

PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Dr. Michael B. Cates takes leadership role on AVMA's One Health Joint Steering Committee

Schaumburg, IL

— Dr. Michael B. Cates has become the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) representative on the One Health Joint Steering Committee, lending a powerful new voice to the One Health movement.

One Health is a collaborative effort of multiple disciplines, working locally, nationally, and globally to attain optimal health for people, animals, and the environment. The need for One Health is underscored when considering recent public health events, including the 2006 E. coli outbreak in spinach, the spread of West Nile virus throughout the United States, avian influenza, and the global epidemics of dengue, chikungunya, and Rift Valley fever.

The AVMA Executive Board appointed Dr. Cates to the post at a meeting earlier this month. As the AVMA representative to the One Health committee, Dr. Cates will help create a One Health Commission and also contribute to a global One Health Initiative.



"I believe strongly that we must place a much bigger emphasis on the linkages between human, animal and environmental health and that we should do so in a truly interdisciplinary manner," Dr. Cates says. "I am honored to be the new AVMA representative to this steering committee, and I look forward to working with all the members toward the vision of global 'One Health.'"

Dr. Cates brings a great deal of experience to the One Health movement. In addition to being the 23rd Chief of the Army Veterinary Corps, he was the first veterinarian to lead the U.S. Army Center for Health Promotion and Preventive Medicine as its commanding general (2004-2008) and he was also the first veterinarian to serve as senior public health and preventive medicine advisor to the Army Surgeon General as director of the Proponency Office for Preventative Medicine (2004-2008). He retired from military as a Brigadier General in 2008 after over 28 years of service to his country.

He is currently a professor at the College of Veterinary Medicine at Kansas State University and director of the its Master of Public Health Program, which is a unique, interdisciplinary degree program involving faculty and courses from four different colleges at Kansas State University.

The One Health Initiative began in 2006 as a part of the presidential agenda of then-AVMA president Roger K. Mahr, DVM. A year later, the American Medical Association joined the initiative, and now the steering committee has nearly 20 participating animal, human and environmental health organizations as members, including the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the National Park Service, the Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges, and the Association of American Medical Colleges.

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"General Cates has provided extraordinary leadership throughout his career with the U.S. Army Veterinary Corps in preserving, protecting, and promoting human and animal health worldwide," Dr. Mahr says. "His leadership experience and expertise will be invaluable in our efforts to develop and implement a sustaining driving force for the One Health Initiative."

The steering committee will be transitioning into the One Health Commission with a target date of July 1, 2009. This new commission will assume the responsibility to further develop, implement and sustain the One Health Initiative into the future. It's anticipated that many member organizations will advance their steering committee representatives onto the new One Health Commission.

Dr. Cates received his doctorate in veterinary medicine at Texas A&M University College of Veterinary Medicine in 1980 and a master's in public health from University of Texas Health Science Center in 1987. He has been a diplomate of the American College of Veterinary Preventive Medicine since 1989 and was honored as one of their distinguished diplomates in 2008. Dr. Cates lives with his wife in Manhattan, Kan.

For more information about One Health, visit www.avma.org.

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The AVMA and its more than 78,000 member veterinarians are engaged in a wide variety of activities dedicated to advancing the science and art of animal, human and public health. Visit the AVMA Web site at www.avma.org for more information.