Reptiles, birds, rodents, small mammals are the new pets. In recent years, the exotic or unconventional animals have become an increasingly important presence both as pets and as a type of farming. To recognize their state of health, what are the indicators, what are the health problems, the implications as potential carriers of zoonotic agents, diagnostic methods, health standards, are just some of the skills to improve and to put available to owners and breeders.

EURISPES data show that Italian people having an animal is increasing. 22.5% of the population in Italy, 55% of households, has decided to adopt an animal, 9.3% of Italians has two, 4.1% have three and 7.4% have more than three pets. The best friend is the dog (60.8%) followed by cats (49.3%), then are fish and turtles (both 8.7%), birds (5.4%), rabbits (5.2%), hamsters (3.1%) and exotic animals (2.1%). The 41.7% of people has animals to fill the loneliness; 18.5% to have someone to care. The northwestern and central Regions. From the point of view of the Veterinary Public Health concern, it is important to define the information based analysis instruments, the possible zoonotic implications, due to the close relationship between man and animals. Regarding the exotic pets, the risk of disease agents are still little known or even unknown, taking into consideration some key factors: the importation of animals with unknown health status, from foreign Countries, the possibility of illegal trade of animals (in fact, the data show that Italy is among the most active Countries in the international trade of animals), the relative ease of acquiring exotic animals via e-commerce. Literature describe investigations in order to understand the reasons for the adoption of a dog or a cat or, at most of the canaries, but there are very few scientific data describing the psychological
motives on the choice of an unconventional or even exotic animal. In today’s world there is an easy access to new and exotic destinations, and to new and fascinating animal species, but it is necessary the need to ask the question whether these animals can be kept as pets and what are the needs in terms of care, of welfare of both proprietary and animals³.

The diagnostic laboratories of the Veterinary Public Health Institutes in Italy (Istituti Zooprofilattici Sperimentali - IIZZSS), have the task to protect human health and in the course of decades, since they were set up, while maintaining the skills and functions identified since their institution, they have done the natural evolution aimed at meeting the needs of public health as necessary and the challenge of non-conventional animals, their health care and the welfare conditions warranty is one of challenges, to fit their purpose. The goal is to protect the human health as well as animals and environment. The diagnostic capacity of zoonoses is a key factor. are the most involved¹.

Zoonoses involve infections and infestations transmissible from animals to humans. Zoonoses are a major global threat. Exposure to zoonotic pathogens exists in various settings including encroachment on nature; foreign travel; pet keeping; bushmeat consumption; attendance at zoological parks, petting zoos, school ‘animal contact experiences’, wildlife markets, circuses, and domesticated and exotic animal farms. Under ascertainment is believed to be common and the frequency of some zoonotic disease appears to be increasing. Zoonoses include direct, indirect and aerosolized transmission. Improved awareness of zoonoses in the society, including hospital environment may be important to the growing need for prevention and control⁴. There is a significant need for the promotion of awareness and management of zoonoses and this is one of the functions of the IIZZSS.

References

1. Eurispes (2016) Rapporto Italia