk of allowing others in the field of animal science to diagnose and treat may become a reality. As has been said by people far wiser than I many years ago, "if we don't do it who will?"

Topic: recruiting more food animal veterinarians and paying them fairly

Description:

self-explanatory

Topic: Replacing retiring federal DVMs

Description:

In order to get Veterinarians replaced we need to not only increase the salaries, but also give them a career ladder that doesn't end at GS 12 or 13, while upper management is comprised of non-scientists (check the FSIS staff). Veterinary expertise is valued only to GS 12, above that is management pay.

Topic: Rural Veterinarians

Description:

Veterinary graduates rarely have the ability upon graduation to go to a rural area, convince large herd owners that they are capable while eaking out a living from the back yard ranchers. Especially if the area is not already supporting a large animal veterinarian. Encouraging older veterinarians to relocate with assurance from local producers of the need and support for a veterinarian with government help for necessary CE would seem to be more effective

Topic: Saturation of Small Animal Veterinarians

Description:

Veterinary colleges tell us there is a shortage of veterinarians.I have seen no data to support this. there does appear to be a shortage of large animal veterinarians. As the colleges turn out larger graduating classes we continue to see a larger population of small animal veterinarians and still a shortage of large animal practitioners. Small animal practices all across the country are seeing fewer clients and finding growth more difficult. We need to start addressing the shortage of large animal veterinarians for what it is, not a shortage of veterinarians but a shortage of veterinarians wanting to practice large animal medicine.

Topic: Serious DVMs in the future

Description:

As a relief DVM in 8 states I have seen a common complaint that has arisen in recent years among practice owners and other DVMs in a position to do the hiring. New graduates frequently have a very poor work ethic and a sense of entitlement that cause experienced staff to take over to fill in. It does not bode well for the future.

Topic: Shortage of actively practicing veterinarians

Description:

I believe there currently is a shortage of actively practicing veterinarians, in particular in fields such as large animal (especially farm animal) and laboratory animal medicine. I believe this shortage will intensify in the next several years, especially as new graduates choose other fields of veterinary medicine to pursue and currently practicing veterinarians retire.

Topic: Shortage of Farm Animal Practitioners

Description:

In the veterinary school admission process, can we go back to more emphasis on selection of students with an animal agriculture background and interest? When I applied for admission to veterinary school in 1953, one did not stand a good chance unless you had a farm background. I realize there is no guarantee that such a person will do farm animal practice. Perhaps, scholarship incentives with obligations might be part of the solution.

Topic: Shortage of Food Animal & Rural Area Vets

Description:

self-explanatory.

Topic: Shortage of food animal veterinarians

Description:

There is a shortage of food animal veterinarians in rural areas and this could continue if support is not available for new veterinarians to work in these areas. In addition, we need to continue to emphasize production medicine, legislative roles, and the role of veterinarians to protect our food sources and the public.

Perhaps a combined food animal/epidemiology/MHP/DVM degree with license restricted thusly.

This is a well known problem that is only going to get worse as many of us retire.

The shortage of food animal veterinarians will likely continue unless there are incentives to increase the numbers.

We are facing a critical shortage of food animal veterinarians that will continue to worsen as current veterinarians retire and high percentages of students choose urban small animal practice. I believe separate small and large animal tract education is one of the better solutions.

Topic: Shortage of food animal veterinarians and proper compensation

Description:

The compensation in reasonable work hours, benefits, and salary compensation has not kept up with the demands and value of this area of veterinary medicine, thus losing knowledgeable experts in the field to those areas that support a better quality of life for veterinarians and their families. The livestock industry, down to small farmers, has such a small margin of profit, that they can not support directly compensating these vets. Government sponsored student payment programs for those committing to this specialty may be a partial answer.

Topic: shortage of food animal vets

Description:

The shortage of food animal vets will impact the safety of our food, will allow less qualified people to monitor food safety, the public will be less confident about the safety of our food supply, more food borne related illnesses will occur.

Topic: shortage of food animal/production medicine DVMs

Description:

We must continue to strategize about increasing the number of DVMs in production & food animal medicine as well ramp up re-education through CE of emerging diseases & zoonotic disease in order to have our profession be ready to deal with bioterrorism on a mass scale.

Topic: Shortage of food production/medicine vets

Description:

Not enough graduating vets are entering the ag/production medicine field. Many students begin vet school with the intention of going into production medicine but many change their minds during the course of schooling. The curriculum is more focused on companion animal medicine, and the students planning on becoming small animal vets bitch and moan about having to learn about large animal stuff. Allowing tracking may encourage potential large animal vets to pursue it since they don't have to deal with the small animal BS. The profession is becoming more specialized, but the boards (and thus the curriculum) is still so generalized. Once graduated from school, graduates don't need to know how to treat every species (both small and large) in the Chicago suburbs, but they were forced to learn it in order to pass the boards so they can work on companion animals. The public doesn't expect us to be all-knowing of every species anymore. The profession does though.

