



Gearing Up for Greensboro

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) is making plans for its 112th Annual Meeting in Greensboro, N.C., Oct. 23-29, 2008. The meeting is held in conjunction with the 51st Annual Conference of the American Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians (AAVLD).

The feature of this year's meeting will be: Foot-and-Mouth Disease: If 'When' Happened.

Program chairs Dr. Don Hoenig, USAHA President-elect, and Dr. David Steffen, AAVLD President-elect, have compiled an excellent program for this year's Joint Scientific Session. The Monday Joint Scientific Session, scheduled for Oct. 27, will take a look at the United States' current preparedness for foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) in this country. The program will feature presentations on federal and state coordination on response plans, laboratory capabilities, international experiences, research in vaccines and other technology, and industry perspectives on key issues.

"Although much attention has been devoted to recent events involving FMD in the United Kingdom and South America as well as other parts of the world, it's been several years since we've focused our attention to FMD in a national forum," says Hoenig.



Sheraton Greensboro Hotel at Four Points, the site of the 2008 Annual Meeting.

With the emergence of highly pathogenic H5N1 avian influenza in late 2005, many industry, state and federal animal health representatives have had their emergency response energies drawn toward upgrading plans for responding to this serious threat.

"The planning committee for the 2008 Joint Scientific session felt that the time was right to take another look at the status of this country's FMD preparedness including a review of new countermeasures for FMD, such as vaccines and therapeutants, new developments in diagnostics and a fresh look at continuity of business planning during an FMD event," says Hoenig. The agenda for the session is available on page 4.

USAHA's 31 committees will have scheduled meetings, along with the AAVLD Plenary and Scientific Sessions and committees. A full sched-

ule of events can be found at <http://www.usaha.org/meetings/2008/index.shtml>. Committee agendas and other details will be posted at this site as they are available.

Registration and hotel information is also available on-line. The Sheraton Greensboro Hotel at Four Seasons is the location for the 2008 meeting. A block of rooms has been reserved at a rate of \$130 per night, plus taxes and fees. Simply reference "Health" when making your reservation. Reservations should be made before Sept. 21, 2008 to ensure the group rate. Meeting registration can be done online or by using the printable registration form. The deadline for pre-registration is Oct. 10, 2008.

For more information about the USAHA/AAVLD Annual Meetings, go to www.usaha.org or www.aavld.org, or call 816-671-1144. □

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USAHA President's Remarks

I would like to greet you as president of USAHA and welcome you to our 112th annual meeting. I trust you will find an opportunity for an extremely productive meeting. Our efforts throughout the last year have certainly been to accomplish just that.

My unique role as an industry representative on the executive committee has allowed me to focus on those things that are necessary to keep this organization strong and able to meet the increasing demands of the times in which we find ourselves.

My goal has been to complete the expectations of the "Long Range Plan" done about 10 years ago. Those planners had the foresight to know we needed more of a long range presence. This involved two issues. First was the executive committee being involved on a year-round basis. I can attest that is surely the case. It seems we are involved in issues on almost a daily basis. Secondly, we needed to move toward an Executive Director.

We are fortunate to have found a most capable director who is continuing to define the ever increasing role of the USAHA office. We have relocated to St. Joseph, Mo. with new staff. All of these changes have been most obvious to the Executive Committee but I hope that each of our members will sense a difference in our ability to serve you on an ever increasing basis. Credit to Linda Ragland and J Lee Alley is due because of their continued support of the organization through this transition.

Along the way, finances were a major concern. I'm happy to report to you that through successful annual meetings, and careful resource management, we have improved our financial position, even during this time of transition. Five years ago, the organization adopted a goal of having two years

expenses in reserve funds. I'm pleased to share that we have met and surpassed that goal. Fiscal challenges ahead will be continuing to staff according to the growing opportunities to increase member services and the impact of our organization.

This past year we have focused on three areas of concern to USAHA.

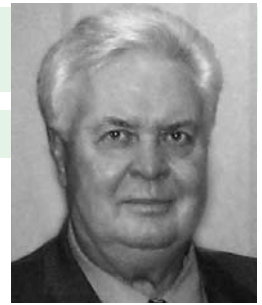
First, as I just alluded to, we want to improve member services. The Executive Committee hopes it can better utilize staff to provide committees and members with information and other tools to help us in our animal health goals. I hope each of you will help us by telling us what we can do to help you in these efforts.

