

technicians. However, with the fancier name comes the necessity of some formal training and testing and the need of the employer to expect to pay a higher salary. With our human counterparts also having nurses, medical technologists, paramedics, and emergency medical technicians, it appears that the veterinary profession will also have its animal technicians.

As for regulations, it appears to me that practice acts should be amended to encompass technicians with some sort of certification program installed. The role of the technician should be defined in general terms, rather than fine specifics, in order to vary with individual practice needs. The animal technician must work under the direction of a veterinarian. The veterinary profession, then the individual practitioner, must accept responsibility for the actions of their technicians as we have done in the past.

### District VI

**Dr. Earl S. Thompson**  
*Clarks Grove, Minnesota*

I have been impressed by the applicants that I have interviewed for jobs. The results of the questionnaire resulted in 28 stating that they do not use animal technicians. Of these, five stated they planned to use them and 13 said they had no need for them. Another five said the cost was too great and five gave no reasons. Twenty-six stated that they use technicians and of these, 13 trained their own and 13 are formally trained. We had one for a year and she did very well; we did a lot more bacteriological examinations.

### District VII

**Dr. R. H. Spencer**  
*Box 370*  
*Scott City, Kansas 67871*

District VII includes the states of Oklahoma, Missouri and Kansas. Recently, an animal technician questionnaire was sent to all members of the AABP. I received 27 from my District. Thirteen veterinarians used technicians in their practice. Fourteen did not use animal technicians in their practice. Of the 13 veterinarians who did use animal technicians, three employed technicians with formal training and ten trained their own technicians. Of the fourteen who did not use technicians, only two were opposed to the concept and most of the other twelve stated it was a good concept or they would use technicians if practice would warrant it. Salary range for technicians ranges from \$100 per week to \$10,000 per year. The technicians were used in assisting the veterinarian, laboratory procedures, monitoring anesthesia and some emergency treatments. None of them were used to prescribe, diagnose or perform surgery.

We now have one accredited school in Kansas. They have had 48 graduates since 1971. The state of Oklahoma does not have any schools. Missouri has a school graduating their first class in 1975. They hopefully will be accredited by the AVMA by the time of graduation.

As far as State Veterinary Practice Acts are concerned, Kansas rewrote their Practice Act a number of years ago. Their Practice Act is very adequate to regulate animal hospital technicians according to AVMA guidelines and also approval of the Attorney General. Missouri has been informed by their Attorney General that their Practice Act is not adequate to regulate the technicians and they must either revise it or seek a new ruling. The veterinary associations of Oklahoma have just formed an advisory committee to proceed on technicians and to study their existing Practice Act.

### District VIII

**Dr. James H. Denton**  
*College Station, Texas*

In some instances, they have their own horses to round them up, separate the calves, and work them. They'll do everything under the sun to them—vaccinate, castrate, dehorn and etc. The majority of ours did answer that they administer drugs and medication, that they dehorn, that they do castrations, so it's according to what side of the fence you are on as to whether castration is proper or not. If you are an equine practitioner you wouldn't have your lay person castrating a horse. Is it all right to worm a cow, worm a calf? Is it all right for a lay person—animal technician—to tube worm a horse? Some of them said we didn't have to get into these discussions, but these are things we're going to have to face head on; we're not going to solve any problems by dodging them, let's meet them. Three of our states—Texas, Oklahoma, and I believe they said Mississippi—contain about 89 or 90% of the brucellosis reactor herds in the United States. A few years back—eight or nine years—we busted the state and federal regulatory people because they had laymen testing cattle. The job's got to be done. Now, in our state we have lay technicians that can bleed and use a card test. They have to be supervised. About all you have to do as supervising veterinarian is sign your name to the test sheets. They draw blood samples.

