

Werk

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Book Reviews

Birnbaum, Z.W.: On the Mathematics of Competing Risks. DHEW Publication: U.S. Dep. of Health, Education, and Welfare 1979, 58 pp.

Dieses kurze Buch zeichnet sich durch die übersichtliche, knappe Darstellung der mathematischen Probleme bei der statistischen Behandlung der „Überlebenszeiten“ im Falle konkurrierender Risiken aus. Zunächst werden die Überlegungen von Daniel Bernoulli zu den Überlebens-
tafeln von 1693 aus Breslau, bei denen zwischen Tod wegen Pockenerkrankungen oder anderen Ursachen unterschieden wurde, dargelegt. Danach wird das moderne Konzept der konkurrierenden Risiken über die Verteilungsfunktionen von Überlebenszeiten entwickelt und die Begriffe der potentiellen und beobachtbaren Überlebenszeiten eingeführt. Sehr klar ist das Identifikationsproblem, unter welchen Bedingungen aus den Wahrscheinlichkeitsverteilungen der beobachtbaren auf die der potentiellen Überlebenszeiten geschlossen werden kann, behandelt. Bei der Besprechung der Schätzmethoden sind die Überlegungen zur Konsistenz sehr interessant, doch fallen leider für die Praxis wichtige Methoden, wie die Behandlung von begleitenden Regressorvariablen, der Kürze der Darstellung zum Opfer. Ebenso erscheint der Abschnitt über Hypothesenprüfung etwas kurz geraten. Alles in allem kann jedoch das Buch auch für den nicht rein methodisch orientierten Leser empfohlen werden.

P. Bauer, Wien

Leech, F.B., and K.C. Sellers: Statistical Epidemiology in Veterinary Science. Charles Griffin and Co., Ltd. High Wycombe. 1979, 158 pp, 14 figs., 29 tables, £ 4.40 net.

The book presents (as see preface) a summarisation of problems confronting the veterinarian, or the biologist, when engaged in animal health control work.

It highlights the differences existing between laboratory and field investigations – the latter being carried out with a view to (1) estimating losses caused by diseases, (2) estimating the effects exerted on environments by diseases, (3) observing the course taken by such diseases as cannot be reproduced under laboratory conditions, (4) comparing effects of laboratory conditions to those prevailing under field conditions, and (5) compiling of preventative measures.

Chapters 'Recording and Identifying Diseases', 'Sources of Data', 'Types of Survey, Sampling Units and Sampling Frames', 'Survey Planning' and 'Field Record Design' point out divers situations (sometimes of a hampering nature) which may arise – distorted results, for one thing, due to individual ways of classifying as practiced by different investigators. Also to be taken into account are the various types of investigations: within the herd (e.g., in health control), in the abattoir, at the veterinary hospital, in A.I., or by log book recording.

Chapter 'Data Processing' briefly surveys opportunities offered by E.D.P., with emphasis given to the need for thorough programme-planning and programme-setting, prior to data collecting.

'First Look at the Data' will aid elimination of the more glaring errors ('impossible observation'); it also presents, via diagrams and statistics (mean, median and mode), the data-set as such.

'Mathematical Models and Data Analysis' deals chiefly with the computing of correlations and regressions by which the effects of various environmental factors on a trait (here: disease) may be established.

'Survey Analysis' and 'Interpretation and Reporting' are chapters informing the reader on how to publish.

In all, this book is a Must to veterinarians and biologists working in animal health control; here is found a basic survey on how to plan and effect field investigations on animals both sick and well, and on how to evaluate the obtained information.

G. Mayrhofer, Vienna

International Labour Office. An integrated system of wages statistics. A manual on methods. Geneva 1979, 245 S., £ 9,75.

The cost of social security. Ninth international inquiry, 1972 – 1974. Geneva 1979, 113 S., 40 sfr.