

Ethiopia freed from Rinderpest!!

The Board member of PFE Awarded

Ethiopia is now free from rinderpest! Ethiopia has won the International Animal Health Organization (OIE) recognition by receiving the OIE certificate indicating its freedom from rinderpest cattle disease.

Rinderpest is a highly fatal disease of cattle causing high mortality up to 90% and morbidity reaching 100%. The disease which is commonly known as “Desta” was introduced in 1887. Between 1888 and 1892 large number of ploughing oxen died that resulted in the “Great Famine of Ethiopia”.

The French Veterinary mission conducted cattle vaccination from 1908 to 1914. Vaccine production started in 1948 and until 1952 Nine million head of cattle were vaccinated against the disease. The veterinary service since then has undergone long way to control this and other diseases by developing diagnostic and vaccine production laboratories and training centres.

The first large scale vaccination campaign against rinderpest commonly known as Pre JP 15 (Joint Program 15) was conducted from 1967 to 1969 followed by JP 15 Campaign Proper from 1970 to 1976. The third stage of the campaign commonly known as JP 15 Follow-up Campaign continued for three consecutive years from 1977-1979. JP 15 campaign drastically reduced the incidence of the disease and reduced mortality but was not able to eradicate the disease.

Because of the resurgence of the disease, The Pan African Rinderpest Campaign (PARC) was launched from March 1989 in three phases until 1994. Since there were no outbreaks detected in Ethiopia as of 1995, Ethiopia declared itself “provisional free from rinderpest on a zonal basis” as of the 1st May 1999. After fulfilling the OIE pathway Ethiopia was awarded a certificate on 30 May 2008 at the OIE head quarter in Paris. A national ceremony was organized to observe and remember the century old rinderpest control and eradication effort by awarding medals and certificates. The ceremony was convened at the National Veterinary Institute (NVI), Debre zeit on July 25, 2009. His Excellency Ato Addisu Legesse, Deputy Prime Minister awarded medals to outstanding veteran veterinary personnel who participated in the series of campaigns mentioned above. The Deputy Prime Minister also awarded prizes to donors and partners who supported the campaign technically and financially.

Dr. Taffese Mesfin, our Vice Board Chair is one of the veterans who participated in the pre JP 15 and Follow-up Campaign. He was awarded a third level prize, a brass medal. We here in PFE & PFE family, congratulate him for his achievement.