One of the things we've talked about is the administration of anesthetics. It is hard on some veterinarians to administer an anesthetic and keep an animal any length of time and do surgery, worry about the patient, and worry about the operation too. They assist in obstetrical work. We have some people who do specialized practices. Dr. Larson—I'm sure you all know him from San Antonio—teaches his clients to deliver calves, to do OB work, and remove retained

placentas. X-ray—they can position the animals; they can take the radiographs; they can develop them for you. What about pregnancy examinations? Is it all right? We do have some who report that they do blood work. These are usually people who have come from hospitals who are trained as lab technicians, and then we came along and helped train them in our part of it. One other thing we might look into is how to use animal technicians in inventory control in your hospital, business practices, keeping records, etc. What is being done to train them in our area? We have the Texas State Technical Institute. We were of the opinion that by this year, they would be approved. I don't believe we are going to have it come off. This is a two-year school, located at Waco, Texas. The University has a biomedical science program that is a four-year study. This is where a lot of them will come from. Dr. Sippel at the state diagnostic lab at A&M uses a lot of these youngsters when they graduate. The problem is that it is a new program. They have only had a few graduates. It will be about two years before we really start turning them out. The State Association works with these programs. We have three different committees—the education committee, the advisory committee to the animal tech school, and then an employee improvement committee. This employee improvement committee is to help upgrade the ones we are using today. Our State Association has approved the State Tech school at Waco, and we hope to try to get another one started in the western part of the state. Then we will be looking more at the feedlot-type cowboy. Some of our veterinarians have said that they cover wide areas and a technician must do the work. It is an understanding that the owner knows that this is a non-licensed person, and he is just doing this as first aid. We had one man say he covered ten thousand square miles and he was gone 50% of the time. If some things came and the technician didn't take care of them, they would be dead before he got back. Some feel that this is unethical, that they do unethical things. If an animal is brought to a veterinarian for treatment, the veterinarian should do the treatment. As far as licensing them or recognizing them, our State Board asked the attorney general of the state of Texas about it, and the attorney general said that the law does not say that they can control anything but a licensed veterinarian. They can not give any recognition to anyone less than a licensed veterinarian. We've got other problems right now. Arkansas has been registering their animal technicians over the past few years. They are going to introduce a bill in January or February to their state legislature including a new Practice Act that will include animal technicians, and their Practice Act is after the AVMA model Practice Act. I couldn't find anything from Louisiana. I tried to call one and I guess his animal technician—a good Cajun named Pierre—was there! I was leaving a call-back number to operator 46 and he said, "All right, I've got it, operator 46, College Station, Texas." She said, "The calling number is Capital 6-84—." He

said, "Wait a minute. Wait a minute." The operator said, "What's the matter? Didn't you get it?" He said, "I don't know how to make a capital six!"

## District IX

**Dr. Larry E. Rice**  
*Arvada, Colorado*

I had 59 replies. Sixty-eight percent of these do use an animal technician in their cattle practice. Of the ones who do not use them, only 22% plan to use them in the future. The reasons for not using them were that their practice didn't warrant it; one reason was quackery; another said he wasn't going to use them, but he preferred to train his own technicians. Of those who did answer "yes"—there were 40 of them—58% of these were trained by the veterinarian. They have used them from two months to 20 years. All but two of them who used technicians used them also in their small animal and equine practices. Some of the uses that I thought to be interesting were 82% use them for administering medication. Nearly half of them use them for dehorning. Fifty percent use them for drawing blood samples, and 25% are used for drawing brucellosis samples. Over 50% of them were used for vaccinations. Three of the positive replies used them for brucellosis vaccination. No one used them for pregnancy palpation, and two for artificial insemination, and none of them for uterine infusions. Four of them were used for surgeries and suturing wounds which was a very small amount. However, 70% of them used them for assisting in major abdominal surgery. Fifty percent used them for administering anesthetics, 70% for OB assistance. All of these things tell me that the people in District IX are using their technicians for a number of technical things. Over 50% of them were trained by the practitioner and did not receive formal training. For example, over 50% used them for blood chemistry, hematology and urology. Fifty-eight percent used them for X-ray even though they were trained within the clinic. They did not do the procedures talked about over 50% of the time without the veterinarian present. Twenty-five percent used them 50% of the time without the veterinarian present. Slightly over 25% used them 25% of the time, nearly half used them 10% of the time. The remainder made no answer. I had 12 replies that said they did use them for emergency treatments, and 14 that said they did not use them. That meant that there were quite a number who didn't answer that question. Salary range—\$250-\$750 a month.

I will read three comments here that I thought were interesting: "At one time we employed technicians from the Curtiss School. We were reported as misusing them and were severely criticized as a result of this. No more formally educated technicians for us." They are going to continue using technicians, but