

SOUTH AFRICAN VETERINARY ASSOCIATION COMMUNITY VETERINARY CLINICS TO TAKE CENTRE STAGE AT WORLD VETERINARY CONGRESS 2011 – ‘SOCIETAL OBLIGATION FOR VETERINARIANS TO BE THE MANAGERS AND ARBITERS OF ANIMAL WELFARE’

MEDIA ACCREDITATION: Please e-mail Greta Wilson at greta@wam.co.za and ideally also indicate which topics are of particular interest so we can match-make you to a speaker/s ahead of the Congress (also helpful if you are able to indicate your wish list with regard to interview dates, times and whether in-studio or to mobile telephone (landline may be possible but limited access during the Congress). Kindly note that only editorially oriented media (not those selling advertising) will be granted accreditation.

[SOUTH AFRICA – Cape Town] Animal Welfare ranks high on the agenda at the 2,000-delegate-strong 30th World Veterinary Congress, taking place Monday 10 until Friday 14 October at the Mother City's Cape Town International Convention Centre.

If one considers the abstract of one of the papers being presented on this topic, it makes sense that Animal Welfare should be so high on the agenda. Dr Jim Edwards' abstract includes the following: *"Veterinarians will need to actively participate and take the lead in animal welfare. The veterinary profession is unique with its knowledge and expertise in animal health and welfare and public health. There is a societal obligation for the profession to be the managers and arbiters of animal welfare."*

Linked to the above thinking, a topic set to come under scrutiny will be a paper on the South African Veterinary Association Community Veterinary Clinics (SAVA CVC) where, given that in South Africa there are unfortunately no state-run veterinary hospitals or clinics, private veterinarians donate their time and skills to provide basic animal healthcare to disadvantaged communities or those who have no access to veterinary services.

The SAVAs' main activity is Primary Healthcare: vaccinations, parasite control and sterilisations. There is also a fair amount of emphasis on educating pet owners about basic pet care such as nutrition. A booklet entitled "Your best Friend" is available in 7 official languages (English, Afrikaans, Sesotho, isiZulu, Setswana, Xhosa, and Tsonga). These booklets are distributed countrywide, in a bid to reach as many communities as possible.

Currently, 21 clinics render services in various regions of South Africa (visit www.communityvet.co.za for further information). All CVC workers assist at the clinics on a voluntary basis and wherever possible, community involvement is enlisted in a bid to establish a firm mentality of 'partners' (establishing sustainable partnerships) instead of 'charities' within communities. The clinics aim to create a culture of paying for services: pet owners are requested to contribute a minimal amount of 10 to 30 South African Rands for a consultation, vaccination and parasite control (deworming & dipping), 30 to 200 South African Rands for sterilisation. The shortfall is addressed by arranging the likes of fundraising events and book sales.

The SAVAs play a vital role in community development. To be relevant in a country with such overwhelming human need, animal welfare should have a humanitarian impact. It is a long-established fact that there is a direct relationship between animal cruelty and violence within communities. Access to basic veterinary services and humane education of children creates empathy for others, through the fostering of respect for life, creating a culture of caring and empathy for all beings. This is a vital ingredient in building a nation.

SAVA CVC is a registered non-profit organisation (Registration Number 000-234 NPO) and is registered with the South African Revenue Services under the 18A legislation as a Public Benefit Organisation, which enables donors to have a tax rebate on donations to the organisation (PBO 18/11/13/1321).

The organisation has as its mission a bid to provide primary healthcare to animals from disadvantaged communities, thus promoting the health and welfare of animals and people. Its vision is to expand and

have CVCs operating in all major centres as well as smaller centres where veterinarians and the community have identified a need.

During the Congress, thanks to sponsor ABSA AgriBusiness, the SAVA CVC will hold a community veterinary clinic (vaccination and sterilisation) in Khayelitsha with interested delegates on Thursday 13 October. At the Congress itself, Dr Dave Kenyon, one of the CVC Directors, will address delegates on Tuesday 11 October between 17h00 and 17h40. Most recently, the SAVA CVC Mobile Clinic got underway thanks to funds from the National Lotto.

Other papers being presented on animal welfare topics are as follows:

