

WORLD VETERINARY DAY MESSAGE – 2016

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We celebrate another World Veterinary Day with this year's theme being "Continuing Education with a One Health focus". This highlights 'One Health' the concept that has been embraced by both the World Health Organisation (WHO) and World Organisation for Animal Health (Oie). One Health shows the intimate link between human and animal health to public health. History over the last few years has highlighted its importance as 60% of the human infectious diseases worldwide have been of animal origin. For example Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) H5N1, influenza H1N1 and acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) have severe impacts on animal health, public health and economies.

There are many other zoonotic diseases that have been more limited in spread but strongly affect human and animal health, production, value chains and trade. In light of this One Health is a shared responsibility so partnerships and cooperation between human/ animal health and environmental professionals are of great importance for public health. Moving forward it is my dream to see all medical and environmental professionals working in greater cooperation with a single goal of achieving better public health, reducing infectious zoonotic diseases, and preserving the health of our ecosystems.

Jamaica needs to build more effective systems that allows for greater intersections between different sectors, so that they can strengthen collaborations with the understanding that human, animal, and environmental health are co-dependent in the prevention of disease.