

MESSAGE FROM THE HONOURABLE KARL SAMUDA, MINISTER OF INDUSTRY, COMMERCE, AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES ON THE OCCASION OF THE CELEBRATION OF WORLD VETERINARY DAY 2016, SATURDAY, APRIL 30, 2016

World Veterinary Day 2016 is being celebrated on April 30, 2016 with the theme “**Continuing Education with a One Health Focus**”. I am fully aware of the critical role veterinarians play in providing effective surveillance of animal diseases, particularly those which can be transmitted to humans. Today, new and exciting challenges face the veterinary profession. We recognize that human health, animal health and ecosystem health are complexly inter-related. The concept of "One World, One Health" indicates that the world has now come to realize the gravity of the linkage between animal diseases and public health. It is known that 60% of human infectious diseases originated from wild or domestic animal sources. We are also aware that 75% of emerging human diseases and 80% of the pathogens that could potentially be used in bioterrorism are also of animal origin. It is believed that the most effective and economical way to safeguard humans from these diseases is to combat all zoonotic pathogens through control at the animal source and the animal-human interface. This requires dedicated commitment from government, along with adequate public and private sector resources.

In this regard, we must ensure that we continue to foster the development of a cadre of veterinarians who can function at the cutting edge of research and diagnostics to provide leadership in One Health. Degree courses in human and veterinary medicine possess numerous commonalities, including pre-clinical courses in biomedical sciences and clinical courses devoted to ensure clinical competence of each graduate. Further integration is needed in an effort

to broaden the knowledge-base so that the medical and veterinary graduates acquire a higher level of competence in the area of the One Health Initiative.

I would like to salute the membership of the Jamaica Veterinary Medical Association (JVMA), the Veterinary Services Division and all our veterinarians and ask that you enhance collaboration between physicians, veterinarians and environmental health professionals in an effort to promote and improve the health and well-being of both humans and animals.