

# THE IMPORTANCE OF VETERINARY MEDICINE TO LIVESTOCK HEALTH

By

Dr. Godfrey A. Springer, B.Sc, DVM

Whether it is a herd of cattle, a flock of sheep or goats, a pen of chickens or a group of weaned pigs, poor animal health decreases the performance of the animals leading to lower production and financial losses.

The provision of veterinary services is a key component to the success of your farm operation. Inputs such as feed, water, proper housing and good management practices and record keeping are essential to your outputs and financial gain. Without proper animal health practices there will be reduce efficiency and optimal profits. There is a direct correlation between quality livestock production and veterinary medical services to your animals.

The role of the Veterinarian is to advise the Farmer on proper herd health management practices such as proper de-worming, vaccination, nutrition, environmental sanitation, disease prevention and control and treatment of animal illnesses. In addition, only healthy animals are delivered for anti-mortem inspection and meat production ensuring safe and wholesome meat for public consumption. We also ensure that we import and transport healthy animals preventing the risk of introducing diseases into the country or unto your farm.

In order to have a successful farm operation, livestock farmers should seek to do the following:

Seek good genetically sound animals with good reproductive ability.

Provide adequate land space for farm operation in order to reduce overcrowding.

Provide proper housing with adequate temperature control for the newborn and young animals.

Ensure adequate feed supply in order to provide proper nutrition for the animals.

Potable and clean water should be provided at all times for the animals.

Have proper animal identification records and include financial and inventory records on the animals and the farm.

Have sufficient pastures for your cattle, sheep and goats and practice proper pasture rotation to prevent parasite build up and reduce pasture destruction.

Once the above practices are carried out there will be a reduce dependency on the over use of veterinary drugs and therefore reduce inventory cost and in some instances utilize natural and proven old-time remedies for your livestock.

By following good animal health preventative measures on your farm, you are opted to have healthy and productive animals for marketing and a brighter financial gain from your farm operation.