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CRITERIA FOR THE USE OF PARENTERAL AND ORAL IMMUNIZATION OF DOGS

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Preventive vaccination against rabies virus is a highly effective method for preventing rabies in animals and humans. Systematic and large scale use of injectable vaccines in dogs in combination with dog movement restrictions have contributed to the progressive disappearance of canine rabies from Western Europe and the United States by the middle of the last century and more recently, large extends of these areas have been freed of wildlife rabies by oral vaccination.

Tragically, rabies continues to claim more than 55 000 human lives each year, mainly in the sub-Indian continent, Asia, Africa and Latin America and this in spite of widespread efforts to control the disease in dogs and the availability of safe and efficacious rabies vaccines.

In addition to strong political focus and good rabies awareness in the human population, accurately understanding rabies epidemiology and clearly defining ways by which to gain access and optimizing the vaccine coverage in the targeted dog population, all while preserving vaccine quality for an optimal immune response of individual dogs throughout the vaccination campaigns are critical elements of successful rabies control and will be discussed.

