



Alberta  
Veterinary  
Medical  
Association

#950 Weber Centre

5555 Calgary Trail  
NW

Edmonton, Alberta

Canada T6H 5P9

Telephone:  
(780) 489-5007

Fax: (780) 484-8311

E-mail:  
avma@avma.ab.ca

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 2, 2006

**INDUSTRY GROUP FORMED TO WORK WITH AVMA TO DEVELOP A REVISED  
DEFINITION OF VETERINARY MEDICINE**

In response to feedback received, the Alberta Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) has established an industry group to work with the AVMA to develop a revised definition of veterinary medicine. The working Group will initially be made up of representatives appointed by the AVMA, Alberta Beef Producers and the Alberta Equestrian Federation.

The goal of the group is to create a definition of veterinary medicine that meets the needs of both veterinarians and animal owners while ensuring animal welfare and protecting Albertans and the province's trade position.

The Government of Alberta asked for recommendations to change the Veterinary Profession Act after an Alberta Court ruled the current Act was not specific enough to allow for the adjudication of a complaint involving a layperson performing dentistry on horses.

"Our intent is to have a definition that does not extent the scope of the Act beyond what both veterinarians and the public understand to be veterinary medicine," said AVMA Registrar Dr. Duane Landals. "Our industry recognizes that many people offer non-medical and non-surgical services to animal owners on a commercial basis for performance enhancement, relaxation and other purposes – the job of the Act is to deal with medical and surgical services – matters where a high level of training is required for the protection of the public, owners and their animals,." he explained.

Alberta Beef Producers has been in discussions with the AVMA since October of 2005 to ensure that the amended definition of veterinary medicine is not unduly broad and that the exemptions for animal owners correspond with the new definition. Bill desBarres of the Alberta Equestrian Federation explained that animal owners want to ensure that they still can make appropriate choices about the care of their animals, but "there is a real need for people to be educated about what appropriate care is and what services are being offered by unqualified people".

The working group will revisit the current proposed changes to the Veterinary Professions Act and seek comment from the broader community before asking the Government of Alberta to introduce a new definition into law.

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For further information, CONTACT:

Dr. Duane Landals, Registrar AVMA (780) 489-5007  
Adrienne Waller, Legal Counsel, Alberta Beef Producers. (403) 275-4428  
Pat Barriage, Executive Director, Alberta Equestrian Federation (403) 253-4411