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## VITAMINS IN ANIMAL NUTRITION

Comparative Aspects to Human Nutrition

## Lee Russell McDowell

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VITAMINS IN ANIMAL NUTRITION

### ANIMAL FEEDING AND NUTRITION

A Series of Monographs and Treatises

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This book is dedicated with appreciation to my parents, to my wife. Lorraine, and to my daughters.

Suzannah, Jody, and Teresa

### Foreword

This is the tenth in a series of books about animal feeding and nutrition. The books in this series are designed to keep the reader abreast of the rapid developments that have occurred in this field in recent years. As the volume of scientific literature expands, interpretation becomes more complex, and a continuing need exists for summation and for up-to-date books.

This book on vitamins is written by Dr. Lee R. McDowell, a distinguished scientist in animal nutrition, who was also editor of *Nutrition of Grazing Ruminants in Warm Climates* (Academic Press, 1985). For the past 23 years, he has been working on animal nutrition studies at the University of Florida and with numerous collaborating animal scientists in Latin America, Africa, Asia, and other areas. He has lectured throughout the world and has collected research data, photographs, and other materials of value for this book. His expertise and knowledge have been greatly enriched by contact with many of the world's leading nutrition scientists.

For many years, there has been a great need for a single book on vitamins covering both animals and humans. Dr. McDowell has done a magnificent job of reviewing the vitamin literature and condensing it into one textbook. He covers the basic chemical, metabolic, and functional role of vitamins. Moreover, he devotes proper consideration to vitamin supplementation. The book is well illustrated with a wealth of valuable photographs depicting vitamin deficiencies in livestock, laboratory animals, and humans.

In addition to worldwide use as a textbook, this book should also be of considerable value to research and extension specialists, teachers, students, feed manufacturers, farmers, and others dealing with the livestock industry. Animal industry personnel, veterinarians, and those interested in comparative nutrition will find this book very useful. It should be valuable for anyone concerned with vitamin nutrition.

New feed and food crops, improved methods of production and processing, increased productivity of animals and crops, changes in animal products including more lean and less fat in meat and less fat in milk, longer shelf life requirements

of food products, and a myriad of new technological developments have resulted in a need to reevaluate vitamin supplementation. This book is timely and valuable in bringing the vitamin field up-to-date and in discussing supplementation needs.

Tony J. Cunha

### Preface

Vitamins in Animal Nutrition contains 18 chapters of concise, up-to-date information on vitamin nutrition for both animals and humans. The first chapter deals with the definition of vitamins, general considerations, and the fascinating history of these nutrients. Chapters 2 through 15 discuss the 14 established vitamins in relation to history; chemical structure, properties, and antagonists; analytical procedures; metabolism; functions; requirements; sources; deficiency; supplementation; and toxicity. Chapter 16 deals with other vitamin-like substances, and Chapter 17 reviews the importance of essential fatty acids. The final chapter discusses vitamin supplementation considerations.

It is hoped that this book will be of worldwide use as a textbook and as an authoritative reference book for use by research and extension specialists, feed manufacturers, teachers, students, and others. An attempt has been made to provide a balance between animal nutrition and clinical human nutrition. Likewise, a comparison between the balance of chemical, metabolic, and functional aspects of vitamins and their practical and applied considerations has been made.

A unique feature is the description of the practical implications of vitamin deficiencies and excesses and the conditions that might occur with various animal species and humans. A large number of photographs illustrate vitamin deficiencies in farm livestock, laboratory animals, and humans. Unlike other textbooks, this one places strong emphasis on vitamin supplementation in each chapter and devotes the last chapter to this subject.

In preparing this book, I have obtained numerous suggestions from eminent scientists both in the United States and in other countries of the world. I wish to express my sincere appreciation to them and to those who supplied photographs and other material used. I am especially grateful to the following: C. B. Ammerman, L. B. Bailey, R. B. Becker, D. K. Beede, B. J. Bock, H. L. Chapman, J. H. Conrad, G. L. Ellis, R. H. Harms, J. F. Hentges, J. K. Loosli, R. M. Mason, R. Miles, R. L. Shirley, R. R. Streiff, and W. B. Weaver (Florida); R. T. Lovell and H. E. Sauberlich (Alabama); O. Balbuena, B. J. Carrillo, and B. Ruksan (Argentina); H. Heitman (California); J. M. Bell, M. Hidiroglou, and N. Hidiroglou (Canada); N. Ruiz (Colombia); N. Comben (England); M. Sand-

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Lee Russell McDowell

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## Introduction and Historical-Considerations

#### I. DEFINITION OF VITAMINS

Vitamins are defined as a group of complex organic compounds present in minute amounts in natural foodstuffs that are essential to normal metabolism and lack of which in the diet causes deficiency diseases. Vitamins consist of a mixed group of chemical compounds and are not related to each other as are proteins, carbohydrates, and fats. Their classification together depends not on chemical characteristics but on function. Vitamins are differentiated from the trace elements, also present in the diet in small quantities, by their organic nature.

Vitamins are required in trace amounts (micrograms to milligrams per day) in the diet for health, growth, and reproduction. Omission of a single vitamin from the diet of a species that requires it will produce deficiency signs and symptoms. Many of the vitamins function as coenzymes (metabolic catalysts); others have no such role, but perform certain essential functions.

Some vitamins deviate from the preceding definition in that they do not always need to be constituents of food. Certain substances that are considered to be vitamins are synthesized by intestinal tract bacteria in quantities that are often adequate for body needs. However, a clear distinction is made between vitamins and substances that are synthesized in tissues of the body. Ascorbic acid, for example, can be synthesized by most species of animals, except when they are young or under stress conditions. Likewise, niacin can be synthesized from the amino acid tryptophan and vitamin D from action of ultraviolet light on precursor compounds in the skin. Thus, under certain conditions and for specific species, vitamin C, niacin, and vitamin D would not always fit the classic definition of a vitamin.

### II. CLASSIFICATION OF VITAMINS

Classically, vitamins have been divided into two groups based on their solubilities in fat solvents or in water. Thus, fat-soluble vitamins include A, D, E, and K, while vitamins of the B complex, C, and others are classified as water soluble. Fat-soluble vitamins are found in feedstuffs in association with lipids.