Secondly, we must always be aware of opportunities to increase membership. The reality of the times is decreased budgets and limited resources which will affect state and federal participation. With that fact in mind, we are continuing to search for new possibilities of membership in order to maintain our membership and meeting attendance.

The third issue I call relevance. As a much younger pork producer, I began attending USAHA because of its tremendous impact with state and federal regulation and ultimately disease control and eradication. The challenge ahead is that we may struggle to maintain our influence. That issue is being addressed in the new "Long Range Plan" that will be presented at the Annual Meeting in Greensboro.

As I traveled to the district meetings of USAHA this summer, I sensed a level of frustration among the state and federal regulatory veterinarians in our ability for one reason or another to adequately address our disease problems. It seems that our efforts have been frustrated by: budget

Jim Leafstedt



issues, sociological issues, political issues, lack of unity among producers and lack of expected coordination in government. One only needs to look to bovine TB, brucellosis eradication and a sensible identification system to demonstrate these issues.

What we can collectively do to ensure the place of USAHA as the important player in these issues remains the challenge for all of us. □

The USAHA Newsletter is a service to the members of the association. For comments on this newsletter, please e-mail: usaha@usaha.org.

2007-2008 USAHA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

James Leafstedt, President
National Pork Board

Donald Hoenig, President-elect
Maine Dept. of Agriculture

Richard Breitmeyer, 1st Vice President
California Dept. of Food and Agriculture

Steven Halstead, 2nd Vice President
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David Marshall, 3rd Vice President
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William Hartmann, Treasurer
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Lee Myers, Immediate Past President

A Word from AAVLD

The American Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians (AAVLD) endorsed the concept of "One Health" and supported the One Health Mission Statement: "Recognizing that human and animal health and mental health (via the human-animal bond phenomenon) are inextricably linked, One Health seeks to promote, improve and defend the health and well-being of all species by enhancing cooperation and collaboration between physicians and veterinarians, and by promoting strengths in leadership and management to achieve these goals," and joined the official list of organizations supporting this initiative.

AAVLD supported the position of the APHL (Association of Public Health Laboratories) that all positive results from non-culture assays used to detect PulseNet-tracked foodborne disease agents be confirmed through culture-based identification methods.

We communicated with the National Center for Zoonotic, Vector-Borne, & Enteric Diseases (NCZVED), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, regarding the temporary unavailability of rabies pre-exposure

vaccination, alerting them to the fact that workers in veterinary diagnostic laboratories form an important constituency for rabies pre-exposure vaccination. The AAVLD has 1,500 members and the bulk of these members are at risk of exposure to rabies virus in our post mortem rooms and various bench laboratories that handle mammalian submissions. We emphasized that pre-exposure vaccination of all new employees, as well as re-vaccination of current employees, is of great importance to us.

In the past few months, I represented the AAVLD at several events: 76th General Session of the OIE (World Organization for Animal Health) in Paris, France, May 24-30; the Cross-Border Animal Agrosecurity meeting in Fargo, N.D., June 4-6, and the Canadian Animal Health Laboratories Network meeting, in Ottawa, Ontario, Can., June 8-11.

The AAVLD Executive Board and Strategic Planning Committee held a very useful strategic planning day on July 16 in New Orleans, La., following our summer Executive Board meeting. We engaged an experienced facilitator, Kevin Murphy, Food Chain Communi-

Grant Maxie

cations, to help us move forward in refining our vision and mission, and to lead to a business plan and marketing plan for AAVLD. We made significant progress on updating our current strategic plan and will refine and confirm these concepts at our annual October meeting in Greensboro. Also at this meeting, we expect to review the results of the AAVLD Workforce Survey, to be conducted this summer.

AAVLD continues to be a strong supporter of NAHLN (National Animal Health Laboratory Network). Governance of the network was further refined in a July 17-18 meeting in New Orleans, and the NAHLN Steering Committee, consisting of federal and state representatives, recently chaired by Dr. Barb Powers of AAVLD, will again be chaired by Dr. Barbara Martin (USDA-APHIS-VS-NVSL), the coordinator of NAHLN. The NAHLN Survey has been completed and a final summary will be available in September. □



From the Executive Director

It has been another busy year for USAHA, but it is business as usual at the new office in St. Joseph. Kelly and I are continuing to learn the ways of USAHA and look for ways to better serve the membership under direction of the Executive Committee.

