



Canadian Food
Inspection Agency

Agence canadienne
d'inspection des aliments

News Release

For immediate release

Animal Health Week: Protecting the health of all species

OTTAWA, Oct. 3, 2011: This is Animal Health Week (October 2 to 8), and the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) and the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association (CVMA) are reminding the public that protecting animal health helps protect human health.

This year's theme is "Protecting the Health of All Species," which highlights the important role veterinarians can play in making sure that animals *and* humans stay healthy.

"About 60 percent of all human infectious diseases have their source in animals," said Dr. Brian Evans, Chief Veterinary Officer of Canada. "With newly emerging pathogens capable of causing health and economic consequences, we're advocating an approach to animal diseases that protects the health of all species."

Many diseases such as rabies can infect wildlife, domestic animals and humans. Parasites (such as tapeworm), conditions (such as ringworm) and bacteria (such as *E. coli*) can also be transmitted between pets and their owners.

"Veterinarians can provide Canadian families with guidance on taking proper animal health precautions in their own households," said CVMA president Dr. Lloyd Keddie. "Keeping vaccinations up-to-date and implementing a parasite protection plan are two examples of appropriate disease prevention practices."

Diseases that affect livestock and wildlife, such as highly pathogenic avian influenza, can also be transmitted between animals and humans. The CFIA and its veterinarians work closely with federal, provincial, territorial and international partners on preventing and controlling animal diseases that may have animal and human health implications.

For example, the CFIA is involved in Canada's Inter-Agency Wild Bird Influenza Survey. The survey is an early warning system designed to detect highly pathogenic avian influenza strains in wild birds, which could be transmitted to domestic poultry—potentially threatening animal and human health.

The CFIA also has a laboratory network that helps identify and analyse emerging foreign animal diseases that may affect people. CFIA scientists and their colleagues from the Public Health Agency of Canada were at the forefront of global efforts to decode the genetic makeup of the H1N1 influenza virus and develop analytic methods that allowed the international scientific community to detect the virus in multiple species (including swine, sheep, goats, turkeys, chickens and humans).

For more information on the CVMA's annual Animal Health Week, please visit www.canadianveterinarians.net.

For media inquiries

Canadian Food Inspection Agency

Media Relations: 613-773-6600

Kristin McEvoy, Manager, Communications and Student Program

Canadian Veterinary Medical Association (CVMA)

613-236-1162, ext. 128

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