

AMTRA SQP, Mark Pass, reflects on his 20 year career as an SQP and why initiatives like National SQP Week are so important to drive better understanding of the role

Mark Pass is a former AMTRA SQP of the Year winner, OTC Gold Standard SQP and author of an AMTRA CPD module on cattle lungworm. He believes awareness of the SQP role is improving, but that more can still be done to highlight the profession's value, which is why he is supporting #NationalSQPweek. He sees SQPs as an important part of the wider animal health team, especially at a time when the veterinary profession faces significant workforce pressures.

With nearly 20 years' experience as an SQP, Mark Pass is passionate about the positive role SQPs play across animal health, from supporting responsible medicine use to helping address skills shortages across the profession.

Now working as a Field Trainer– Ruminant and Equine at Zoetis, he provides technical and commercial support on disease control, diagnostics and animal health, helping SQPs, vets and customers make informed decisions that improve outcomes on farm.

Mark began his animal health career in 2005, qualified as an R-SQP in 2006 and achieved Gold Standard status in 2013. In practice, he supported a wide range of livestock and animal owners, working alongside vets to improve herd and flock health, efficiency and responsible medicines use.

His experience shows how SQPs add real value: providing year-round advice, supporting disease prevention and parasite control, and helping farmers use medicines correctly, effectively and cost-efficiently. A key example of that impact is how his expertise has been used to develop flock health and performance monitoring programmes over his career, working closely with vets and farmers to deliver tailored advice on parasite control, nutrition, vaccinations and medicine use.

Mark says ongoing CPD has been central to his career, helping him stay current and strengthen the advice he gives customers. His expertise in disease prevention and veterinary medicines enables him to support the right product choices, at the right time, in the right way.

“Having an in-depth knowledge of disease prevention and POM-VPS medicinal products and NFA-VPS animal medicines ensures my customers use the right products at the correct time and in the right way. Taking pride in my customers' businesses and being able to exert a positive influence is vital.

He also highlights the value of collaboration, with SQPs and vets working together to support farm health planning and deliver practical, trusted advice for animal keepers.

Asked what he would say to anyone considering an SQP qualification, Mark is clear; “Becoming an SQP can open the door to a rewarding career built on trusted advice, responsible medicines use and close collaboration with veterinary teams.”

His wider work includes involvement in parasitology training, flock planning, and industry groups such as SCOPS and COWS, further underlining the breadth of expertise SQPs can bring to the sector.

“Over the last few years, I’ve been a member of the farm animal clinical board at VetPartners, whilst I was also involved in training vets on parasitology within the group. More recently, I have been working on the COWS steering group as an active member.”

In his current role at Zoetis, Mark continues to share his knowledge with a wider audience, helping strengthen animal health support across the industry.

He says the SQP role carries real responsibility and is built on promoting best practice, responsible medicines use and trusted advice. His MSc in Veterinary Pharmacy has further strengthened the service and expertise he brings to his work.

Mark’s story reflects the vital contribution SQPs make in supporting animal keepers, working alongside vets and improving animal health outcomes across the UK.