We continue to have requests for participation from our federal, state and industry partners, which speaks volumes about the role USAHA plays in animal health. There is no doubt in my mind that the Committee meetings

Ben Richey

will have very informative sessions in Greensboro.

I am pleased to inform you that Linda Ragland continues to provide meeting program support for the Association. Linda remains on contract to handle the details of this year's meeting, working closely with the Sheraton Greensboro Hotel. Linda possesses an enormous amount of institutional and meeting coordination knowledge specific to USAHA, and we're happy to have her continued service.

USAHA has concluded its fiscal

year for 2008, and staff are in preparations for its financial audit. USAHA maintains a strong fiscal standing, and we hope this can be translated to better service for the membership.

As the Annual Meeting approaches, we are looking forward to the deliberations that are the product of USAHA. With our friends and colleagues at AAVLD, we anticipate another excellent meeting this year in Greensboro. I look forward to seeing you all there. □

2008 Joint Session Agenda

Monday, October 27, 7:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Dr. Alfonso Torres, Cornell University, Moderator

- Joint Presentation on: The Status of the FMD Response Plan, Coordination between States and DHS - *Drs. Jose Diez, USDA-APHIS-Emergency Programs and Bob Hooks, DHS*
- The NAHLN and Laboratory Response, Surge Capacity, Testing Issues - *Dr. Barbara Martin, USDA-APHIS-VS*
- Recent Diagnostic and Molecular Epidemiology Data from the 2001 and 2007 Outbreaks of FMD in the UK - *Dr. Don King, DEFRA, United Kingdom*
- DHS and ARS New Vaccine Research, Countermeasures, Commercialization Prospects, and Allocation of Vaccine in an Outbreak, NVS - *Drs. Tam Garland and Luis Rodriguez, DHS*
- FMD Eradication Efforts in South America: Current Status of the Disease and Vaccination Strategies in Countries that are Vaccinating - *Dr. David Ashford, USDA-APHIS-International Services, Sao Paulo, Brazil*
- Issues for the Dairy Industry in an FMD Outbreak - *Dr. Jaime Jonker, National Milk Producers Federation*
- Issues for the Beef Industry in an FMD Outbreak - *Dr. Elizabeth Parker, National Cattlemen's Beef Association*
- Issues Facing the Swine Industry - *Dr. Paul Sundberg, National Pork Board*
- Consumer Perspectives: Consumer Perceptions, Product Marketing during an Outbreak - *Dick Crawford, McDonald's Corporation*
- Panel Discussion

Other Events at Greensboro

AAVLD President's Reception and Auction - Friday, Oct. 24, 6 p.m.

AAVLD Plenary Session - Saturday, Oct. 25, 8 a.m.

USAHA/AAVLD President's Reception and Dinner - Sunday, Oct. 26, 6 p.m.

USAHA Membership Meetings - Monday, Oct. 27, 12:00 p.m.

Wednesday, Oct. 29, 1:30 p.m.

Spouse's Tour to Biltmore

Travel to Biltmore Estate and Gardens (2 hours 45 minutes from Greensboro) and view a film about Biltmore as you travel. Then take a 30-minute breakfast stop (on your own) in Hickory, N.C. The Biltmore Estate and Gardens, completed in 1895, took an army of stonecutters and artisans six years to construct. The Biltmore House, which is today the largest private home in America, is situated on more than 8,000 acres of land. George Vanderbilt filled his 250-room mansion with treasures he collected during his world travels. Before heading back to Greensboro, enjoy a buffet lunch at Deerpark Restaurant (included and all-inclusive), originally was a dairy barn for George Vanderbilt's farm operations located on the estate. The cost is \$121, and separate registration is required. The form with details can be found at www.usaha.org.

About Greensboro, N.C.

Greensboro is serviced by Piedmont Triad International Airport, with several major airlines: Allegiant Air, American Airlines, Continental, Delta, Northwest, United and US Airways.

Average temperatures for October: highs of 68° F and lows around 44° F.

Other local attractions include:

- Furniture shopping at nearby High Point, the Furniture Capitol of the World;
- Four Seasons Town Centre;
- Guilford Courthouse National Military Park;
- Barn Dinner Theater; and
- Old Salem, established in 1776.

