the development of the livestock industry in the region, and probably in the world, is largely hindered by the presence of infectious diseases in animals. Infections not only result in direct loss of animals, but also act as an obstacle to the international trade of the animals and their products. Fortunately, ASEAN member countries are free from several devastating animal diseases including African Swine Fever, African Horse Sickness, and Bovine and Caprine Contagious Pleuropneumonia. However, several diseases of economic and public health importance are still present in one or more member countries, including Foot-and-Mouth Disease, Classical Swine Fever, Newcastle Disease, and Rabies.

Recognizing that vaccination plays a significant role in the control of animal diseases, ASEAN agricultural ministers decided at their meeting held in Manila in August 1996, to embark on establishing standards for vaccines to be used in the livestock industry in member countries. This would ensure that only vaccines which meet international standards for safety, efficacy, and quality are used to protect animal health in the region. In addition, the harmonization of vaccines in the ASEAN countries would also enable free movement and trade in vaccines within the region. Free intra-ASEAN trade will in turn strengthen the region's competitiveness in the vaccine industry. With the establishment of common standards in veterinary vaccines, ASEAN will be able to offer vaccine producers a common market made up of some 500 million people.

Member countries have established procedures for the registration of animal vaccines, as well as requirements for good manufacturing practices for animal vaccines and quality control standards at vaccine testing laboratories. These documents will be published by the ASEAN Secretariat under the following titles:

a) Manual of ASEAN Standards of Animal Vaccines

b) Manual of the ASEAN Standard of Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) for Animal Vaccines

c) Manual of ASEAN Accreditation Criteria for Animal Vaccine Testing Laboratories


The Manual of ASEAN Standards of Animal Vaccines contains the ASEAN standards for 38 veterinary vaccines established to date. This manual describes the requirements of safety and potency for each of the vaccines using a standard format for ease of reference under the headings: (1) seed and production substrate requirements — seed strain and production substrate; (2) quality control requirements — sterility test, purity test, safety test, inactivation test, potency test; and (3) general or other requirements.

The Manual of ASEAN Standards of Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) for Animal Vaccines provides guidelines for manufacturers producing animal vaccines for use within ASEAN, to ensure consistency and quality of vaccine manufacturing systems to meet the established ASEAN standards for veterinary vaccines. The manual describes the standards relating to personnel, premises, equipment and methods for production, processing, quality control, documentation and self-inspection of vaccines.

The Manual of ASEAN Accreditation Criteria for Animal Vaccine Testing Laboratories outlines the ASEAN criteria for the accreditation of laboratories in ASEAN member countries testing animal vaccines for use in the region. The principal aim of this manual is to harmonize the standard of proficiency of laboratories performing quality control tests on animal vaccines within ASEAN. The manual describes the technical specifications for buildings, facilities and quality assurance systems required of such laboratories.

The Manual of ASEAN Rules and Procedures for the Registration of Animal Vaccines outlines the framework for the regional registration of animal vaccines in ASEAN countries, for vaccines produced in member countries as well as those imported into member countries.

The objective of the publication of these manuals is to make ASEAN standards readily and widely available. This would help to promote the animal vaccine industry in ASEAN. The manuals have been approved by the ASEAN Ministers for Agriculture and Forestry at their 19th Meeting held in Bangkok in September 1997. Copies are expected to be available soon from the ASEAN Secretariat.
India May Have to Import Sugar

India’s sugar production is forecast to fall during the 1997–1998 period. The fall is expected to be more than 30% compared to the record output, during 1995–1996. Lower production is expected for most states except Tamil Nadu, Andra Pradesh and Gujarat. The fall in production is expected to be most pronounced in Maharashtra, the largest sugar growing state in the country. According to the government, the public distribution system will remain under pressure during the 1997–1998 period, and it is essential to keep the import option open. Almost 33% of the sugar industry’s production is bought by the government at below market rates for public distribution through its ration shops. The industry is allowed to sell the rest at market prices.

Important Measures Taken for Grain Production in 1998

Seed has always been one of the key factors determining the quality and quantity of grain production in China. Since 1996, various provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities started optimizing seed quality by taking strict measures based on the guidelines from the Ministry of Agriculture. Centralized supply of seeds for main field crops will cover 73.3 million ha of cultivation area this year. Rice is one of the most important grain crops for China, and rice production increased significantly by using hybrid rice seeds. At present, the national hybrid rice growing area occupies about 54% of the total rice growing acreage. Ensuring that good quality hybrid rice seeds are used in cultivation is very important as it makes a great impact on annual rice production. Production of hybrid rice seed requires special conditions. These were some of the issues discussed at the National Hybrid Rice Seed Production Meeting, held in Changde City of Hu’nan Province (湖南省常德市) last year. More than 100 participants from 14 provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities attended the meeting.

An official from the Ministry of Agriculture said that much attention must be paid to the seed quantity and quality in order to have sustainable agricultural production. He also said that the ministry has decided that 73.3 million ha of field crops will be grown using seeds from a centralized supply. The ministry will be taking necessary measures to ensure that the target is achieved. Centralized supply of seeds will also help ensure that farmers do not use inferior quality seeds for cultivation.

China’s State Council Promulgates New Regulations on Agricultural Pesticides

On 8 May 1997, Chinese premier Li Peng (李鵬) signed the No. 216 State Council Decree to promulgate the Regulations of Agricultural Pesticides Administration.’ The new regulations provide systematic and clear stipulations for the registration, production, management and use of agricultural pesticides, as well as for their supervision, administration, and punishment for misuse. Apart from these, the new regulations also provide an important basis for the establishment of accompanying legal regulations, thus laying a solid foundation for other new administrations regarding the control of agricultural pesticides.

The Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Chemical Industry and the Legal Systems Bureau of the State Council have issued documents to stress the importance of promulgating and practicing the new regulations. These government bodies indicated that the regulations will play an important role in improving pesticide use and management in China, thereby guaranteeing the quality of pesticides, the protection of the ecological environment, and the safety of humans and livestock.