



Embargo until 27th April 2013

WORLD VETERINARY DAY – 27th April 2013

Today in many countries around the world, World Veterinary Day (WVD) is being celebrated for its thirteenth year. On this occasion the veterinary profession highlights its various contributions to the health of both animals and humans, underlining the vital role of veterinarians in also ensuring animal welfare, food safety, food security, safe world trade in animals and animal products as well as protecting public health.

WVD was initiated by the World Veterinary Association (WVA) in 2000 in order to celebrate the veterinary profession annually on the last Saturday of April. The objective is to bring the importance of the Veterinary Profession to the society as well as individuals in focus.

World Veterinary Day activities around the world vary from seminars, workshops, "open doors" activities at clinics, hospitals and veterinary schools, social and media events to inform the general public about the key role played by veterinarians in our daily life.

In 2008 the WVA and the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) agreed on the creation of the World Veterinary Day Award. The aim of this award is to reward the most successful celebration of the veterinary profession. The first WVA-OIE World Veterinary Day Award was given in July 2008 to the Kenya Veterinary Association.

Every year the WVA and OIE are choosing a different theme for the World Veterinary Day Award. The selected theme for World Veterinary Day Award 2013 is *Vaccination*. In previous years themes were Antimicrobial Resistance, Rabies, the One Health Concept and the Diversity of the veterinary profession.

The veterinary profession, through effective and efficient Veterinary Services, is crucial *to the* success of vaccination campaigns in animal health and consequently, in protecting human health from diseases of animal origin.

A vaccine is a biological preparation that improves immunity to a particular disease. The term vaccine derives from Edward Jenner's 1796 use of cow pox, to inoculate humans, providing them protection against smallpox.

Today, vaccines are valuable tools to stop the spread of a large number of transmissible diseases that threaten the health and welfare of animals and people. Through well organised campaigns, vaccination contributes to the eradication of diseases from certain areas and even from the world. The use of mass vaccination campaigns also limits, in many situations, recourse to depopulation in case of disease outbreaks.