

Shaping the future of veterinary medicine in southern Africa

The South African Veterinary Association (SAVA) stands at a defining moment in its history — a moment shaped not by challenge alone, but by extraordinary opportunity. For more than a century, SAVAs has served as the professional home of veterinarians in Southern Africa, advancing science, strengthening standards, and safeguarding animal and public health. Today, that mission is more vital than ever.

At the heart of this mission lies the *Journal of the South African Veterinary Association (JSAVA)* — a platform not only for publishing science, but for shaping the future of veterinary medicine on our continent.

JSAVA: A platform for African veterinary excellence

JSAVA exists to serve practising veterinarians, researchers, educators, and students by providing scientifically rigorous, clinically relevant, and regionally meaningful knowledge. It tells Africa's veterinary story — grounded in our realities, our diseases, our production systems, our wildlife, and our communities.

The journal's growing international authorship and readership reflect a rising global recognition that **African veterinary science matters** — not as a peripheral voice, but as a vital contributor to global knowledge.

We are deliberately positioning JSAVA not simply as a journal that publishes African research, but as a journal that **defines African veterinary relevance** and helps lead global conversations from an African perspective.

Strengthening quality in a rapidly changing publishing world

The global scientific publishing landscape has expanded at an unprecedented pace, driven by rapid technological advances, artificial intelligence tools, and growing academic output from emerging economies.

In this environment, JSAVA is making a principled choice: **we will lead unapologetically with quality, not volume.**

We are actively refining our editorial and peer-review processes to ensure faster, fairer, and more transparent editorial decisions.

Our success will not be defined by metrics alone, but by the **real-world impact** of the science we publish on animal health, food security, wildlife conservation, and public health in Africa.

A profession at the centre of society's greatest challenges

Veterinary professionals now stand at the frontline of some of the most pressing challenges of our time:

- Emerging and re-emerging zoonotic diseases
- Climate change and its impact on animal production and wildlife
- Food security and sustainable agriculture
- Mental health and wellbeing within the profession

Through the **One Health** framework, veterinarians occupy a unique and irreplaceable position in society — connecting animal health, human health, and environmental stewardship. SAVAs is committed to ensuring that veterinarians are not only recognised, but empowered, supported, and heard.

JSAVA will continue to prioritise research and commentary that directly addresses these challenges and equips practitioners with practical, actionable knowledge.

Renewing SAVAs: building a stronger professional community

Recent leadership changes within SAVAs mark not instability, but **renewal** — an opportunity to build on strong foundations while embracing new energy and ideas.

Our focus is clear:

- Strengthening member value and professional identity
- Expanding mentorship and career development
- Advocating effectively at national and regional levels
- Building stronger partnerships across Southern Africa and beyond

SAVA is not simply an organisation. It is a **community of professionals** bound by shared purpose, responsibility, and pride in the profession.

Looking to the future: a call to belong and to lead

The future of veterinary medicine in Southern Africa will not be shaped by trends elsewhere — it will be shaped by us.

JSAVA and SAVAs invite every veterinarian — in private practice, research, academia, industry, wildlife, and public service — to become part of this collective journey.

We call on you to:

- Share your knowledge
- Contribute your research and clinical insights
- Serve as reviewers and mentors
- Engage actively within your professional community

SAVA's calendar is packed with opportunities for professional development and networking. The SAVAs Congress, scheduled for early 2027, will bring together experts, practitioners, and students for a dynamic exchange of ideas and innovations.

Regional branches and interest groups will also host workshops, webinars, and outreach programmes aimed at:

- Enhancing clinical skills
- Promoting wellness
- Strengthening community ties

These platforms are not merely events, but essential spaces where the profession strengthens its identity, advances its knowledge, and builds collective leadership.

A shared future

SAVA stands firm in its mission to support veterinarians, advocate for animal welfare, and contribute to public health. As the profession evolves, so does the Association — embracing innovation, adapting to new challenges, and fostering a strong sense of community among its members.

Through its publications, events, and advocacy efforts, SAVAs continues to be a beacon of excellence and integrity in the veterinary field.

Together, through our shared commitment to excellence, service, and scientific integrity, we will define the future of veterinary medicine in Southern Africa.

For access to current and archived issues of JSAVA, visit: www.jsava.co.za/index.php/jsava

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