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Veterinary Medicine in Turkey

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There is only one veterinary college in Turkey. This is not enough, of course, for a country which has a high animal population. The Turkish government is planning to establish two more veterinary colleges in two of the big cities.

The educational period is 5 years, or ten semesters; there is a winter semester and a spring semester. To be admitted, one must be a high school graduate and 18 years of age or more; girls are accepted. There are 70 to 120 students in each class. During the first year the students receive courses in zoology, botany, physics, and chemistry. During the second year, anatomy, histology, embryology, physiology, biochemistry, and elementary or first parts of internal and external diseases are taught. During the next five semesters the students take anatomy, topographical anatomy, pharmacology, parasitology, pathology, bacteriology, internal and external diseases, and clinics, animal husbandry, hygiene, meat inspection, and surgery. Dairy industry, agricultural economics, and history of the Turkish Republic are added to the eighth and ninth semesters. In the tenth semester all students go to the different governmental ranches (horse-cattle, sheep-goat, poultry) to practice. After a positive final examination the student receives a Med. Vet. diploma, or D.V.M. degree. With this diploma he can practice anywhere in Turkey; but first, the graduate must finish his military service, which is for one and one-half years.

Three main fields are open to the graduate; these are teaching at the college, private practice, and working for the government. The latter includes the majority of veterinarians, or veteriners as they are called in Turkey (Med. Vet. means Veteriner-Hekim, or Veterinary Doctor). Work for the government includes the production of biologics, research, or practicing as a district veterinarian. The district veterinarians are distributed through the 63 counties of Turkey and they serve the farmers without cost to them. Therefore, private practitioners are few in number and are called mostly when farmers can not reach a district veterinarian.

The majority of veterinary practice is concerned with cattle and horses, then sheep and goats, and with some dogs, cats, and poultry. No veterinarian is strictly a large or small animal practitioner. Swine are not raised in Turkey because of the religion, but may be seen in the zoos.