

MICROBIOLOGY FOR VETERINARY TECHNICIANS

M IKRAM and E HILL: 1st Edition, American Veterinary Publications, Inc. 1991. pp 213. Price \$24.50 (ISBN 0-939674-30-0)

In the preface the authors state that the book was written as an inexpensive reference for veterinary technicians, practising veterinarians, agriculture students, workers in the biological field and other allied health professionals. To achieve this objective, the book is divided into 3 main sections, namely Bacteriology, Mycology and Virology. These sections are divided into a considerable number of short chapters dealing with classification, morphology, pathogenesis, treatment, control and laboratory procedures. In this respect the book is well set out. It is also pleasing to find chapters introducing the concepts of host resistance and pathogenesis. However, the authors have in a few instances neglected to distinguish clearly between bacterial and viral pathogenesis. In the section on bacteriology, viruses are cited as examples to explain concepts such as tissue affinity, chemical barriers and biological barriers. In terms of host resistance the statement that: "the skin is free of micro-organisms" is incorrect and does not consider the important role that the normal flora play.

The correctness of certain statements was not sufficiently checked. In a description of *Cl. botulinum*, it is stated that: "Only types A and B are of major veterinary importance", whereas types C and D are the toxigenic types most commonly involved in bird and animal disease all over the world. Further examples of incorrect information include New Castle disease described under the heading of Togaviruses, equine influenzavirus included with the paramyxoviruses and herpesviruses described as single-stranded DNA viruses.

The section on laboratory procedures in bacteriology is practical and includes for the most part up-to-date information. However, some information may be misleading to the laboratory technician. In this regard one may refer to the statements that most *Actinomyces* species are aerobic and that *Borrelia* is an aerobic organism.

The inclusion of therapy and control in a book on microbiology for veterinary technicians is debateable. To state that: "Tetanus toxoid and antitoxin should be given after castration, tail docking and traumatic wounds", will be confusing to persons not familiar with the principles of vaccination.

This book covers the subject of veterinary microbiology satisfactorily from the viewpoint of the veterinary technician, and may serve to provide basic information as envisaged by the authors.

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