

MESSAGE FROM THE HONOURABLE AUDLEY SHAW, MINISTER OF INDUSTRY, COMMERCE, AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES ON THE OCCASION OF THE CELEBRATION OF WORLD VETERINARY DAY 2019, SATURDAY, APRIL 27, 2019



World Veterinary Day 2019 is being celebrated on April 27, 2019 with the theme "**THE VALUE OF VACCINATION**". I want to use this opportunity to commend and commemorate veterinarians on their contribution to animal health and to our society.

We must acknowledge that by preventing and controlling animal diseases, veterinarians play a critical role in securing sufficient, safe high-quality protein, while improving the health and welfare of people and animals. In keeping with the theme, we recognise that vaccines are one of the most valuable tools available to veterinarians in their fight against deadly diseases. These medicines not only protect animal health, but also serve to safeguard the livelihood of farmers.

Our veterinary professionals continue to develop guidelines and standards in keeping with best practice, in an effort to minimise the use of antimicrobial preparations in animal production. We are aware that the use of antimicrobials over the years has no doubt enhanced the practice of human and animal medicine and global public health. We cannot however ignore the reality of the development of Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR). The prudent use of antimicrobials is one of the key approaches of veterinary professionals in safeguarding the efficacy of life-saving antimicrobials. Importantly, it is widely accepted that effective vaccination programs when

implemented, can assist veterinarians in reducing the need for antimicrobial use, which in turn can help reduce the risk of emergent antimicrobial resistance. It therefore essential for veterinary professionals to continue to educate the public, particularly animal owners and producers, about the benefits of vaccination for animals in the safeguard of public health in general.

The Ministry of Industry, Commerce, Agriculture and Fisheries will endeavour to work along with veterinarians, veterinary para-professionals, farmers and all key stakeholders as they continue to put in place herd health and vaccination programmes, the ultimate objective of which is geared towards sustainable production of foods of animal origin and the achievement of food security. I also recognize the importance of vaccination in safeguarding our equine industry and pet animal population.

On the occasion of the World Veterinary Day 2019, I wish to congratulate the Veterinary Services Division, the Membership of the Jamaica Veterinary Medical Association (JVMA), all our veterinarians and veterinary para-professionals for their continued support to our farmers, processors, consumers and other stakeholders in an effort to ensure the safeguard of human health, animal health, animal welfare, food security and food safety.