

FORCES SHAPING ANIMAL HEALTH



Climate change

- Diseases such as Bluetongue, West Nile and Schmallenburg virus have expanded into northern Europe, Australia, South America and Africa now that the midge species that transmit these viruses are able to survive winter at higher latitudes.
- Droughts are expanding worldwide, especially in sub-Saharan Africa, which withers pasturelands and makes it more difficult for farmers to keep their livestock fed and healthy.
- Increases in temperature and humidity strengthen certain pathogens. This can worsen outbreaks and make it even more difficult for farmers, especially in developing countries, to provide for their family and community.



Modernisation of livestock production

- Diseases are easier to control in larger, more efficient production systems than traditional small enterprises.
- Pigs, cows and poultry produce more offspring and are more efficient in converting plant protein from their food into animal protein.
- The increase in animal protein production in the developing world means more people have access to key micronutrients found in animal products, such as Vitamin B12, Zinc and iron.



Travel and trade

- There has been a threefold increase in air passengers and air freight over the past 25 years. As a result, global diseases like Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) spread more easily and rapidly than ever before. Infected passengers can board a plane in one country and disembark in another before even developing symptoms.
- Rising international trade of food between markets means rigorous, harmonized global food standards are needed to ensure free flow of trade and prevent disease.
- Trade in 'bush meat' – driven by poverty and hunger – has accelerated dispersal of viruses such as Ebola and Congo fever.



Growing middle class

- By 2030, the global middle class is expected to grow by three billion – more than entire population of North America, South America, Europe and Africa...combined.
- Demand for meat will rise significantly alongside this burgeoning middle class. Meeting their needs requires more efficient production that safeguards the sustainability of our food supply.
- Animal health companies worldwide are investing billions in new medicines that help protect animals and improve production, however, greater cooperation is needed to ensure they reach veterinarians and farmers.



Growing global conflicts

- Healthcare systems, local veterinary services and disease monitoring break down when conflict breaks out and zoonotic diseases often skyrocket among populations caught in the middle.
- Since the eruption of civil war in Syria, NGOs like Médecins Sans Frontières (Doctors without Borders) have reported higher levels of rabies, hemorrhagic fever, brucellosis and leishmaniasis – zoonotic diseases that can be controlled and prevented when veterinary services are functioning properly.



Changing preferences in the developed world

- Increasing awareness of the connection between human, animal and environmental health, a growing awareness of animal welfare issues.
- An increase in popularity of welfare-branded, organic, and local food is changing consumer preferences and driving retailers towards 'farm to fork' style marketing.