

Recommendations of the OIE International Conference on the Control of Infectious Animal Diseases by Vaccination, Buenos Aires, Argentina, 13 to 16 April 2004

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Introduction

In recent years, epidemics of emerging and re-emerging infectious animal diseases and zoonoses have often been controlled by implementing a policy of mass slaughter. However, this approach to disease control poses considerable ethical, technical, ecological and economic problems and there is a need for alternative control strategies. Therefore, in 2004, the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE), the International Association for Biologicals (IABS), and the National Animal Health Service in Argentina (Servicio Nacional de Sanidad Animal) organised an international conference on the control of infectious animal diseases by vaccination. The conference was held in Buenos Aires, Argentina, from 13 to 16 April and was attended by over 300 scientists from some 50 countries.

Recommendations

The recommendations of the Conference attendees (1) support the position that veterinary vaccinology can help to build a better world, particularly given the quality of the veterinary biologics available today.

Considering that:

1. Preventing the spread of animal disease through international trade of animals and animal products is one of the primary missions of the OIE. This is accomplished by establishing and updating international standards and guidelines that prevent the spread of pathogens while avoiding unjustified sanitary barriers.
2. The OIE standards for terrestrial animals are contained in the *Terrestrial Animal Health Code* (the *Terrestrial Code*) and the *Manual of Diagnostic Tests and Vaccines for Terrestrial Animals* (the *Terrestrial Manual*).
3. The collection, analysis and dissemination of veterinary scientific information is also one of the main missions of the OIE.
4. The standards developed by the OIE are recognised as international standards for animal health and zoonoses by the Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS) of the World Trade Organization (WTO).
5. Infectious animal diseases and zoonoses represent a major constraint to the maintenance and development of livestock and present a major threat to public health, to

the livelihood of farmers (especially in developing countries) and to national economies.

6. Over the past few years, the world has witnessed the emergence and re-emergence of several infectious animal diseases that have had a major impact on animal and human health. These have severely affected the economy in both developed and developing countries.

7. New scientific and technological knowledge about the prevention of many of these infectious diseases could contribute to the development of safer and more efficacious vaccines and diagnostic tests.

8. For ethical, ecological and economic reasons, it is no longer acceptable to control and eradicate disease outbreaks mainly by applying a policy of mass slaughter.

9. Vaccines help to improve animal health, public health, animal welfare, and agricultural sustainability, thus protecting the environment, maintaining biodiversity, and protecting consumers of animal products.

10. The OIE, being the international reference organisation for animal health and zoonoses has, wherever possible, incorporated into its standards, the best 'state of the art' scientific knowledge on the use of appropriate diagnostic tests, disease prevention and control by vaccination.

11. Vaccination is without doubt one of the most useful measures which can be used to prevent animal diseases, and since its inception veterinary science has been strongly linked with the development of vaccinology.

12. Vaccination has proved that it is capable of preventing, controlling and eradicating disease, as exemplified by the control of smallpox, rinderpest and rabies.

13. Recent scientific advances in the diagnostic field, in particular the ability to differentiate vaccinated animals from those that have undergone pathogen replication as a result of natural challenge, have been recently incorporated into the *Terrestrial Manual*. Their implications have either already been reflected or are currently being discussed by the OIE in order to amend those sections of the *Terrestrial Code* which deal with disease control and recovery of disease-free status after an occurrence of a disease.

14. This International Conference is based on the valuable experience gained in the control and elimination of foot and mouth disease and other significant animal diseases and zoonoses through the use of vaccination.

15. The Conference is an opportunity for the exchange of the latest scientific information at the global level that will,

at the same time, assist in the evaluation and improvement of the current OIE standards and guidelines for better control of animal infectious diseases.

16. For this event, the OIE has acted in collaboration with the IABS, which has a long and valuable tradition in the dissemination of the most relevant scientific information on human and animal health.

Conference attendees of the OIE International Conference on the Control of Infectious Animal Diseases by Vaccination recommend the following:

1. Current approaches to animal disease prevention, control, and eradication by vaccination should be reviewed, wherever possible, according to the latest scientific information and incorporated into the OIE standards, recommendations and guidelines in order to facilitate both animal disease control and trade in animals and animal products.

2. Whenever feasible, the OIE should formulate vaccination policies as an alternative to the mass slaughtering of animals.

3. Greater emphasis should also be placed on the use of vaccination for the control of food-borne and other zoonotic diseases in animals in order to safeguard public health. This may include wildlife reservoirs of pathogens.

4. The OIE should develop and incorporate into its standards, recommendations and guidelines all relevant new information on diagnostic tests and the effective prevention, control and subsequent eradication of infectious animal diseases by vaccination.

5. The OIE should ask Member Countries to produce and use vaccines manufactured, tested and approved according to OIE standards and guidelines in order to improve their safety and potency. The same principles should apply to diagnostic tests.

6. The OIE should encourage Member Countries to strengthen the capacity of their antigen and vaccine banks to control emerging or re-emerging infectious diseases and zoonoses.

7. The OIE should recommend the development of more flexible marketing authorisation regulations in order to be able to adapt vaccines to the epidemiological situation in the field when facing pathogens with multiple serotypes, as exemplified by vaccines against human influenza (provided good epidemiological tools are in place).

8. The OIE should support all research efforts in veterinary vaccinology and encourage funding agencies to put research into new veterinary biological products on their agendas and make it a priority. Public research is still needed to fill the gap where the private sector does not invest in new products due to the lack of foreseen investment return.

9. The OIE should provide, on official request from Member Countries, international standards and general information on the availability of antigen and vaccine banks.

10. The OIE should encourage other international and regional organisations to adopt a similar approach in the

control and eradication of other infectious animal diseases by vaccination.

11. The OIE and the IABS should disseminate all information concerning the International Conference to OIE Member Countries, international and regional organisations, and other stakeholders.

12. The OIE should refer the scientific information generated and discussed at this International Conference, including these recommendations, to the OIE Regional Commissions and relevant Specialist Commissions before submission for endorsement by the OIE International Committee.



References

1. Schudel A.A. & Lombard M. (eds) (2004). – Control of infectious animal diseases by vaccination. Proc. OIE Conference, Buenos Aires, Argentina, 13-16 April 2004. *Dev. Biol. (Basel)*, **119**.



