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Position Paper regarding “European Acknowledged Veterinarians”

Preamble

Several European countries have already some sort of higher level of post-graduate qualification. These are called a variety of names such as an acknowledgement or certification or accreditation. The term suggested by UEVP should be “European acknowledged veterinarian”.

An acknowledged veterinarian as seen by UEVP is a veterinary practitioner working mainly with the species concerned and having obtained additional experience and qualifications. This system of “acknowledged veterinarians” is totally different from the EBVS specialisation which is mainly discipline-orientated and is at a higher level of qualification and expertise.

Obtaining this qualification aims to have a positive influence on the veterinary profession as well as to fulfil consumers (with regard to the need for clear information) and stakeholders requirements (e.g. insurance companies, Eurepgap¹, retailers, ...).

Another aim is to harmonize “acknowledged veterinarians” over Europe in order to reach a common standard and mutual recognition.

Veterinary Ethics and Deontology

The respect of the principles relating to European veterinary ethics and deontology is required so as to guarantee services in conformity with the regulations in force, with the Code of Conduct in force, with customers’ requirements and the ethical principles relating to the delivered services and/or the animals under the veterinarians’ responsibility.

Definition

A veterinary surgeon can only become acknowledged when he/she is licensed/authorised to practice in the country concerned and when he/she is working in the field concerned.

The acknowledgment of a veterinarian should be:

1. Based on a species (or a group of species) orientation such as for cattle, companion animals, equines, pigs, poultry;

¹ <http://www.eurep.org>

Organisation in which retailers and their suppliers have created and implemented a series of sector specific farm certification standards.

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2. Preceded by a period of - species related - theoretical and practical training together with a suitable level of professional experience;
3. Issued by a national competent veterinary authority (such as Chamber, Statutory Body, Veterinary Organisation, Ministry, Veterinary Faculty, Scientific Organisation ...);
4. Supervised by a competent European veterinary authority in order for the acknowledgement to be recognised as a European one;
5. Revalidated.

Requirements to become acknowledged

'De facto' acknowledged veterinarians can be appointed when needed in the initial acknowledgment process.

Practical experience for becoming an acknowledged veterinarian shall only be possible after working for three years within the last 5 years spending at least 50% of the time with the species concerned, based on a working week of 40 hours.

In addition, during this period the applicant should have obtained in average 35 CPD scientific attendance hours a year relevant to the species concerned.

Each country would have to evaluate the level of abilities and skills of the candidate before acknowledgment either by a certificate issued by the supervising acknowledged/competent veterinary surgeons with whom he/she worked for a certain time and/or after being examined by a professional body.

Requirements to maintain acknowledgement

In order to maintain the acknowledgement veterinarians should obtain at least 175 hours of CPD scientific attendance hours over 5 years. The veterinarian also has to continue to work at least 50% of his/her work time within the field acknowledged.

Revalidation should be done at least every 5 years and should include the 'de facto' veterinarians.

Promotion of the principle at European/national level.

This point will have to be discussed after agreement of the General Assembly regarding the principles of an "acknowledged veterinarian".