- **An update on compulsory community service for veterinarians in South Africa**
- **The adjudication of animal welfare issues by ethical analysis** – *part of the present-day challenge of veterinarians involves resolving ethical debate around conflicting animal, human and environmental interests. It also prompts the question of how the profession should respond politically, rationally and with integrity in balancing the interests of its stakeholders in animal welfare debate. The use of a structured ethical analysis and adjudication process which considers all aspects of animal and human interests at play, in terms of animal and human well being, autonomy, justice and sentience must be pivotal in meeting this challenge. Factual knowledge is also required to support ethical judgments. Essential to ethical analysis is the construction of matrices or ethical frameworks as an aid to categorising the relevant and competing animal and human interests in terms of their wellbeing, their autonomy, their sentience as well as interests in maintenance of the integrity of the biota and biosphere. Human reliance on animal exploitation will continue for the foreseeable future. In the current climate of public interest, the tempo of contention about what is and what is not morally acceptable, is also likely to escalate in the veterinary and livestock production sphere. The response as veterinarians ought to be directed towards maintaining the integrity of our profession and towards the refinement of animal welfare and human service, in a balanced and ethical manner.*
- Related to the above topic, the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals will present the following paper: **Animal welfare and animal cruelty – considerations for the small-animal practitioner** – *There is a clear ethical and moral argument for practitioners to report suspicions of animal abuse to the appropriate authorities when education is inappropriate or has failed. In addition, the major veterinary professional organizations support the concept. There is a link between animal abuse and human violence and as responsible members of the community, it is important for veterinarians to be aware that their actions may be the first step in an intervention that may save the lives of both humans and animals. It is not an easy decision to make, but there are many veterinary forensics resources available today to help veterinarians recognize abuse, document the conditions or injuries and testify in court. Certainly the recognition that animal health and welfare affects human health and welfare and vice versa make compelling arguments for educating clients about responsible pet care and for fulfilling the veterinary oath to protect the public health and relieve animal suffering by reporting this criminal activity when appropriate.*
- **Global perspective of animal welfare related to increased food production** – *The veterinary profession must continue to rise to the challenge of managing animal welfare as the World increases the food supply to meet the rapidly increasing human population. The challenge is to not only increase food production, but also to manage the intensification required, the need to educate consumers about the management of production and animal welfare, and the defence of production systems. **Veterinarians will need to actively participate and take the lead in animal welfare. The veterinary profession is unique with its knowledge and expertise in animal health and welfare and public health. There is a societal obligation for the profession to be the managers and arbiters of animal welfare.***

As for the Congress as a whole, matters of real importance to the health and wellbeing of all South Africans as well as to the national economy and the continental and global economy will be under discussion as the Congress explores the theme “Caring for animals: healthy communities.” Worldwide,

there are an estimated 70 billion poultry, 12 billion cattle, sheep and goats, 1.5 billion pigs, 223 million domestic dogs and 220 million domestic cats.

2011 holds much significance for the veterinary profession as the Congress takes place during World Veterinary Year, with the related theme of "Vet for health, vet for food, vet for the planet!" In this regard, the Congress will play host to the closing event for the global World Veterinary Year celebrations. 2011 furthermore represents the 250th anniversary of formal veterinary education and of the veterinary profession. It is also 250 years since the concept of 'comparative pathobiology' first came into being. The World Veterinary Association celebrates its 150th anniversary in 2013, while Onderstepoort held their Centenary celebrations in 2008. The South African Veterinary Association (SAVA) is 108 years old.

Almost all of the scientific wildlife sessions will be presented by South African wildlife experts.

Continuing veterinary education and professional development are the cornerstones of a healthy, responsible and competent veterinary profession. With this in mind, veterinarians, para-veterinarians and other animal healthcare professionals from across the globe, together with their families, are set to descend on the Mother City – among the world's Top 10 tourist destinations.

The Congress theme ties in well with the One Health initiative, which will be unpacked in certain sessions. One Health is a worldwide strategy for expanding interdisciplinary collaborations and communications in all aspects of healthcare for humans, animals and the environment, in a bid to sustainably manage our collective global survival. The programme will explore in-depth the triangle formed by the Human / Animal (both domestic and wild) / Ecosystem interface, with the veterinarian central to this relationship.

The Congress will touch on the companion-animal, production-animal and / or wildlife animal veterinarian's role in positively impacting on a community's social, economic and environmental sustainability. The Faculty of Veterinary Science, University of Pretoria, for one, will host two very stimulating parallel programmes for each of the core three days of congress sessions and these stimulating programmes will cover their integrated livestock and wildlife health programme.

Congress components include:

- National Veterinary Clinicians Group Pre-Congress Day sessions (Monday 10 October) – *these sessions are specific to small animal veterinarians – these veterinarians service small animals that, not least, may serve as companion or therapy pets in human mental rehabilitation facilities, prisons, hospitals, children's hospitals, retirement centres, and working with adults or children living with disabilities or autism;*
- Integrated Livestock and Wildlife Health and Management- multiple sessions – *presented by the Faculty of Veterinary Science, University of Pretoria, in conjunction with the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) of the United Nations;*
- the World Veterinary Association Summit (Tuesday 11 October) – the World Veterinary Association Summit (Tuesday 11 October) – WVA President Dr Tjeerd Jorna will welcome delegates to the Congress, followed by an opening word by Director-General of the OIE Dr Bernard Vallat, Dr. Scott Newman from FAO and Dr. Awa Aidara-Kane from WHO. The Summit will investigate and interactively discuss the benefits and challenges encountered with using antimicrobials. ("Antimicrobials: use them responsible today to safeguard them for tomorrow");
- the International Veterinary Behaviour Congress (Tuesday 11 and Wednesday 12 October);
- the World Veterinary Dental Congress (Tuesday 11 until Thursday 13 October);
- the World Veterinary Association Presidents Assembly Meeting (Wednesday 12 October);
- a Wildlife Immobilisation Course conducted in Kruger Park by Dr Cobus Raath and other veterinarians [2-8 October and 16-22 October];
- pre- and Post- Congress tours;
- a large trade exhibition which could open many doors for trade into Africa and internationally

