Using information technologies to deliver learning objectives covering the competencies of new veterinary graduates relevant to veterinary public health and food safety

Nova Rodrigo J.

School of Veterinary Medicine and Science, Sutton Bonington Campus, University of Nottingham, LE12 5RD.

rodrigo.nova@nottingham.ac.uk

Regardless of the career pathway that veterinarians may follow after their graduation, all veterinary professionals must be trained in veterinary public health and food safety. The understanding of concepts and the acquisition of the required knowledge in these areas by veterinarians are essential for countries to deliver veterinary services of quality.

Nevertheless, student training and student engagement in veterinary public health and food safety is not always easy. Some of the challenges faced in the teaching/learning process are: the lack of access to food processing environments where the topics could be taught (that access could result in a higher risk of cross-contamination of the food product); the feminisation of the veterinary profession (reports suggest that there may be a bias in the selection of a career pathway, in which recent female graduates tend not to choose veterinary careers focusing in food producing animals); and teaching/learning needs of the current generation (highly driven by social media and the use of technology).

In order to deliver a more attractive curriculum in veterinary public health and food safety which could result in increased engagement and a more positive learning experience for veterinary students, we have made use of a number of information technology tools to deliver veterinary public health and food safety concepts. Relevant images have been collected to create an online photo database, freely available, that we currently use for the teaching process. We offer online revision sessions through Twitter, where our photo database is essential for the online discussions. Finally we have created online interactive material through two online platforms; Xerte (created by the University of Nottingham) and Moodle (software learning management system).

We aim to continue innovating in our teaching methods and engaging students in veterinary public health and food safety topics.

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