

# VETERINARY MEDICINE

2009

Veterinarians trained as generalists are devoted to the health of animals (pets and livestock). Many work in the agri-food industry, pharmaceuticals, research, manufacturing, trade, and management. Veterinarians contribute to the protection of public health, as well. International cooperation in the fight against diseases affecting animals, or carried by them, is an important part of veterinarians' public-health responsibility. Veterinarians employed in national parks and zoos play an essential role in environmental protection, preserving the natural balance, protecting endangered species, and helping to preserve biodiversity in the face of human population growth and urbanization.

French veterinary training programs participate in a dense network of exchanges with partner institutions in Africa, the Americas, eastern Europe, and other parts of the world.

**Applicant profile :**

solide formation scientifique, intérêt pour l'évolution des technologies, facultés d'observations, habilité manuelle et sens de la communication

**Field :** Santé et professions sociales

Also see the following subject profiles : Agriculture–Agri-food industry, Medicine, Biology

## ORGANIZATION OF STUDIES

### Curriculum leading to professional practice as a veterinarian

The Diplôme d'État de Docteur Vétérinaire (doctor of veterinary medicine, a government-sanctioned diploma) is required for the independent professional practice of veterinary medicine in France. The degree program requires 7 years of postsecondary study, 5 of which are spent in one of 4 national schools of veterinary medicine located in Alfort, Lyon, Toulouse, and Nantes. Applicants are admitted by examination following 2 years in a university program, a postsecondary preparatory program, or a technical-certificate program (BTS in general biology).

The 4 paths to admission are all highly selective:

- A. Applicants have successfully completed a 2-years preparatory program in biology, physics, chemistry, and earth sciences. This is the most common of the 4 paths.
- B. Applicants have completed the first 2 years of a university licence program in life sciences.
- C. Applicants have completed a 1-year preparatory program following the award of their BTS or DUT degree in agriculture, agronomy, or agricultural engineering.
- D. This path to admission is reserved for graduate doctors of medicine, pharmacy, or dental surgery, and for individuals holding a master's level degree in biology. Admission is based on the applicant's application file and an interview.

All applicants are presumed to have followed a scientific track in secondary school.

### Sequence of studies

A new national veterinary curriculum took effect in April 2007:

- 4 semesters (S1–S4) in a preparatory program, as described above.
- 8 semesters (S5–S12) of core veterinary curriculum in a school of veterinary medicine. Students who successfully complete the 8-semester core curriculum are awarded the Diplôme d'études fondamentales de vétérinaire (DEFV, diploma of basic veterinary studies).
- 2 semesters (S13–S14) of specialized study. Holders of the DEFE continue on for a year of specialized study, during which time they work on a thesis. Successful defense of the thesis leads to award of the degree of doctor of veterinary medicine. Students specialize in one of the following fields: agricultural animals (livestock), domestic animals (pets), equines (racehorses), veterinary public health, research, or industry.

Some students choose to continue for an additional 3 years of study leading to a specialized professional degree (the Diplôme d'études spécialisées vétérinaires, DESV) or a doctorate

### Admission of international students into the pre-professional curriculum

To enroll in a preparatory program and qualify to sit for the veterinary school entrance examination, international students must hold a secondary diploma entitling them to enter postsecondary education in their home country. Under the Erasmus and Socrates programs, some 20 European students are admitted to each of France's veterinary schools for periods of 3 months to 1 year on the basis of their academic records and examinations.

Upon request from countries with which France has cooperative agreements, international students from outside the European Union with an appropriate academic background may be allowed to enroll directly in the first year of study at

one of the national schools of veterinary medicine. Such applicants must hold a first university degree in life sciences and be able to follow instruction in French. Students who have already studied veterinary medicine at the postsecondary level are not eligible for these places.

- Application for admission on basis of academic record

Applications for admission must be submitted by June 15 to the national veterinary school at Alfort by the French embassy in the applicant's country. The embassy is expected to add its recommendations.

- Admission

The council of directors of the nation's veterinary schools makes admission decisions during the month of July.

- School assignment

Admitted students are assigned to schools where space is available. They may be eligible for on-campus housing. They have the right to use all of the school's facilities.