The World Veterinary Association serves as the Custodian of the 30th World Veterinary Congress 2011. Among those organisations also dispatching delegates are: OIE (the World Organisation for Animal Health, formerly known as the Office International des Épizooties); FAO (the Food and Agriculture Organisation of

the United Nations); WHO (the United Nations World Health Organisation); the WMA (World Medical Association); University of Pretoria (UP), Faculty of Veterinary Science, Onderstepoort; World Aquatic Veterinary Medical Association (WAVMA); International Veterinary Behaviour Meeting (IVBM); Federation for Animal Health (IFAH); World Veterinary Dental Association (WVDA).

Congress sponsors are as follows:

- “Guardian of the Wild” sponsor – World Veterinary Association
- “Big Five” (Platinum) sponsors – Pfizer; OIE
- “Revered Wildlife” (Gold) sponsors – Iams; Nestlé; Hills; Piramel Health Care; Ross University; South African Veterinary Association (SAVA); SAVA Community Veterinary Clinics; University of Pretoria; Instavet and Equine International; NW Parks
- “Antelope” (Silver) sponsors – Cipla Vet; FAO; Afrivet; Western Cape Department of Agriculture; Karl Storz; Merck Sharpe & Dome; Deltamune; Lomaen Medical; SVD; National Department of Agriculture (DAFF); Bayer; Medpet; OPB; Avimark; Boehringer Ingelheim; Lakato; Virbac; Kyron; Merial; Imagex / Xerikona; Daro Enterprises;
- “Small Five” (Bronze) sponsors – Otomys; PB Mayer Medical Books; Mouldmed; SAVC; Unisa; SA Biomedical; WVC 2013; Abaxis; Medical Books; Randox Laboratories; Cabi; Axim; Cassim Medical Repairs; Biotech; Health & Hygiene; MDS; Brothers Safaris; World Society for the Protection of Animals; Envirocin; High Tech Medical; Performance Pet Foods; Pharm4Game

The Congress Secretariat is SAVETCON Event Management.

While members of the public are welcome to follow the Congress by joining the Congress groups on Facebook or Twitter, physical presence at the Congress is exclusively open to the veterinary trade. Registrations have closed. The scientific sessions are open only to those registered, that is, veterinarians (public and private sectors), veterinary nurses, veterinary technologists, some laymen such as aquaculturalists who will also attend the on-farm workshop in Franschoek on Friday 14 October. The Veterinary Nursing Association of South Africa (VNASA) and South African Association of Veterinary Technologists (SAAVT) are also greatly involved in both the organising committee as well as in terms of Congress attendance.

For further information, visit www.worldvetcongress2011.com or telephone +27 +12 346 0687. Visit the Congress on Facebook at WorldVeterinary Congress and on Twitter at WorldVeterinary Congress2011.

The World Veterinary Association website can be viewed at www.worldvet.org and the One Health Initiative website can be viewed at www.onehealthinitiative.com. Visit the World Veterinary Year website at www.vet2011.org.

E N D S

EDITOR'S NOTES

PROGRAMME AT A GLANCE

(An updated programme will shortly be supplied to media – for example, the OIE - World Organisation for Animal Health - initiative at the Congress includes the setting up of collaboration in not least the SADEC region, with Deans and Registrars at veterinary academic institutions meeting up at the Congress).

Saturday 8 October

Set up exhibition (contractors only).

Sunday 9 October

Contractors for stand-only spaces move in. Registration and Information desks open for delegates.

Monday 10 October

Shell-scheme exhibitors move in. Registration & Information desks.
Pre-congress day (small animals).

COCKTAIL FUNCTION in Exhibition Hall (media welcome – Exhibition Hall, CTICC). At this event, the Trade Exhibition will officially be opened, with SAVA President Dr Riaan du Preez welcoming delegates and the trade. (To date, close on 1,000 individuals have RSVPd and plenty more are likely to RSVP).

Tuesday 11 October

OPENING: PLENARY SESSION (media welcome – Auditorium 2, CTICC).

Parallel sessions to follow. (Plenary session programme will shortly become available to media on request).

Wednesday 12 October

Parallel sessions.

SOCIAL EVENING OFF-SITE (please note: media can attend this if purchasing a ticket at R685 per person from petrie@savetcon.co.za – venue: Grand Café and Beach, situated between Cape Town Stadium and the V&A Waterfront.

Thursday 13 October

Parallel sessions.

Closing Ceremony (media welcome – Auditorium 2, CTICC).

GALA DINNER (please note: media can attend this if purchasing a ticket at R685 per person from petrie@savetcon.co.za).

EXHIBITION CLOSSES.

Friday 14 October

Workshops.

ADDENDA:

- Congress programme
- List of exhibitors
- Speaker bio's will become available to media shortly (presentations available with speaker permission by date of Congress, in some instances pre- Congress)
- Speaker photo's will become available to media shortly

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