

Investigation of Animal Disease Outbreaks

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Commentary

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ABOUT THE STUDY

Animal disease outbreak epidemiological investigations will be quite comparable to human disease epidemiological investigations. A pathogen (an infectious agent such as a bacterium, virus, parasite or prion) that has transferred from an animal to a person can produce communicable disease which is an infectious disease that affects humans. Increasing numbers of new diseases have been reported in headlines over the past 20 years and the most are originated from animals (zoonoses). Examples from recent times include the West Nile virus, SARS, avian influenza and monkey pox. Some developing diseases impact both humans and animals whereas others only affect either animals or humans. All of these emerging or re-emerging illnesses, however, have societal repercussions that are frequently connected to regional and global economy.

The index cases for newly developing diseases may be illnesses that affect agricultural labourers. Animals hold a unique position in human society. Animals are used for transportation, raw materials (such as wool and hides), energy (such as manure), food (such as milk and meat), recreation and money. Additionally, in some communities, pets like dogs, cats and horses are frequently regarded as "companions". Numerous factors contribute to the emergence of new diseases including global trade, animal translocation, climatic change, pathogen adaptation. These elements depict the changing interactions between the pathogenic agent, the host and the environment. This epidemiologic triangle includes the extrinsic factors such as the host's biological, social and physical environment as well as the intrinsic characteristics of an individual's susceptibility to disease such as immune status, general health, genetic makeup, lifestyle, age, sex and socioeconomic status. Even though, certain diseases does not directly affect people's health and they still take a lot of pressure on society because they affect both local economies and global trade. This is demonstrated by the current Foot-and-Mouth Disease (FMD) outbreak in the

United Kingdom. FMD primarily affects domestic and wild animals with cloven feet. Although it is endemic in portions of South America, Asia, and Africa, FMD is not present everywhere. These include the majority of the European nations, Australia, New Zealand, North and Central America and Japan. As one of the most infectious viruses, FMD has significant ramifications for the commerce in animals and livestock products. Indirect contact with sick animals, aerosol from diseased animals and milk trucks, fomites and artificial insemination are all possible ways for the disease to spread. People who come into contact with infected animals can act as mechanical vectors because the FMD virus can persist in their upper airways for long enough to infect livestock on a continuing basis. An estimated 2,000 confirmed cases of FMD were found in the UK in 2001. Controlling the outbreak and costs from reduced tourism were expected to have cost 6.2 billion pounds. The food that was allegedly imported illegally and afterwards used as food scraps in rubbish that was given to pigs was the source that was suggested. There was a significant psychological and economic impact on both farmers and non-farmers in Britain. A trade embargo, travel restrictions and a decline in tourist revenue contributed to significant economic losses as well as an increase in the number of farmer suicides that have been documented. The expense of containing the outbreak and the loss of genetic stock are not taken into account. Farmers in the affected area had significantly higher psychological morbidity scores than farmers in non-impacted areas according to a psychological assessment of the effects of FMD.