Learn more at www.greensboronc.org.

REPORT on the 76th Annual Meeting of the OIE

By Don Hoenig, USAHA President-elect

Introduction

The 76th General Session of the World Animal Health Organization (OIE) took place in Paris, France, May 25-30, 2008. Approximately 600 participants, representing 172 Member countries and territories, as well as observers from more than 20 regional and international organizations, attended the 76th Annual General Session of the International Committee of the OIE. The OIE has been recognized by the World Trade Organization (WTO) as the standard-setting body for animal health. As such, the OIE develops and establishes the health standards for the safe trade of animals and animal products and makes recommendations for the overall well-being of animals. During 2007, three new countries joined the OIE, bringing the membership to 172 countries. For the past several years, the president-elect of USAHA has attended this meeting and this year it was my turn.

Ministers of Agriculture from 10 Member countries (Belize, Cuba, Former Yugoslav, Republic of Macedonia, France, Laos, Mali, Swaziland, Tanzania and Uganda) attended the opening session. Each welcomed Member country delegates and wished them all a productive session. In addition, the OIE's Director General, Dr. Bernard Vallat, reminded the International Committee in his opening remarks of the OIE's expanded activities in the area of veterinary capacity building, animal welfare, laboratory capacity, biotechnology and food safety. He encouraged the delegates to work with their respective ministries to ensure that their governments provide adequate resources to improve their national veterinary services. He also stressed the central role that these veterinary services

play in applying and complying with the adopted OIE standards.

Technical Items

The technical items presented at this year's General Session were:

- Technical Item I: Participation of small farmers in animal health programs; and
- Technical Item II: Implications of private standards in the international trade of animals and animal products.



World Animal Health Situation

The OIE Animal Health Information Department provided a summary of the animal health situation worldwide relative to about 100 animal diseases. The new web-based system for disease notification — the World Animal Health Information System (WAHIS) — has greatly facilitated the reporting of animal disease events. All OIE animal health information is now available through the OIE database commonly known as WAHID (World Animal Health Information Database).

Special Commission Reports

I. Scientific Commission (SC).

The president of the SC summarized the Commission's work in 2007. The SC met three times during the year and reviewed, updated or drafted over 15 chapters and appendices, reviewed country disease submission reports, addressed other issues, and established a network of bluetongue reference laboratories. Some of the SC's specific activities and work

addressed the following:

a. Containment Zone – The approval of the concept of “containment zone” into the foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) Terrestrial Animal Health Code (the Code) chapter required the development of criteria necessary to assess such a zone and “fast track” the re-recognition of FMD freedom of a country's territory outside the containment zone.

b. Buffer Zone – The president of the Administrative Commission has requested that the presidents of the Code Commission and the Scientific Commission work to develop a feasible definition for buffer zones, in particular with respect to the FMD Code chapter.

c. Atypical Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) – An ad hoc group on atypical transmissible spongiform encephalopathies (TSEs) concluded that the current science on atypical BSE was not enough to change the current Code Chapter on BSE.

d. Atypical Scrapie – The ad hoc group on atypical TSEs also concluded that the available science on atypical scrapie was not sufficient to justify standards specific to atypical scrapie.

e. Other items addressed: Surveillance, conference on FMD (scheduled for Paraguay in 2009), epidemiological monitoring, non-structural protein tests and evaluation of country submissions for rinderpest, FMD, contagious bovine pleuropneumonia and BSE status.

II. Terrestrial Animal Health Standards Commission (Code Commission).

The President of the Commission presented various Code chapters and appendices for adoption. Most of these chapters were sent to the delegates on two separate occasions during the course of the year for review and comment.

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Public Relations & Information Technology

The Committee on Public Relations and Information Technology has been sunset by President Jim Leafstedt, following a recommendation from Committee Chair Martha Littlefield and Vice-Chair Karen Conyngham. The decision comes following decreased attendance over the past few years and the transition to new staff. Responsibility for issues in this area will fall under the responsibility of the executive director, with support of the executive committee and other members with expertise in these areas.

Bluetongue & Related Orbivirus

The Committee on Bluetongue and Bovine Retrovirus has a new name, which will now be called the Committee on Bluetongue and Related Orbivirus. The change comes in an effort to better reflect the mission and activities of the Committee.

