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Book review — Boekresensie

International animal health code – mammals birds and bees (9th edition)

2000. Office International des Épidémiologies, Paris, 473 pp., soft cover. Price €45. ISBN 92-9044-494-0.

The 8th edition of the *International animal health code – mammals, birds and bees* was reviewed in the June issue of the journal. Published at irregular intervals of 3–6 years since 1968, from 1998 it was resolved that the code should be updated annually. Nevertheless, because the subject of disease control is under constant study, new diseases emerge, and printing takes time, the Code is always out of date by the time it appears. Producing it annually is a considerable advance, and since it is not possible for information to become widely available during the development stage, the current Code can be considered, for all practical purposes, the most up-to-date information that is generally available on the control of diseases. I have attempted to identify the more significant changes by comparing the 9th edition with the previous edition.

Improvements include a user-friendly list of List A and List B diseases as a Chapter 1.1.2 under general definitions and notification of diseases. The chapter on evaluation of veterinary services has been completely rewritten. It is much more comprehensive and specific. If rigorously applied, it is likely that many countries, including our own, would fall short of the required standards. The principles and guidelines are excellent, and provide goals for which every country should strive. If all veterinary services were able to achieve the standards indicated, animal health would be much less of a problem. Furthermore, the recommendations are practical and by no means impossible to achieve. The very brief chapter on Aujeszky's disease (pseudorabies) in the 1998 code has been replaced by a much more extensive chapter that covers all precautions required to prevent importation and spread of the disease. It is clear that to obtain disease-free status for Aujeszky's disease the requirements are very strict, and few countries, including South Africa, would easily achieve official free status. The chapter on bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) has been rewritten, but in view of recent developments, including the finding that many countries imported cattle, beef and bone meal from Britain during the critical period, and some changes in case patterns for new variant Creutzfeld-Jakob disease in humans, the recommendations are likely to change again.

Chapters on zoonoses transmissible from non-human primates and *Salmonella enteritidis* and *S. typhimurium* in poultry have been

moved to a special section 'Diseases not covered by List A and List B'. The chapter on zoning and regionalisation has been considerably abbreviated. This is probably a natural result of the fact that the concept as described in the 1999 Code was relatively new, and therefore warranted extensive coverage. In the recommendations for foot-and-mouth disease, the information relating to outbreaks in previously free countries is incorporated in the paragraph on infected countries, which is logical, because if an outbreak occurs the country is indeed infected. With respect to both free and infected countries, the recommendations refer to embryos derived *in vivo* rather than fresh or frozen. Recommendations with regard to the importation of *in vivo*-derived embryos from ruminants, horses and swine have been added for vesicular stomatitis. Trichinellosis has been moved from porcine to the multiple species List B diseases.

Various other minor changes, e.g. more specific instructions for control of bluetongue in regions adjacent to the global bluetongue zone, more emphasis on processes that destroy the spores of *Bacillus anthracis* as well as the free bacteria, and removal of references to ova with respect to African horsesickness were noted, and the immunofluorescent antibody test is no longer given as the prescribed test for heartwater.

The appendices have been rather extensively revised. An important addition is a chapter on surveillance and monitoring for BSE. Chapters on certain aspects, e.g. lagomorph embryos, have been omitted.

Recent events have shown that an outbreak of diseases can most unexpectedly disrupt the even tenor of life and expose veterinarians, both in the government services and in private practice, to a situation in which they will be expected to answer questions about not only control of the disease, but the implications of the outbreak and the control measures for their clients and for the economy. It is therefore very handy to have the latest Code available for easy reference.

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