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## Book review — Boekresensie

### Comprehensive reports on technical items presented to the International Committee or to Regional Commissions

1999. *Office International des Épidémiologies, Paris*. 250 pp, soft cover. Price €25. ISBN 92-9044-505-X

The 1999 edition of comprehensive reports made to various meetings of the OIE contains some highly pertinent and topical information in the realm of disease control. The first section consists of 3 reports presented at the 67th General Session of the International Committee in May 1999. The first deals with the problem of resistance to treatment of ecto- and endoparasites. It demonstrates the scope of the problem and emphasises the need for integrated pest control, including innovative approaches such as the FAMACHA technique that is currently being validated. Appropriate production systems and a solid knowledge of the epidemiology of the parasites are essential in order to develop sustainable approaches to control. The second paper, on management of disease emergencies, is particularly topical, and is an excellent summary of the elements required for the prevention and handling of animal disease outbreaks. Although it is mentioned, in my opinion the importance of early recognition of disease by farmers and field staff and how this can be achieved are not sufficiently emphasised, perhaps owing to the content of the questionnaire on which the report was based. The third paper evaluates the role that new generation vaccines (gene-deleted, recombinant and DNA vaccines) can play in disease control.

The other 3 sections consist of reports to the OIE Regional Commissions for Africa, the Middle East and Asia. The 2 reports on Africa deal with the effect of structural adjustment programmes on the delivery of veterinary services, and the indications for implementing stamping-out measures for disease control in Africa. The former reports on the results of a questionnaire survey, to which response was unfortunately limited to a relatively small number of countries, to evaluate the effect of restructuring programmes developed to counteract shrinking public sector resources. Although the conclusion was there have been positive effects, the report reflected was that problems are experienced with continued budgetary constraints, downgrading of the livestock sector as a 'poor relation' in agriculture,

an inadequate private sector that itself experiences financial constraints, and loss of information and control. Having experienced at first hand some of these constraints in Ghana, I found this a particularly interesting paper. The second paper is based on the Botswana experience with contagious bovine pleuropneumonia, where stamping-out was successfully applied. Two-thirds of the countries that responded to the questionnaire indicated that their financial resources would be inadequate to implement stamping-out measures, highlighting a major constraint for control of disease outbreaks in the African region.

The 2 Middle East reports relate to factors concerning trade of animals and livestock among countries in the region, namely the Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures, and identification systems for animals. In the light of the recent outbreaks of foot and mouth disease in a number of regions, these papers are relevant for all countries with a livestock trade.

Two of the reports from Asia relate to the Nipah virus outbreak in Malaysia in 1998/1999 and contain most interesting information on the emergence of this new, seriously zoonotic disease and the measures to control it. A paper on the economic impact of foot and mouth disease in the Asian region is of general interest in view of the current global situation with regard to that disease. The fourth paper deals with diseases of farmed fish and other aquatic animals, and emphasises the need for capacity to diagnose and deal with these diseases in countries where aquaculture is a growing industry.

The annual publication of the comprehensive reports is a noteworthy contribution by the OIE to global disease control. The 1999 edition contains information that will be of great value to veterinarians in the public sector, as well as those in other sectors with an interest in the epidemiology and control of animal diseases.

**M-L Penrith**

*ARC - Onderstepoort Veterinary Institute  
Pretoria*