



Economic impacts of tick-borne diseases in Africa

B.D. PERRY

ILRI, Nairobi, Kenya

ABSTRACT

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As we join Onderstepoort in celebrating its centenary, it is worth reflecting that tick-borne infections of wildlife and livestock have been part of everyday life in Africa for many, many generations. While much has changed since Watkins-Pitchford started developing short-interval dipping trials with arsenicals to contain the new epidemic of East Coast fever in southern Africa 100 years ago, when it comes to the impacts of tick-borne infections, many of the same challenges remain.

These impacts are characterised at one extreme by the high cost and environmental inappropriateness of chemical acaricides used to prevent losses from the cluster of diseases, each with its particular host and vector association, and on the other by the lost potential of indigenous breeds in settings where they enjoy the ecological climax of endemic stability. Between these extremes are the variable degrees of morbidity and mortality associated with endemic instability.

This keynote paper will review the diversity of these impacts, and discuss the value of broader consideration of societal impacts of the diseases and their control.
