



Plant Health as Part of One Health

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Description

Although plant health is currently part of the definition of One Health, plants have typically not been well integrated into discussions of One Health approaches. However, plant health is vital to sustain human and animal health and a critical component of the complex interactions among the environment, humans, and animals. Recognizing the key role of plants in public health, the United Nations declared the year 2020 to be the International Year of Plant Health (IYPH). The overarching purpose of the IYPH was to raise awareness of plant health and its effects on society. Maintaining plant health has important consequences for human and animal health as an important driver of food security and safety, as a source of livelihoods in plant-based agriculture, as a source of pharmaceuticals, and as part of healthy environments.

Plant Health

The 'one health' concept has largely been defined around zoonotic diseases and the sharing of infrastructure and capacities of human and animal health systems. Veterinary public health is an essential part of public health and includes various types of co-operation between the sectors and disciplines that link the health triad, people-animals-environment. Yet agriculture is missing in the equation. Many human and animal health problems are caused or worsened by hunger, malnutrition and poor quality of food and feed. Looking beyond the zoonoses, it is clear that human and animal health are closely connected to plant health for at least four reasons: Food security – enough food at the right time to feed people; Food safety – plant products free from mycotoxins, pesticide residues and human disease contaminants; Feed security – enough feed at the right time to feed animals; and Livelihoods – agriculture is the world's most important enterprise and is fundamental for economic growth in developing countries. Agriculture means crops. Plant health is essential if the crop yields are to be sufficient and of the right quality.

FAO supports Members to build and implement effective collaborative One Health strategies, simultaneously addressing the health of people, animals, plants and the environment. The One Health approach is used to design and implement programmes, policies and legislation. A hub of technical knowledge, FAO embraces One Health in protecting human, animal and plant health; supporting management and conservation of natural

resources; ensuring food security; facilitating access to safe and nutritious food; tackling AMR; advancing climate change adaptation and mitigation efforts; and promoting sustainable fisheries and agricultural production.

To anticipate, prevent, detect and respond to plant, animal and foodborne disease outbreaks and AMR, FAO encourages the sharing of epidemiological data and laboratory information across sectors and borders, which can result in more effective coordinated planning and response. The 'one health' concept has largely been defined around zoonotic diseases and the sharing of infrastructure and capacities of human and animal health systems. Veterinary public health is an essential part of public health and includes various types of co-operation between the sectors and disciplines that link the health triad, people-animals-environment. Livelihoods agriculture is the world's most important enterprise and is fundamental for economic growth in developing countries.

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