

BOOK REVIEWS

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**"HANDBOOK OF ANIMAL SCIENCE"
EDITED BY PAUL A. PUTNAM.
ACADEMIC PRESS, NEW YORK AND
LONDON. 1991. ISBN 0-12-568300-6 401
PAGES**

In his preface Paul Putnam describes this Handbook as presenting "information ranging from our livestock heritage, the history of animal nutrition, and a listing of animal breeds and populations to production characteristics, product definition, and consumption" It will be apparent, therefore, that the scope of this multi-author volume is wide and inevitably some subjects are given more prominence than others.

This Handbook is of some relevance to all who are concerned with food production. The first section, dealing with "History and Background", provides interesting and valuable data on the origins of modern livestock and developments in animal nutrition. There is also a useful glossary of terms. The second section "Breeds and Genetics" and the third "Statistics" contain practical information relating to livestock breeding. Veterinarians will be particularly interested in the fourth section "Health", which deals with parasites and major infectious diseases,

but this is condensed into 40 pages and therefore, inevitably, incomplete. Inclusion of tables on diseases of dogs, cats and marine mammals would seem to be of doubtful relevance and there are unfortunate typographical errors-for example "Feline panleukema" rather than "Feline panleukopenia". The sections on "Production" and "Product/Utilization" cover both theoretical and practical aspects and the final section, "Future", as its title suggests, looks at the potential for increased production and higher efficiency.

This book is certainly of interest to veterinarians but is more likely to be found on shelves of academics than in the clinics of practitioners. It is of limited relevance to East Africa: Tanzania does not feature in the index and the only references to it that the reviewer could locate were in the tables of livestock on pages 175-180. The emphasis throughout the book is on the situation in the United States and all 21 contributions are American. This is a pity. A more global perspective would have greatly enhanced its value and appeal.

John E. Cooper

Note: (the review copy of this book has been presented to the SUA Faculty of Veterinary Medicine Library).