Topic: shortage of large animal veterinarians

Description:

Provision of health services to food animals and large animals is a critical function of the veterinary profession. We must meet this strategic need to safeguard the food supply of our country.

With increased negative publicity regarding animal husbandry, liberal policies allowing direct sale of drugs to farmers, and increasing regulations, farming and large animal veterinarians are coming out at the short end of the deal, along with our food safety, availability of food, and to the economic downfall of our agricultural communities.

Topic: Shortage of large animal vets

Description:

There are many factors contributing to this problem. 1) If you look in JAVMA's classified ads, you are unlikely to find any jobs listed for large animal practitioners. I am not sure why that is, but if no one is hiring, how are the new grads supposed to get experience and take over the retiring vets' practices? 2) Many vets have significant others who are also planning to have a career, and it can be difficult to find jobs for both people in a rural setting. 3) There is a shift in thinking in this generation of vets that says there is more to life than your job. If you are the sole vet in a 100 mile radius, then there is no way to have vacations or even weekends off for that matter. You are on call 24/7 out of necessity. This lifestyle is less popular with the current generation of vets. Sadly, I don't have a solution to offer. I can see why it is happening, but I am not sure how to fix it. I have felt an obligation at times to become a rural large animal vet because I know it is needed, however, my bigger obligation has to be to my family and that lifestyle doesn't work well with my family.

Topic: Shortage of large animal/food animal veterinarians in the US

Description:

The shortage of large/food animal veterinarians in the US appears to be growing. Not only does this affect herd health, it can also impact the agricultural safety of the United States as these veterinarians would likely be the first people to recognize a foreign animal disease in the US.

Topic: Shortage of large animal/mixed animal practitioners

Description:

There is a need for large animal/mixed animal practitioners, though the number who retire/switch is exceeding the number of replacements. The protection of our nation's food supply, the assistance to livestock producers, and the monitoring of foreign animal diseases will suffer.

Topic: Shortage of large animal veterinarians

Description:

Maybe we should consider having something like a nurse practitioner or physician assistant certification for a supporting large animal physician. They hopefully wouldn't have the student loan burden that full veterinary education would entail, so hopefully would be willing to work for less. My understanding is that most vets don't want to do large animal work because it doesn't pay as well and difficult working conditions. Not sure what we can do about the working conditions, but maybe if there was less student loans people would be happier with less money. I guess another option would be programs that supply large animal vets to rural areas for a certain period in exchange for paying for school.

Topic: Shortage of large/food animal practitioners.

Description:

Again, this issue has been and is being widely discussed in the profession. Legislation has been passed federally, as well in a number of states, to help address this problem through financial subsidies for veterinary student debt in exchange for service in underserved areas. I also believe that more can and should be done again in our veterinary medical teaching institutions to promote the value, integrity and societal benefit of choosing to work with large/food animals. I also believe again that more can be done as outreach to pre-veterinary students at both the undergraduate and at secondary school level. There are not as many kids growing up on farms today as there were 40 years ago, and this is not likely to change as land resources become more scarce with growing U.S. population. So it is not viable to wait for the "farm kids" to come forward to veterinary schools looking to become farm animal veterinarians: this will not be enough. We need to go to the "city kids" or the kids in suburbia/exurbia and teach them about food and farm animals and expose them to the need for humane veterinary care in these settings. We need to plant the seeds for our future long before they arrive on the doorsteps of veterinary school when the battle has already largely been lost to companion animal medicine. It is the rare veterinary student that changes her mind midstream, however this aspect should not be overlooked either. I am not a proponent of tracking in veterinary medical school, as in my personal experience it is true that you do not always know what you want until you see someone else doing it.

Topic: Shortage of Males in the Profession

Description:

Veterinary school enrollment is primarily female. As women stop working to have children or work part time, this will continue to create a shortage of veterinarians in the work force.

Topic: shortage of mixed animal practitioners

Description:

I live in rural Georgia - I cover 7 counties. Finding someone to take my place when I am no longer able to do large animal work is getting more and more difficult.

Topic: shortage of mixed-animal and/or food animal practitioners

Description:

Topic: shortage of public health, food animal vets

Description:

Hopefully the new legislation and congressional funding for this issue will continue to stem the tide on this.

