

2011: A year of great significance for our profession and Faculty

In 2011, we animal husbandry veterinary physicians celebrate 250 years of the birth of the profession. Also this year the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine and Animal Husbandry reaches its first decade of life. Both anniversaries are motivation to celebrate the accomplishments, but more importantly focus on new horizons for our program and the development of this field.

At the opening ceremony to the World Veterinary Year, Dr. Bernard Vallat, Director General of the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE), stated: "Everybody knows that veterinarians are the physicians of animals, but few are aware that they play a fundamental role in the prevention and control of infectious diseases in animals, including those that are transmissible to humans, animal welfare, food production and food safety. This year is a special opportunity to pay tribute to the daily contribution of veterinarians to civil society that represents a global public good.

I would like to mention two facts that without a doubt are becoming important challenges for our profession to advance with the swiftness that humanity demands. The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations estimates that approximately 920 million people in the world suffer from hunger and malnutrition, 13.2% of the world population. A second fact, of no less importance, is that 60% of human epidemics are caused by pathogens that are found in animals.

The lack of animal husbandry veterinary physicians in the world is an important limiting factor to the security and safety of world food supplies and as a University we are faced with the great challenge of providing high quality professionals, in order to help to reduce the socioeconomic breach of rural populations, in order to decrease the levels of poverty and hunger, to perform exhaustive epidemiological research that will help avoid new epidemics on a global scale.

From our Faculty we pay tribute to all those professionals that in their daily lives perform ethical, honest work and who ensure that veterinary medicine and animal husbandry are dignified and influential professions in socioeconomic development.

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