

CLIMATE CHANGE

The veterinary profession is entrusted with protecting and maintaining individual and population animal health and welfare, including companion animals, production animals, wildlife, and other relevant groups; protecting public health; contributing to the advancement of animal and human health through research and education; and serving veterinary professionals to maximize their competencies and wellbeing.

It is therefore incumbent that academic veterinary medicine acknowledges and understands the impact of the global climate emergency on the health and wellbeing of all animals, people, and the environment, and acts to address its own contributions to climate change.

The American Association of Veterinary Medical Colleges (AAVMC) recognizes that anthropogenic emissions of pollutant greenhouse gases, mainly carbon dioxide, methane, and nitrous oxide, have led to a climate crisis. Atmospheric greenhouse gases emissions have driven significant air and surface warming, ocean acidification and warming, extreme and harmful weather events, melting of sea ice and glacial systems, coastal flooding, mega-droughts, loss of habitats and biodiversity, and the disruption or complete failure of agricultural systems. Climate change acts as a threat multiplier, fueling food insecurity, mass migrations, public health threats such as zoonotic diseases and the spread of antimicrobial resistance, and the destruction of natural habitats. These disruptive impacts are not equally distributed around the world, nor across animal and human populations.

Accordingly, the AAVMC:

- Recognizes that we are in a global climate emergency that threatens the health of animals, people, and the environment.
- Acknowledges and accepts its role as a forum for educators of current and future veterinarians, animal health scientists, One Health scientists, and the animal health industry in climate change and its impact.
- Encourages its member institutions to develop and incorporate climate change and related topics into their curriculums, consistent with the missions of their respective institutions.
- Supports transdisciplinary climate research and interprofessional collaborations to understand, prevent, and justly address the impacts of climate change on the health and wellbeing of all animals, humans, and ecosystems.
- Endorses consideration of diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging in its response to climate change through education, research, and community engagement.
- Commits to participating in efforts to decarbonize and improve the sustainability of the veterinary and animal health sector, including the mitigation of its own emissions of greenhouse gases, and that of its member institutions.

Jurisdiction:	Board of Directors	Date of Last Review:	
Approved by:	Board of Directors	Date Last Amended:	
First Approved:	October 23, 2023	Date of Next Review:	2028
Historical References:	The Position Statement on Climate Change was developed by the AAVMC Task Force on Climate Change, Health, and Education and approved by the BoD on October 23, 2023.		