Topic: Shortage of rural (predominantly large animal) veterinarians

Description:

Many areas of the country are experiencing shortages of rural / large animal veterinarians. The predominant issue is the poorer income compared to other sectors, especially when physical difficulty and number of hours is

Topic: shortage of rural and food supply veterinarians

Description:

For the first time in history, humans are now more urban than rural. With the flow of people to metropolitan areas flow veterinarians to care for them and their urban-dwelling companions. Despite the shift, veterinarians in rural America remain a precious and more rare by the day commodity. The implementation of the Veterinary Medical Loan Repayment Plan may well be successful in filling some of the deepest voids in the nation. However, much should be done at the veterinary school level to laud the merits of rural and production medicine practice. This problem can only get worse as the "baby boomer" generation of rural vets hang up their stethoscopes for good.

Topic: shortage of rural or large animal vets

Description:

I read a lot about how this is a recurring theme, and I sure don't do equine practice much anymore, and nor do I know too many new vets going into that area. The ones I am around all want to do small animal residencies and become specialists. I think large animal vets need to charge more to make their increased risk worth it, and we need to retrain clients to tolerate that. At least with pet large animals. I realize for producers that may not always be a reality. I commend the AVMA for taking real initiative to dig for some real answers to tough questions, and then being a true advocate for the profession. Thank you!

Topic: Shortage of rural practitioners (not just large animal)

Description:

The shortage of large animal vets is really a shortage of rural vets--vets in small communities need to be able to care for household pets as well as livestock.

Topic: Shortage of Veterinarians

Description:

Demand continues to rise while supply diminishes. In the absence of veterinarians the public and society at large will be forced to turn to other non-regulated providers.

Topic: Shortage of veterinarians entering food animal/large animal practice

Description:

This is an urgent need that is only going to get worse. Veterinary schools need to be far more proactive in recruiting student who will work in this area of practice.

Topic: Shortage of veterinarians in rural places

Description:

In order to make a living wage and not work 80 hours a week, most veterinarians are turning to lucrative small animal practice in big cities. This makes it difficult for rural areas to attract and keep veterinarians.

Topic: Shortage of veterinarians where they are needed most.

Description:

Small animal vets are everywhere and only large animal vets are in short supply. This is a false statement. There are not enough vets in the North and South Pacific islands (where I practice) and we have had to rely on Para Vets to do most of the work. Even in places where it is "more civilized" there is a shortage of vets. We just are not located in the semi-remote and remote areas where the animals and the people need us most. Personally, I could use another 5 veterinarians.

Topic: shortage of veterinary pathologists

Description:

There is a projected need for ACVP board certified veterinary pathologists that will result in offshore outsourcing of pharmaceutical regulatory toxicologic pathology services to potentially lesser qualified individuals.

Topic: Shortage of vets in particular fields

Description:

Schools need to expand the knowledge of applicants as well as current students of various careers for vets.

Topic: Societal veterinary need, assure adequate numbers and specialized training

Description:

From large animal medicine to public health to laboratory animal medicine, a number of areas in veterinary medicine need more individual practitioners and/or can expand the use of veterinarians. The specific areas should be identified, related planning made for veterinary education and specialization training, and industries/institutions encouraged to take advantage of the unique contribution that veterinary medicine can make to their operation.

Topic: Source of Food Animal Vets

Description:

young people coming from farm backgrounds

Topic: Sparsity of food animal practitioners

Description:

most practitioners are going into companion animal practice. We need food animal practitioners.

Topic: Student debt

Description:

Student loan repayment programs are a great start, but these programs need to be funded and expanded to encourage students to enter public practice and rural/food animal medicine.

Topic: Sufficient food animal veterinary care

Description:

Rural areas are finding it difficult to attract food animal veterinarians. Veterinary technicians trained in food animal techniques and industry characteristics can work with veterinarians to extend the reach of their services. The veterinary technology program at North Dakota State University has a Large Animal Veterinary Technology minor available to students in its BS degree program.

Topic: Supply

Description:

Distribution of veterinarians to provide care in all areas (food animal, rural/underserved, etc.).

Topic: Supply of food animal/mixed practitioners

Description:

Mixed practitioners have been a key component of our national disease control program (identifying, reporting, and control measures). Developing programs that encourage more students to enter this segment of the profession, and also addressing economic issues that can make the choice sustainable.

Topic: Supply of large animal veterinarians for rural areas.

Description:

Need greater incentives for large animal vets in rural areas.

Topic: Supply of small animal veterinarians greatly outstripping available positions

Description:

With the increase in number of graduates in small animal medicine areas due to increasing class sizes, increase in new schools opened, and the over-whelming surge of females in the profession with the vast majority of them wanting to practice only small animal medicine has lead to a crisis in employment opportunities for not only new graduates but also experienced veterinarians. Veterinarians with several years of experience are now competing with new graduates for the same positions and at frequently the same starting salaries.

