Interest in vaccine-related issues has increased in the last several years, fueled in part by safety concerns and questions regarding duration of immunity. These issues are being addressed by national veterinary organizations, scientists in academic settings, and vaccine manufacturers. The individual and cooperative efforts of these groups should be applauded and encouraged. Nonetheless, the quest to more completely understand the etiopathogenesis, immune response, and epidemiology of feline infectious diseases must continue if practitioners are to develop safer and more effective infectious disease control programs.

Although traditional methods of vaccine testing and production are still viable, the future impact of novel technologies (eg, recombinant techniques) on vaccine safety, production, and, possibly, duration of protection, cannot be overestimated. The manner by which recombinant vaccines invoke immunity and the methods used to evaluate the patient's response often differ from those of traditional products, and it will be increasingly important for practitioners to familiarize themselves with this emerging technology. Animal vaccine manufacturers will inevitably continue to develop new and safer vaccines, and if used properly, these products have the potential to improve the quality of care veterinarians deliver to their patients. There is every indication that new products will be introduced at an unprecedented rate, and veterinary practitioners must arm themselves with information to enable them to make the most appropriate vaccination recommendations.

Footnotes

[a]The Virus, Serum, and Toxin Act of 1913 (21 USC § 151-158) in part provides that "...it shall be unlawful for any person, firm, or corporation to prepare, sell, barter, or exchange in any place under the jurisdiction of the United States, or to ship or deliver for shipment from one State or Territory or the District of Columbia, any worthless, contaminated, dangerous, or harmful virus, serum, toxin, or analogous product intended for use in the treatment of domestic animals, and that no person, firm or corporation shall prepare, sell, barter, exchange, or ship as aforesaid any virus, serum, toxin, or analogous product manufactured within the United States and intended for use in the treatment of domestic animals, unless and until the said virus, serum, toxin, or analogous product shall have been prepared, under and in compliance with regulations prescribed by the Secretary of Agriculture, at an establishment holding an unsuspended and unrevoked license issued by the Secretary of Agriculture as hereinafter authorized."

[b]Veterinarian and vaccine manufacturer liability after Smith-Kline: implications for both sectors (a panel presentation), in *Proceedings*. AVMLA, 1997.

[c]Federal preemption of vaccine product liability litigation—rationale and result, in *Proceedings*. AVMLA, 1998.

[d]A more complete discussion of the informed consent doctrine as it applies to veterinarians can be found in "The informed consent doctrine: what you should tell your clients" *Calif Vet* 1997;51(5):12-13.

[e]California Jury Verdicts Volume 41, No 27, Page 28: John Shelby and Don Fullerton dba Fulbor Cattle Company et al vs Grand Labs; Veterinary Pharmaceuticals, Inc; Thomas Worthington, DVS; and Chino Corona Veterinary Service. Number RCV 65023 consolidated with 01521. Plaintiff award for $1,541,948 for negligent administration of vaccine, in part due to breech of warranty that the vaccine was safe for use in cattle under 3 months of age.