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Animal disease surveillance and control: Need of an integrated approach

Barkha Sharma, Parul, Waquar Ahmed and Basanti Bist
UP Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyay Veterinary University, India

Animal diseases cause major economic losses through mortality, reduced productivity, lower fertility, condemned products and restricted access to potential markets. Newly emerging diseases including non-contagious animals diseases having potential to cross over from animals to human population or back are being encountered on almost daily basis. This has been time and again proved by emergence of various epidemics like SARS, avian influenza and swine flu. Approximately 60% of all known pathogens and 75% of emerging pathogens are zoonotic in nature, with about 70% of all emerging zoonotic pathogens being vector-transmitted diseases. Main animal diseases that pose challenges in today's world are FMD, RP, CBPP, TB etc. Some of them are even classified under Transboundary animal diseases (TADs). The international trade in animal and animal products has become a sensitive issue for both developed and developing countries by posing an important risk for the spread of animal and human pathogens whilst at the same time being an essential activity to ensure world-wide food security and food safety.

Integrated efforts of various mentioned organizations are thus laying an important role in combating the challenges posed by unchecked multilateral trade in animals and animal products. The importance of overall integrated efforts may be cited by the success of Global RinderPest Eradication Program (GREP) started by Emergency Prevention System (EMPRES) that has been able to eradicate RP from the world in 2011. Global Health Agencies like the OIE, WHO, FAO etc are continually striving towards achieving an environment supportive for health and in their effort, are being well supported by various regional organizations.

But all this represents just a short stretch of road to global health. Rest of the journey still lies ahead of us. In this review, we have tried to assess the role played by various national and international agencies in animal disease surveillance, how far they have come in achieving this goal and what still remains to be done.

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manubarkha@yahoo.com