



# AVMA

## 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Fact Sheet

**Theme:** The AVMA: 150 years of education, science, and service

**Background:**

- The AVMA was founded in 1863 as the U.S. Veterinary Medical Association (USVMA) in New York City, New York.
- Name changed to American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) in September of 1898.

**Then and Now:**

- 1863 membership: 40
- Today's membership: 84,000+
- Number of degreed women veterinarians in 1915: 4  
Women account for more than 50% of veterinarians in 2011.
- Horses comprise 80% of veterinary care in 1900 but fall to 10% by 1910 after the advent of the Model T.
- U.S. veterinary colleges in 1860: 3
- U.S. veterinary colleges in 2010: 28
- Veterinary specialists in 1967: 389
- Veterinary specialists in 2012: 11,163

**Milestones:**

- 1800s: USVMA established with 40 members – focus on large animals (horses, cattle and cows)
- 1896: Women allowed to attend AVMA annual meeting – federal government begins replacing farriers and horse doctors with veterinary surgeons
- 1900 – 1929: First female graduates from veterinary college
- 1903: First African-American admitted to veterinary college 1920: Use of horses declines and companion-animal practices become popular
- 1930 – 1959: Expansion of veterinary expertise to monitor food safety.
  - Veterinarians eradicate pleuropneumonia
  - Prevent outbreaks of foot and mouth disease
  - Find remedy for hookworm in dogs
  - Discover virus responsible for hog cholera
  - AVMA governmental relations office in Washington, D.C., opened in March, 1953.
- 1960 – 1979:
  - 55% of American families owned pets by 1960s
  - Women comprise 5% of profession and 25% of veterinary students
  - Veterinarians were included in space program;
  - Expanded role in radiation research and greater role in public health

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- 1980 – present:
  - 51% of AVMA members in companion-animal medicine
  - Veterinarian part of crew on space shuttle Columbia
  - Canine rabies eradicated in United States
  - First female president of AVMA elected in 1996.

## **150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebratory Activities:**

### **Proclamations**

- Governors across the country have declared 2013 as the “*Year of the Veterinarian*” in celebration of the significant contributions veterinarians have made to human, animal and public health.

### ***Animal Connections: Our Journey Together***

- Presented by the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service (SITES) to mark the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the AVMA and made possible through the generous support of Zoetis. The custom-built, 1,000-square-foot interactive exhibit invites visitors to explore the connections between animals and humans. For more information visit [animalsconnections.com](http://animalsconnections.com).

### **Movie Trailer**

- The AVMA’s first-ever [movie trailer](#) highlighted the many facets of the veterinary profession during the week of June 21 in 2,760 movie screens across the country. Veterinarians are invited to embed the video on their own websites.

### **AVMA 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary: Coffee table book**

- A beautifully illustrated book featuring remarkable historic photos and a look at the history of the AVMA and the veterinary profession.

## **Other celebrations:**

### **American Veterinary Medical Foundation 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary**

- The AVMF, the charitable arm of the AVMA, is America’s only veterinary-directed animal charity. The AVMF focuses on strategic initiatives around humane outreach/animal welfare, education and public awareness of responsible animal ownership, animal health research and veterinary student enhancement. The AVMF has embraced and advanced the well-being and medical care of animals for the past 50 years.

### **AVMA Veterinary Medical Assistance Teams 20th anniversary**

- In May 2003, the AVMA pioneered efforts to develop a world-class veterinary disaster-response team program. Resulting Veterinary Medical Assistance Teams (VMAT) collaborated with the federal government and were key to facilitating necessary changes in disaster prevention and response. Pet owners no longer need to evacuate without their pets. In addition to providing on-the-ground veterinary response during times of national emergencies, VMAT has assisted in training state, county and local veterinary response teams throughout the country. During disasters, Red Cross volunteers refer all animal medical questions and needs to veterinarians affiliated with VMAT-trained groups. An AVMF grant funds VMATs.

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