Tuberculosis

During the 2007 USAHA annual meeting in Reno, Nev., several subcommittees were formed to assist the Committee on Tuberculosis (TB) with its mission. The Committee continues to be served by the existing TB Scientific Advisory Subcommittee, chaired by Mitch Palmer, DVM, PhD, Veterinary Medical Officer with the Bacterial Diseases of Livestock Research Unit at the National Animal Disease Center in Ames, Iowa.

The five new Subcommittees to the Committee include the Elephant TB Guidelines Subcommittee (chaired by Janet Payeur, DVM, MPH, PhD, Scientific Outreach Coordinator, National Veterinary Services Laboratories), the Eventing Cattle Subcommittee (chaired by Chuck Massengill, DVM, previous Committee Chair), the Diagnostic Test Review Subcommittee (chaired by Tyler

Thacker, PhD, Research Microbiologist, Tuberculosis Research Group, USDA Agricultural Research Service), the Education and Communication Subcommittee (chaired by John Maulsby, DVM, former Colorado State Veterinarian), and the Test-And-Remove Assessment Subcommittee (chaired by Phil Durst, Extension Dairy Educator – NE Michigan, Michigan State University Extension). Updates on the Subcommittees' activities and progress will be given during the 2008 TB Committee meeting in Greensboro, N.C., on Wednesday Oct. 29.

The Committee provides a forum for identification, investigation and evaluation of subjects and issues relating to eradication of bovine tuberculosis from U.S. and North American animal populations. The Committee also makes recommendations and provides guidance through USAHA to industry, state, provincial and national governments for initiation or modification of policies, procedures, guidelines or regulations as well as identification and recommendation of diagnostic aids, test procedures, control measures and research needs to assure the successful eradication of bovine tuberculosis.

Submitted by Kathleen Connell

Laboratory Network Update

Committee on Diagnostic Laboratory and Veterinary Workforce Development and the Committee on International Standards

Dr. Paul Kitching, Director of the National Centre for Foreign Animal Disease (NCFAD) in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Can., recently reflected on the progress made by international organizations, countries and continents to pursue global animal health laboratory networks. The NCFAD hosted the first meeting for the

North American Animal Health Laboratory Network collaborative effort in February 2007. Dr. Kitching comments that "large countries such as the United States, Canada and Australia, and groups of smaller countries closely connected by trade, such as the European Union, have recognized the importance of harmonizing their diagnostic animal health laboratories, by sharing protocols, reagents and expertise. This facilitates rapid movement of live animals and their products across provincial, state and country borders, in-



creases confidence and trust, and reduces the possible impact of newly introduced or emerging disease problems."

Kitching further states that "the need to link these networks across international borders is self-evident and has been strongly supported

by the United States Animal Health Association (USAHA). Mr. Bob Frost and Dr. Rick Willer have been instrumental over the last few years in encouraging and facilitating the development of a collaborative effort between the U.S., Canada and Mexico on their animal health laboratory networks. Initial efforts have been directed toward harmonization of laboratory tests focusing first on avian influenza, because of its potential to impact public health and vesicular diseases, because of their adverse impacts on the livestock industries including loss of world trade and bovine tuberculosis, because of its negative impacts on livestock trade. In the future, other diseases may be included in the effort. I as well as others involved in this effort hope that the collaboration between the North American countries will serve as a template for other continental and global collaborations on animal health laboratories."

After the February 2007 meeting at the NCFAD, a notebook prepared

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by Frost and Willer for the meeting (the "Winnipeg Notebook") was distributed to key animal health leaders in other countries and global animal health organizations. A number of those leaders immediately expressed their interest and offered their support. Dr. Juan Lubroth, Head of the Infectious Diseases Group, Animal Health Service of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations headquartered in Rome, Italy, stated that this information "will be tapped in our United Nations development agenda North-South and South-South collaborations."



Dr. Bernard Vallat, Director General of the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE), responded, "I appreciate very much the information provided on your recent meeting of the three nations to improve collaboration between laboratories. I commend you for your efforts and consider this approach as a model for other regions. I will share this report with the staff of the Scientific Department and the members of the Biological Standards Commission for their information and consideration. Please keep me posted as to the progress in your efforts. I will make sure that the OIE continues to work with you in these collaborative efforts."

