Strategy for the Prevention and Control of Canine Rabies in Border Areas of Northern Chile

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INTRODUCTION

In Chile, the canine variant of the rabies virus has been controlled; however, the risk of reintroduction persists due to migratory movements and the epidemiological situation in neighboring countries, which have reported over 1.500 rabies cases in dogs and cats over the past decade, with at least 14 cases in humans in recent years.

The objective is to prevent the occurrence of rabies cases in Chile, given the threat of reintroduction of the canine variant of the rabies virus through a comprehensive strategy implemented in the northern border area of the country.

METHODS

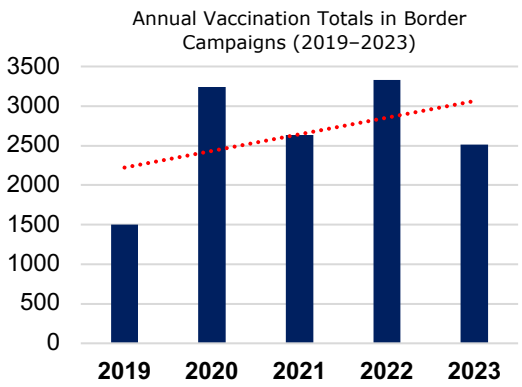
The strategy is implemented in the primary four political-administrative divisions in northern Chile, bordering Bolivia, Peru, and Argentina.

Activities within this strategy include:

- Strengthened intersectoral epidemiological surveillance in the area.
- Annual mass vaccination of pets in critical border locations.
- Reinforcement of pet migration control in irregular border crossings.
- Promotion of rabies awareness through educational campaigns at the community level.

RESULTS

- **13.213 pets vaccinated** against rabies in critical areas along the border (2021–2023).
- **9 community leader training schools** established, with over **100 participants**.
- **656 animals immunized** at veterinary border checkpoints (irregular crossings) between 2021 and 2023.



CONCLUSION

The comprehensive strategy implemented in the northern border regions has proven effective in preventing rabies cases in animals and mitigating the risk of rabies spread across the country. In the event of a detected case, this strategy enables mass vaccination of pets, promotes community education and participation, encourages intersectoral cooperation for surveillance, and enforces pet migration controls, all crucial in preventing animal rabies cases and thereby safeguarding public health.

References: Ministerio de Salud de Chile. Oficina de Zoonosis y Control de vectores.

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