Topic: Supply of veterinarians and student debt load

Description:

Self-expanatory.

Topic: Supply of Veterinarians in Clinical Veterinary Practice

Description:

I personally feel that there are TOO many veterinarians that are going into or working in clinical veterinary practice both small and large animal. Individual veterinarians when focused on doing the things that VETERINARIANS should do- diagnose, prescribe, prognosis and surgery can be far more productive than the average veterinarian is today. This issue can be minimized if there was more emphasis on the other career options available to veterinarians without seeking an additional degree or more schooling

Topic: Supply of vets

Description:

Supply of veterinarians, particularly in research and large animal medicine. Vet schools have not substantially increased enrollment and training in these areas.

Topic: The decreasing numbers of rural - food animal veterinarians

Description:

This is an on-going problem that is being addressed by many different states - offering incentives for students that choose food animal medicine. This decrease has coincided with the drastic decrease of males enrolled in veterinary colleges around the country. Male enrollment has been dropping steadily for decades and now represents <25% of the national student body currently enrolled in all the vet schools in the United States.

Topic: The gender changes

Description:

In the last couple of decades there is a dramatic changes in the gender of new graduates, because of most female graduates like to have a family (which is natural) they either try to work part time or not at all and hard to find veterinarians who willing to work at night or week ends or in emergency hospitals.

Topic: The profession is predominately female in gender.

Description:

As a profession with a predominately female ratio the future will have more shortages develop as the female veterinarians leave the work force to have a family. Most females are not physically capable of handling large animals, thus increasing the shortage in the area of large animal doctors.

As a profession with a predominately female ratio the future will have more shortages develop as the female veterinarians leave the work force to have a family. Most females are not physically capable of handling large animals, thus increasing the shortage in the area of large animal doctors.

Topic: The shortage of veterinarians serving in rural areas

Description:

Very few graduates want to work in rural areas after school. The majority go on to specialize or work in larger cities. That is understandable as veterinarians cannot be expected to be on call 24-7.

Topic: The supply of veterinarians

Description:

I think with the current veterinary student debt load, there will be a shortage of veterinarians in general. We are already feeling this in the food animal practices. We will need to seek out other options because of this and I think that technician utilization will be a must, as well as the potential for another option of a possible Nurse Practitioner and/or Physicians Assistant type of position(s) that should be added.

Topic: The surplus of veterinarians

Description:

Publicity claims to the contrary, there are too many veterinarians and maybe too many veterinary schools in the nation today. This has led to an abundance of competition including an increase in unprofessional conduct amongst colleagues. Corporate practices motivated by the bottom line, unscrupulous individual veterinarians who find devious ways ("diversion" springs to mind) to pad their income and para-veterinary groups who see themselves as more capable than they really are have caused a lowering of the practice standards bar. This has led to inferior care for many animal patients and that is very sad. Individual veterinarians have become competitors and some have left the profession in bitterness. The myth of a "veterinary shortage" continues to be promoted by those who have a financial interest in a bigger crop, namely veterinary schools and corporate veterinary practice groups.

Topic: The workforce

Description:

Hiring/maintaining full time veterinarians esp in rural areas

Topic: Too few food animal vets

Description:

There will be too many small animal vets and too few large animal (especially food animal) vets. This will happen because students who want to go into farm animal medicine may not have as strong qualifications when applying to vet school as students who want to go into small animal practice. Also, the lifestyle of a small animal practitioner often has better hours, better pay, and less physical demands than that of a large animal practitioner. Small animal practice may also be more flexible and family-friendly for women. Therefore, a lot of students (especially women) may decide to be small animal vets, even if they started vet school wanting to work with farm animals.

Topic: Too few large animal practitioners available

Description:

This trend is probably going to continue as family farms are disappearing across the country. There does not seem to be an adequate plan to address this issue. I have heard applicants to veterinary schools express that they indicate that they have interest in food animal medicine if they think that their chances of getting accepted will be improved. Once in veterinarian school, they will simply change their minds and pursue a small animal curriculum.

Topic: Too few practitioners choosing research or government careers

Description:

Very little information on these career paths is currently provided during veterinary school

Topic: Too few practitioners willing to work on large animals

Description:

Even here in KS, large animal medicine seems to receive less time and resources in veterinary school than small animal. More effort should be made to encourage students to consider large animal or mixed practice.

Topic: Too many small animal veterinarians

Description:

This increase in "competition" exacerbates the problem listed in #1. There're always those who make the rest of us look like we are "price gauging" because they charge less and practice "volume medicine."

