

Veterinary education in the Americas

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The school of Veterinary Medicine at the National Autonomous University of Mexico, established in 1853, is the oldest continuous functioning school of veterinary medicine in the Americas.¹

Veterinary medical education in the Americas is well-represented on the OIE registrar. The OIE has registered 173 Veterinary Medicine Schools, whose distribution is as follows: In North America: Canada, 5, USA 28 and México 16; Central America and the Caribbean: Costa Rica 2, Cuba 1, El Salvador 1, Guatemala 1, Honduras 1, Nicaragua 7, Panamá 1 and Trinidad and Tobago 1; South America: Argentina 10, Bolivia 3, Brasil 40, Chile 9, Colombia 20, Ecuador 12, Paraguay 4, Perú 4, Uruguay 1 and Venezuela 6. However, this list does not include all the Schools of Veterinary Medicine; for example, in the case of Brasil and Mexico and possibly other countries.

Veterinary education programs vary among the different regions in the Americas. In the USA and Canada, is a 4 year program; whereas in Latin America it is usually a 5 to 6 year program which combines veterinary medicine, with some animal production.

The main objective of this presentation will be to report the awareness and application of “OIE Day 1 competencies” in the Americas that will open the possibility to discuss the principal challenges in America in their implementation.

In order to obtain the report, an inquiry was made to the Veterinary Medicine Schools in the continent, using harmonized questions. The survey is still open with a 24%, response rate to date. Responses are as follows: 79% know about “OIE Day 1 competencies”; 54% of the Latin American Schools have modified their curricula to reflect “OIE Day 1 competencies”; finally, schools from countries like USA and Canada know “OIE Day 1 competencies”, but only a few have included them in their curricula for different reasons.

In review of responses or website information, it is clear that appropriate use of new and contemporary communication technologies is one of the most useful tools for the new generations.

In analyzing the list of VEEs, it is recommended that the OIE questionnaire be improved to remove any confusing questions and to take into account of different interpretations of "accreditation/certification/approval".

Keywords: veterinary medicine – education– professional competences.

¹ Silveira Prado, Enrique y Etxaniz J. Manuel, “Las primeras escuelas de Veterinaria en América” (The first Veterinary Schools in America), REDVET. Revista electrónica de Veterinaria 1695-7504, 2007 Volumen VIII Número 9, disponible en: <http://www.veterinaria.org/revistas/redvet/n090907/090706.pdf>