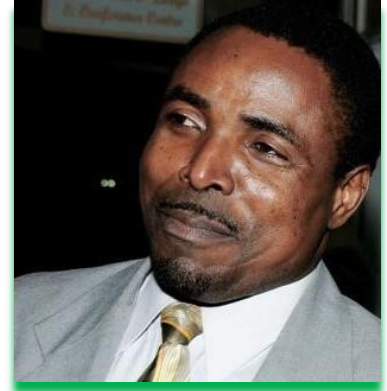


**MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF VETERINARY OFFICER,
MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY COMMERCE AGRICULTURE
AND FISHERIES ON THE OCCASION OF THE
CELEBRATION OF WORLD VETERINARY DAY 2019,
SATURDAY, APRIL 27, 2019**

Dr. Osbil O. Watson



Over the past few years the world has experienced numerous health threats at the human–animal–ecosystem interface, as pathogens continue to emerge, re-emerge and adapt to new hosts and environments, thereby imposing a burden on human and animal health systems. These health threats are driven by numerous inter-related global factors generally related to human actions and environmental changes reflecting the complexities of the ecosystems, in which humans and animals coexist. We must recall that 60% of human infectious diseases, 75% of emerging diseases and 80% of pathogens that can potentially be used in bioterrorism have their source in animals.

The theme of World Veterinary Day 2019 is **“the value of vaccination”**. Vaccination has been proven to be one of the most effective tools in the fight to protect both humans and animals from devastating diseases and also in the eradication of diseases. One of the most remarkable examples of a successful vaccination programme was demonstrated on June 28, 2011 when the United Nations officially declared that for the second time in history, a disease had been wiped off the face of the earth. This disease, Rinderpest, or *cattle-plague*, an infectious viral disease of cattle, buffalo, yak and numerous wildlife species caused devastating effects throughout history. In the 1890's rinderpest destroyed nearly 90 percent of all cattle in sub-Saharan Africa and millions of wild animals. On

October 26, 1977 Small Pox became the first disease to be so eradicated. Vaccination continues to be an important tool in the prevention and control of several other devastating diseases of socio-economic significance such as Rabies, Foot and Mouth Diseases, Classical Swine Fever, Newcastle Disease, Rhinopneumonitis, Encephalitis, among others.

I wish to commend the members of the Jamaica Veterinary Medical Association (JVMA), the staff of the Veterinary Services Division, our veterinarians, animal health technicians and laboratory experts, our farmers and the public in general for their continued hard work and commitment over the years in keeping Jamaica free of devastating diseases.