

Ethnoveterinary research and development

C M McCorkle, E Mathias and T W Schillhorn van Veen (Eds)

1996. *Intermediate Technology Publications, London, 338 pp. Price £17.95 (US\$29.95). ISBN 1 85339 326 6.*

Eighty-nine percent of the planet's inhabitants rely mainly on traditional treatments and practitioners, *i.e.* on ethnomedicine. A similar percentage appears to hold for livestock and ethnoveterinary care. This interdisciplinary and international compilation of reviews and case studies published in 1996 is the first in the field of ethnoveterinary medicine.

'Whether in poor, Third World countries or in the relatively rich countries of the First World, the economic, environmental and biomedical sustainability of many modern technologies has been called into serious question'. This is particularly provocative in our current environment in the sub-Saharan region.

Constance McCorkle and her co-workers present a book relevant to our own current challenges. Several chapters give insights into relevant case studies and methodologies to collect and effectively analyse data in the field of veterinary anthropology (disease factors, epidemiology,

socio-cultural and biophysical aspects of animal health and production). Socio-cultural, environmental and biomedical viewpoints intertwine with historical perspectives. Twenty-three chapters cover 10 major domesticated species in 40 African nations as well as in Asia, Europe and the Americas. From topics such as those of the opening chapters 'Sense or nonsense? Traditional methods of animal diseases', ethnotoxicology and ethnopharmacology to traditional veterinary medicine, this book offers any veterinary scientist considerable food for thought. An extensive reference list provides the reader with further sources of material.

The book is designed to provide workers in this field with insights and methodologies not often accessible in a field of growing awareness in our own environment.

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