



**Message from
the Hon Derrick Kellier, CD, MP
Minister of Agriculture, Labour and Social Security**

**On the
OCCASION OF THE CELEBRATION OF
WORLD VETERINARY DAY 2015**



This year marks the 15th occasion of the celebration of World Veterinary Day and will focus on the theme 'vector-borne diseases with zoonotic potential'.

Historically, vector-borne diseases have been the scourge of man and animals and are among the most serious public health and animal health problems in the world today. The ease of global travel creates the potential for the rapid spread of these zoonotic vector-borne infections and represents a major challenge for veterinary and human health professionals.

Without a doubt, there is an established inextricable link between human and veterinary medicine. Over 60% of pathogens that cause disease in humans are of animal origin. Diseases such as Lyme Disease, West Nile Virus, Crimean-Congo Haemorrhagic Fever, Chagas Disease, Rift Valley Fever and Chikungunya, to name a few, are listed among vector-borne diseases with zoonotic potential. This underscores the One Health concept that in relation to animal and human medicine there are no dividing lines. It is therefore critical for veterinary and human health professionals to collaborate in an effort to combat the threat of vector-borne zoonotic diseases.

I would like to recognize the efforts of the members of the veterinary profession, the Jamaica Veterinary Medical Association (JVMA) and the Veterinary Services Division of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries for their continued role in safeguarding both human and animal health. The Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries commits to the implementation of measures towards ensuring a healthy animal and human population. To this end, the Ministry has embarked on numerous initiatives, such as laboratory accreditation and animal identification and traceability to facilitate disease surveillance, monitoring, prevention and control.

The Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries joins with the local veterinary fraternity in the celebration of World Veterinary Day 2015 and in keeping with this year's theme, commits to offering technical support through the Veterinary Services Division towards the enhancement of zoonotic disease surveillance programmes in collaboration with the Ministry of Health. I urge our veterinarians to continue to keep Jamaica healthy and free from devastating animal diseases and to safeguard the welfare of public health.

Derrick Kellier