

Dr. Jean Blancou

Dr. Jean Blancou received degrees in Veterinary Medicine from the Faculty of Medicine in Toulouse, France, in 1960, and in Tropical Veterinary Medicine in Paris in 1963. He completed advanced studies in immunology, microbiology, biochemistry, statistics and zoology, notably from the Pasteur Institute. He then went on to obtain a doctoral degree in biological sciences in Nancy, France, in 1982.

Jean Blancou began his career as Technical Advisor to the Veterinary Services in Ethiopia, where he led a campaign against rinderpest in the southern territories. From 1965 to 1967, he was Deputy Director of the National Veterinary Laboratory in Niger and was responsible for the diagnostic of animal diseases and the production of veterinary vaccines. He went on to serve as Director General of the National Veterinary Laboratory in Madagascar from 1968 to 1974, where he began research on the diagnosis and control of dermatophilosis and bovine tuberculosis, as well as on other bacterial and parasitic animal diseases. He subsequently served as Head of Department in the National Veterinary Laboratory in Senegal from 1975 to 1977.

In 1977, he returned to France and became Deputy Director and subsequently Director of the National Centre for Research on Rabies and Wildlife Diseases, a World Health Organization Collaborating Centre located in Nancy, France. He held that position until 1990. It was in that capacity that he undertook, over a period of twelve years, in-depth research on the diagnosis, causal agents, epidemiology and control of rabies. From 1988 until 1990, he also served as Head of the Animal Health and Protection Department of the National Centre for Veterinary and Food Studies (CNEVA) in Maisons-Alfort, France. Since 1 January 1991, Dr Blancou has been the Director General of the Office International des Epizooties, the world organisation for animal health, which is situated in Paris.

Dr Blancou has authored more than 370 scientific publications devoted to the study of animal diseases, and to the production and control of biologicals, and is the author of many book chapters on rabies and vaccinology. He holds an Honoris Causa degree from the University of Liège (Belgium) and is a member of the French Veterinary Academy, corresponding member of the Agronomic and Veterinary Academy of Argentina and foreign member of both the Royal Medicine Academy of Belgium and the Russian Academy of Agricultural Sciences. He is also Vice-President of the French Society for the History of Medicine and an Honorary Member of the British Veterinary Association.

He has received many French medals, such as the Légion d'Honneur (Chevalier) and the Agricultural Order of Merit (Commander). He has also received awards from the French Veterinary Academy (Trasbot Award, 1980), the World Health Organization (Award for Significant Contributions, 1980) and the CNEVA (Medal of Honour, 1991).