Topic: Too many women.

Description:

Gender change in profession will bring down salaries.

Topic: Under supply of food animal practitioners and specialists

Description:

Inadequate number of veterinarians in these areas

Topic: Uneven distribution of veterinarians between urban and rural areas

Description:

This is tough to equalize without infringing on individual freedoms, both veterinarians and animal owners. Several forces are at work here, not the least of which is rural livestock owners' tendency to do their own medical work and buy their own drugs at the feed store, thus diminishing their (perceived) need for veterinary services. Meanwhile, urban areas are overcrowded with veterinarians.

Topic: Vet shortage

Description:

I read about the issue in research, teaching, food animal, but I think it is overall as we now have 6 in a town that used to have 10. We suffered through three years with only 4 1/2 and I hear the same thing from other rural areas. The business is here, just not enough Doctors.

Topic: Veterinarian shortage/opportunities

Description:

The veterinary schools to recruit students interested in all facets and opportunities within the profession.

Topic: veterinarians as stewards of food/fiber producing animals

Description:

x

Topic: Veterinarians for rural areas

Description:

Identifying students who want to live in rural areas and assist them to make it financially possible.

Topic: Veterinarians in rural communities and livestock industry

Description:

Again, probably a current issue, but will continue to grow. As veterinarians continue to move towards cities to do companion animal medicine, how do we meet the demand in the rural communities where salary and lifestyle (i.e. hours, wear and tear on body, etc) are not as attractive.

Topic: Veterinarians should be public Health services

Description:

Incoming veterinary students should be pointed in the direction of public health while they are in the early days of their veterinary curriculum.

Topic: Veterinary Compensation, Rural veterinarians, Cost of education

Description:

Veterinary education is very expensive and the debt load is not easily managed by the new graduate. Compensation for rural veterinarians is far below what urban veterinarians make and this usually translates into large animal vs small animal veterinary medicine. We are in need of rural large animal veterinarians in the country. Our profession needs to look at this issue seriously and offer incentives to individuals who plan to practice in a rural setting and decrease the cost of their education. The debt load is crippling to the new graduate.

Topic: Veterinary Leadership Needs to Better Reflect the Changing Demographics

Description:

The majority of state, local, and national veterinary leadership is made of white males. Does this truly reflect the demographics of those in our veterinary schools and in our practices? If not, why not? Are the local and state VMA's actively recruiting new leaders that reflect the changing demographics? Diversity in the veterinary leadership will help to ensure the profession adapts and changes with the times.

Topic: Veterinary Shortage

Description:

It would appear that the AVMA is aligning itself with Congress in an attempt to get funding for veterinary shortages in rural areas. This is a mistake. The free market should be the guide not Congress. Nothing comes for free and this is certainly true of ALL things that come from the federal government. If there is a federal subsidy for veterinarians in rural areas then there should be federal subsidies for hairdressers, mechanics, etc. That has the nasty stench of socialism. The AVMA and veterinarians should stand on their own two feet and not accept any subsidies from Congress. If you want the veterinary profession totally screwed up, then get Congress involved. They screw up everything else, they will screw up our profession.

Topic: Veterinary shortages

Description:

public health, large animal

Topic: Veterinary Supply

Description:

When I started veterinary college in 1982 there were going to be too many veterinarians so several colleges reduced class size. Now we are expanding class size, foreign graduate certification capacity has been expanded and more foreign colleges are working towards AVMA accreditation. So, it is a given the supply will grow. The AVMA needs to be well prepared to help market the valuable skills that our well trained graduates possess.

Topic: Veterinary Workforce Shortages

Description:

The AVMA should take a true leadership position in identifying solutions to workforce shortages. The AVMA, with AAAP, Federal and State Agencies as well as other professional groups (Dairy, Beef, Swine, Equine, Poultry, Public Health, etc) should work towards identifying novel ways to recruit new DVM's to practice in underserved geographic areas as well as underserved segments of our profession. Identifying individuals willing to practice in areas of need will allow DVM's to find positions that will fulfill both professionally and economically. Improving Workforce Shortage issues will also improve the problem of student debt.

Topic: vets in public health

Description:

The role of and vacancies for veterinarians in public health are, and will expand as, important issues facing veterinary medicine both in the US and worldwide. With more public health training programs becoming available, we will need to make sure students are pursuing these options and filling the vacancies as they become available.

Topic: Workforce

Description:

Gender, diversity (nice job in the last JAVMA), student debt and its effect on economic issues, generational issues. AVMA has been at the forefront of evaluating these issues. Need to keep the momentum going.