

movement restrictions and co-ordinated vaccination programmes. It is the first infectious disease of animals ever to have been eradicated (smallpox of humans is the only other infection eradicated). Rinderpest caused high fever, severe malaise, ulcerations in the mouth and nose, and in many cases led to death within a week or two: it was a very serious welfare problem.

According to the OIE, the World Organisation for Animal Health, dozens of laboratories worldwide still hold stocks of the virus. These present a threat to the health and welfare of potentially very large numbers of wild and domesticated animals. The OIE has launched a campaign to warn of these risks and to draw attention to the great responsibility those involved have to avoid accidental or malicious releases. It is calling for countries and laboratories to identify their stocks and to take steps to safely destroy or sequester them.

The World Organisation for Animal Health Launches Digital Media Campaign for Sequestration and Destruction of Rinderpest Virus Stocks (May 2013). OIE, The World Organisation for Animal Health, Paris. Available at: <http://www.oie.int/for-the-media/press-releases/detail/article/the-world-organisation-for-animal-health-launches-digital-media-campaign-for-sequestration-and-destr/>.

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AVMA Guidelines for the euthanasia of animals

The American Veterinary Medical Association first published guidance on euthanasia of animals in 1963: at that time the document covered only dogs, cats and some other small mammals. Since then the Guidelines have been built upon and greatly developed over the years and the recently published, 2013, edition is major revision. They are the

work of the AVMA's 13-person Panel on Euthanasia with input from many others and are based on extensive literature reviews (634 publications are listed) and consultations. The Guidelines cover many aspects of the principles and practice of euthanasia. They describe methods for a wide range of animals (mainly vertebrates but some aquatic invertebrates also), and in addition to post-natal animals they address various other stages of the lifecycle (embryos, foetuses and neonates and the destruction of viable eggs).

The purpose of these Guidelines is to provide advice to veterinarians. In addition to updating of methods, techniques and agents of euthanasia, among the topics that have been addressed in considerably greater detail in the 2013 edition than hitherto, are depopulation — large scale killing of farmed livestock — for disease control reasons, euthanasia of injured wildlife, confirmation of death and disposal of animal remains.

It is often considered to be necessary to euthanase animals in order to prevent further suffering and it is important, when this task is to be done, to use effective and reliable methods. These Guidelines are a very valuable contribution and resource for animal welfare. They provide clear and concise general information about the subject of euthanasia and the judgments it involves and detailed practical advice about appropriate methods for many species.

AVMA Guidelines for the Euthanasia of Animals (2013). A4, 102 pages. American Veterinary Medical Association, 1931 North Meacham Road, Suite 100 Schaumburg, IL 60173-436, USA. Available at: <https://www.avma.org/KB/Policies/Documents/euthanasia.pdf>.

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