

Equine Reproductive Physiology, Breeding and Stud Management

M C G Davies Morel (1999). CABI Publishing: Wallingford. 450pp. Paperback. Obtainable from the publishers, Wallingford, Oxon OX10 8DE, UK; or for North American orders from, 10 East 40th St, Suite 3203, New York, NY 10016, USA (ISBN 0851993729). Price £25.00/US\$45.00.

The author intended this book to be of use to the practising equine breeder. To that end she has been entirely successful; the book is packed with practical information that is well organized and is presented in a readily available format. It has useful photographs, line drawings and graphs that illustrate relevant points in the text. Some of the photographs are of intermediate quality, however, which is unfortunate.

The book is organized into two sections. The first, on reproductive anatomy and physiology, consists of 10 chapters covering all aspects of anatomy and endocrinology relating to normal functions in the female and male. The second, on breeding and stud management, consists of 11 chapters which cover animal selection, practical aspects of breeding, infertility and reproductive technologies (including artificial insemination and embryo transfer). The book has a useful, but not complete, index.

I found this book informative and easy to read. I would, however, have liked there to have been more consistency in some of the terminology used throughout the text; this tended to vary between some of the chapters. Also, there was a mixture of scientific and 'lay' terminology – and the author might have been better selecting one or the other.

The animal husbandry and breeding management sections of this book are well written and no doubt represent the author's considerable experience in these areas. However, the veterinary sections are less well written, and tend to be reviews of some scientific papers with little real interpretation. For example, the section on hastening of the ovulatory breeding season really gave little indication of what, practically, should be done and what could be achieved using licensed drugs in this country. Similarly, the section on the diagnosis and treatment of endometritis was inadequate and somewhat misleading. I am concerned that perhaps the book has not been substantially revised since it was first published (by Farming Press) in 1993.

Despite these criticisms, the book provides a solid foundation for the understanding of the reproductive physiology and breeding management of horses. It is suitable for the educated breeder, but perhaps not for academic study.

G C W England
The Royal Veterinary College
Hatfield, UK

Management of Animal Health Emergencies

OIE Scientific and Technical Review Volume 18:1 (1999). Office International des Epizooties (OIE): Paris. 288pp. Paperback. Obtainable from the publishers, 12 rue de Prony, 75017 Paris, France (ISBN 929044486X/ISSN 0253-1933). Price EU40.00 or FF270.00 or US\$45.00.

The OIE, the editors and the 52 contributors are to be congratulated on the production of this unique review which contains a wealth of information and experience invaluable to all Chief Veterinary Officers (CVOs), their staff and their administrative colleagues. Anyone involved in the problems of preventing and controlling disease on a national scale will find both the principles outlined and the details contained in the case studies of great assistance to their

own planning and mode of operation. The detailed text clearly indicates the technical, managerial, economic and political complexities which beset satisfactory disease control measures. A very wide range of diseases and disease situations are covered and it is particularly commendable that there are contributions on aquatic problems. Not all the contributions give sufficient emphasis to the animal welfare implications of control methods, however, and any new edition would be improved by a standard addition to each contribution on the welfare aspects of control methods.

The format and printing are clear and easily followed but, inevitably, with so many authors from nearly as many countries, there have been some problems of presentation. In general, the English version appears first with summaries in French and Spanish – but this doesn't help. Presumably it would have been prohibitively expensive to have all the papers translated in their entirety into all three languages.

Bearing in mind that CVOs are inevitably extremely busy (and one marvels that so many of them have found time to write their contributions), it would have been helpful to have more diagrammatic summaries along the lines of the excellent contribution on p194 on 'Unknown disease emergencies'. Such figures could provide a quick and ready reference check for those suddenly faced with a new situation demanding instant but considered action. Emergencies rarely allow those involved time to quietly peruse 288 pages of closely written text! Few of the photographs add much more than a splash of colour and might have been replaced by such diagrammatic representations. It would also have been helpful (and realistic) to indicate more clearly any weaknesses in the existing systems. For example, the notification of any disease outbreak to OIE has notorious gaps. The OIE undoubtedly, albeit inadvertently, help to fill such gaps by their regular meetings of CVOs, encouraging personal contacts and inside knowledge on an 'old boy' basis.

In commending this publication to all involved in large-scale national and international disease control one can only hope that the small print used for its main title 'Management of animal health emergencies' on the frontispiece will not inhibit its widespread use.

*A J Stevens
Guildford
Surrey, UK*

The Nutrition of the Rabbit

Edited by C de Blas and J Wiseman (1998). CABI Publishing: Wallingford. 344pp. Hardback. Obtainable from the publishers, Wallingford, Oxon OX10 8DE, UK; or for North American orders from, 10 East 40th St, Suite 3203, New York, NY 10016, USA (ISBN 085199279X). Price £55.00/US\$100.00.

This comprehensive new book is a multi-authored text that draws together the latest research and information on rabbit feeding and nutrition. It is aimed at rabbit meat producers, although there is one chapter on fibre-producing Angora rabbits, and a final chapter on the nutrition of pet rabbits. Rabbits are an important food source in many parts of the world, and have many advantages as production animals such as: rapid growth, high reproduction rate, the ability to thrive on a relatively low quality, high fibre diet, and the provision of low-fat meat.

The first chapter is a review of the rabbit's unique digestive system, daily feeding patterns and the process of caecotrophy. A diagram of the anatomy of the digestive tract would have been helpful, but the physiology is comprehensively covered. Chapters 2–5 cover the