Several other possibilities exist for international students wishing to pursue veterinary studies in France:

- They may complete a 1-year course of professional training capped by the award of a certificate of advanced veterinary studies (CEAV, Certificat d'études approfondies vétérinaires).
- They may enroll in a course leading to the DESV degree (specialized veterinarian).
- They may pursue a master's degree.
- They may obtain specialized training through a residency or internship (e.g., in a clinic or equine surgery center).
- They may obtain a paid position from the livestock and veterinary medicine department of CIRAD, France's center for agronomic research for development. These positions are reserved for aspiring veterinarians from developing countries who are involved in CIRAD projects. CIRAD trains interns in its laboratories and provides distance-education programs.  
[http://www.cirad.fr/fr/prest\\_produit/formation/professionnel.php](http://www.cirad.fr/fr/prest_produit/formation/professionnel.php)

#### Diploma and certificate programs in veterinary sciences

- CEAV (Certificat d'études approfondies vétérinaires, certificate of advanced veterinary studies)

Tropical animal pathologies, epidemiology

- CES (Certificat d'études supérieures en épidémiologie animale, certificate of postsecondary study in animal epidemiology)

- Master concentration: Livestock production in tropical regions
- The École Nationale des Services Vétérinaires in Lyon (ENSV, national school of veterinary services), in cooperation with France Vétérinaire International, offers programs in France on the control of bovine spongiform encephalopathy and management of fishery products, capped with an optional internship. Individually tailored internships may also be arranged.

- The World Trade Organization, World Bank, UN Food and Agriculture Organization, World Health Organization, and World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) cooperate to train public officials for posts in which they will be responsible for veterinary matters. ENSV coordinates this cooperative program for France. OIE selects a small number of French and international trainees for 1 to 6 months of study. Trainees are selected from the pool of degree candidates in veterinary medicine, recent graduates, researchers, and practicing veterinarians

## PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE IN FRANCE

### By european union nationals

One of two documents is required:

- Diploma, certificate, or other credential appearing on a list drawn up pursuant to EU regulations and conferred on or after the dates set forth in a decree published on May 21, 2004.

Bureau de la pharmacie vétérinaire et de l'alimentation animale, Sous-direction de la santé et de la protection animale, Direction générale de l'alimentation, Ministère de l'Alimentation, de l'Agriculture et de la Pêche, 251, rue de Vaugirard, 75732 Paris Cedex 15.

[http://www.veterinaire.fr/ordre-v2/onv\\_o\\_cr.htm](http://www.veterinaire.fr/ordre-v2/onv_o_cr.htm)

- Diploma, certificate, or other credential conferred before the date specified in the decree and accompanied by a statement from the competent authority of a member state attesting that the holder has practiced veterinary medicine for at least 3 consecutive years.

### By nationals of countries outside the european union

The international doctorate awarded to students who have not had prior veterinary training in their home country, who are admitted by entrance examination, and who are not nationals of a member state of the European Union does not entitle the recipient to practice veterinary medicine in France or in a veterinary pharmaceutical organization.

### Websites

- École Nationale Vétérinaire de Nantes <http://www.vet-nantes.fr/>
- École Nationale vétérinaire d'Alfort <http://www.vet-alfort.fr/>
- École Nationale Vétérinaire de Lyon <http://www.vet-lyon.fr/>
- École Nationale Vétérinaire de Toulouse <http://www.envt.fr/>
- École Nationale des Services Vétérinaires <http://www2.vet-lyon.fr/ensv/>
- CIRAD (international center for agronomic research for development), office of education and training, <http://www.cirad.fr>
- Agronomic and veterinary examinations office  
[contact@concours-agro-veto.net](mailto:contact@concours-agro-veto.net)
- Ministère de l'Alimentation, de l'Agriculture, et de la Pêche  
Direction Générale de l'Enseignement et de la Recherche  
Sous-direction de l'enseignement supérieur et de la recherche
- Bureau des formations de l'enseignement supérieur  
<http://www.sup.chlorofil.fr>
- France Vétérinaire International (FVI), a French government agency devoted to international cooperation in veterinary medicine  
<http://www.france-vet-international.org/>  
E-mail : [fvi@agriculture.gouv.fr](mailto:fvi@agriculture.gouv.fr)
- Syndicat National des Vétérinaires d'Exercice Libéral (SNVEL, national association of professional veterinarians)  
Descriptions of careers; lists of organizations, institutions, and programs of study; detailed list of degrees and specializations  
<http://www.snvel.fr>
- Ordre des Vétérinaires (national council of veterinarians) and regional affiliates,  
<http://www.veterinaire.fr/>
- OIE (World Organisation for Animal Health), [http://www.oie.int/fr/fr\\_index.htm](http://www.oie.int/fr/fr_index.htm)
- French academy of veterinarians  
<http://www.academie-veterinaire-defrance.org/bulletin.html>

### Keywords

agri-food – agronomy – animal health – animal production – biodiversity – biometry – biomolecules – biological processes – biotechnologies – cardiology – CEAV (certificat d'études approfondies vétérinaires) – chemistry – equines – experimentation – feed – fine chemicals – food – integrative biology – internal medicine – laboratory animals – life sciences – livestock – marine biotechnologies – medication – metabolism – microbiology – nutrition – ophthalmology – pets – reproduction – risks – surgery – tropics – veterinarian – veterinary public health