



48th World Small Animal Veterinary Association Congress and 29th FECAVA Eurocongress

Lisbon, 27-29 September 2023



Speakers Proceedings

Celebrating the 26th APMVEAC Congress together
with the XIX FIAVAC Congress

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INTERACTIVE SESSION: PROMOTING THE ROLE OF VETERINARIANS IN RESPONSIBLE ANIMAL BREEDING-A PRAGMATIC APPROACH

Paulo Borges¹, *Manuel Magalhães-Sant'Ana*²

¹Universidade Lusofona, Reproduction Centre, Lisboa, Portugal, ²Universidade de Lisboa, Faculdade De Medicina Veterinária, Lisboa, Portugal

Qualifications:

Paulo Alexandre Paulos Borges

DVM, MSc, Dip ECAR

pborgesvet@gmail.com

Manuel Magalhaes-Sant'Ana

DVM, MSc, PhD, Dip. ECAWBM (AWSEL)

mdsantana@fmv.ulisboa.pt

Responsible breeding of animals remains a critical concern in contemporary veterinary practice, as the global demand for companion animals continues to rise. As stewards of animal health and welfare, veterinarians are expected to play a pivotal role in shaping the future of animal breeding practices (1). The primary goal of responsible animal breeding is to produce individuals with superior health, behaviour, and performance while preserving the genetic diversity necessary for long-term population sustainability (2). However, this objective must be balanced with ethical considerations, such as minimizing the risk of inherited diseases and ensuring the well-being of both the breeding animals and their offspring (3,4). By understanding these issues, veterinarians can effectively communicate the importance of responsible breeding to breeders, owners, and the general public (5).

This presentation aims to explore the multifaceted role of veterinarians in small animal breeding and provide a pragmatic approach to enhancing their involvement in this field, with a focus on maintaining the overall health and genetic diversity of populations. This interactive presentation has three main pedagogical objectives: a) to raise awareness of the practical and ethical issues involved in small animal breeding, b) to develop veterinary professional skills in small animal breeding, and c) to promote responsible animal breeding practices.

During the presentation, we will delve into the key aspects that empower veterinarians to take a proactive role in responsible animal breeding. First, the utilization of modern diagnostic tools, including advanced genetic testing and screening, will be emphasized. This includes collaborating with breeders to establish ethical breeding programs that prioritize the health, temperament, and genetic diversity of the animals. We will emphasize the importance of pre-breeding health screenings, genetic testing, and responsible mate selection to minimize the risk of passing on inherited diseases and disorders. Additionally, we will explore the significance of behavioural evaluations in breeding programs to ensure the production of physically fit and socially adaptable animals.

We will explore the ethical issues raised by the application of advanced reproductive biotechnologies in companion animal practice, namely by using the ethical matrix (6). Moreover, we will address the importance of client education and the veterinarian's role in providing accurate and evidence-based information to prospective pet owners (7). We will discuss strategies for effective client communication, including the use of educational materials, brochures, and online resources. By empowering owners with knowledge about responsible breeding, veterinarians can

influence their decision-making process and steer them away from supporting unethical breeding practices.

Furthermore, the presentation will emphasize the need for collaboration and coordination among veterinarians, breeders, and regulatory bodies. We will explore the development of partnerships and networks that promote responsible breeding practices, such as breed clubs and breed-specific health organizations. By working together, veterinarians and breeders can establish guidelines, share best practices, and collectively address issues related to breed health, genetic diversity, and population management.

Finally, this presentation will highlight the importance of continuous professional development and education for veterinarians. We will discuss the need to improve veterinary continuous education in topics such as genetics, reproductive technologies, and breeding strategies, in order to equip veterinarians with the knowledge and skills necessary to advocate for responsible breeding practices. By staying abreast of emerging trends and research, veterinarians can provide cutting-edge guidance to breeders and effectively contribute to the betterment of small animal populations.

To facilitate an interactive session, we will engage participants in study cases and debate, encouraging them to share their experiences and challenges faced in promoting responsible breeding. We will explore potential solutions and strategies to overcome these obstacles, fostering a collaborative and innovative approach to responsible small animal breeding.

In conclusion, promoting the role of veterinarians in responsible small animal breeding requires a pragmatic approach that encompasses collaboration, education, and advocacy. By actively engaging in responsible breeding programs, veterinarians can make a significant impact on the health, welfare, and longevity of companion animals. This presentation aims to inspire and empower veterinarians to take a proactive stance in promoting responsible small animal breeding and contribute to the overall improvement of the veterinary profession.

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