

ANIMAL HEALTH CARE

Canada, with its reputation as a producer and exporter of high quality livestock, also claims a substantial share of international markets for new animal health care products. The federal government's National Biotechnology Strategy, formulated in 1983, identified animal health care as a high potential area. Its goal was to develop an internationally competitive Canadian animal health care industry by increasing technological capability and research activity in government, university and private industry, especially in recombinant DNA and monoclonal antibody technologies. Notable progress has been achieved, partly due to increased opportunities for communication within this industry sector and a greater number of cooperative research and development efforts. The annual meetings of Bionet, the animal and human health care network, provide the opportunity for discussion and exchange of information on topics including government research programmes, funding agencies, venture capital, the university/industry/government interface, patenting and copyrighting, and regulatory issues. Bionet membership is approximately 280, with 45% of members coming from industry, 27% from universities and 27% from government.

Recently reported Canadian research and product development activities in animal health care include the following examples, just a few among many significant advances attributable to Canada's scientists.

Diagnostic Reagents

Monoclonal antibody (MCAB) and/or enzyme-linked immunoassay (ELISA) technologies for diagnosis of brucellosis, pseudorabies, rabies, salmonellosis and campylobacteriosis are currently being developed in Agriculture Canada's Animal Pathology Division. Some are joint undertakings with university or private laboratories, supported by

the National Research Council and other agencies. MCAB-based diagnostic kits recently developed by Canadian companies, either alone or in cooperation with other institutions, include tests for detection of rotaviruses associated with calf scours. New ELISA tests include a test for bovine leukosis and one for swine transmissible gastroenteritis.