In April 2008, a meeting at the NC-FAD was held between animal health laboratory network managers from Australia, Canada and the United States to share concepts and best practices/experiences in the development of laboratory networks in each country to facilitate the diagnosis of foreign/exotic/emerging diseases of animals. The meeting developed a set of broad guidelines for the operation of such networks and the group made a set of recommendations, which included a vision and mission statement, general

requirements and objectives and technical issues of the network.

In the spring of 2008, the Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges (AAVMC) met with Dr. Vallat and other OIE staff at the OIE headquarters in Paris, France. Among the topics of discussion were global animal health laboratory networks and their importance to academic intuitions for teaching and research, and their diagnostic role in global animal and human health. Dr. Bennie Osburn, Co-chair of the Committee on Diagnostic Laboratories and Veterinary Workforce Development, Dean of the UC Davis, School of Veterinary Medicine, and Past President of the AAVMC was in attendance. Dr. Osburn states that "AAVMC members recognize the importance of veterinary laboratories to animal and human health and the critical role that veterinary medical education plays in preparing individuals to work in those laboratories as well as the importance that those laboratories play in the education process itself. Veterinary Colleges in the U.S. and throughout the world play a leading role in preparing those who will safeguard our nations' domestic and wild animal resources and protect the public from zoonotic diseases."

The importance of collaboration between nations on animal health laboratory networks was one important message delivered to veterinary and public health leaders at a recent Brucellosis Conference held in Serpukhov, Russia. Willer and Committee on Brucellosis Chair Glenn Plumb attended the conference as a follow-up to a 2005 Brucellosis Vaccine Workshop held by the USAHA in Laramie, Wyoming. The Serpukhov conference, "Brucellosis as a Trans-Boundary Infection of Animals and Humans that Needs to be Managed by Cooperative

Efforts of Different Countries," was hosted by the Russian Regional Center for Toxicology and Hygienic Regulation of Biopreparations with support from the U.S. Civilian Research and Development Foundation (CRDF). The conference was attended by individuals from the veterinary and public health fields representing the Commonwealth of Independent States (former Soviet Union) as well as six individuals from the U.S. and Mexico, including Drs. Glenn Plumb and Rick Willer.

In addition to sharing his transboundary experiences in brucellosis control and eradication, Willer emphasized the importance of animal health laboratory networks and collaborative efforts between countries on those networks in order to combat transboundary infections of animals and humans. The Conference group passed a resolution based on discussions on a wide spectrum of special issues related to the transboundary infection of brucellosis. That resolution included a component emphasizing the importance of animal health laboratory networks and that there should be "creation of a network of diagnostic laboratories provided with unified equipment and materials for timely diagnosis of the disease, mutual alerting and providing coordinated response in extreme situations based on interaction of different Ministries and Agencies including the Ministry of Public Health and Social Development, Federal Medico-Biological Agency (FMBA) Ministry of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Defense, frontier services, etc."

As a more detailed update on the progress on the North American Animal Health Laboratory Network collaborative effort, the following information prepared by Frost and Willer was sent earlier this year to the members of their committees as well as other interested

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stakeholders:

As the chairs of the two USAHA Committees that have supported collaboration between animal health laboratory networks in Canada, Mexico and the U.S., we wanted to share with you recent progress on that effort. We are pleased to tell you that after laying the foundation for collaboration between the North American countries (an effort started in 1999) and after the February 2007 "kick-off" meeting of high-level laboratory network representatives from the three countries at Canada's National Centre for Foreign Animal Diseases in Winnipeg, Canada, remarkable progress has been made. At the Winnipeg meeting hosted by Dr. Paul Kitching, the three countries agreed that initial efforts should be directed toward the harmonization of diagnostic tests for three important diseases and formed three working groups to address Vesicular Diseases, Avian Influenza and Bovine Tuberculosis. Each country designated an expert to act as a point person for each Working Group.

Since the meeting in Winnipeg, the Working Groups have met both face-to-face and by teleconference to discuss harmonization efforts. The Vesicular Diseases and Avian Influenza Working Groups met in May 2007 in Mexico City and the Tuberculosis Working Group met in November 2007 in Ames, Iowa. At those meetings, the three Working Groups established a working definition of harmonization – "Ensuring an equivalency of diagnostic test results between laboratories, regardless of protocols practiced by each country" – and drafted a road map with a schedule of activities for harmonization of diagnostic tests. Those road maps include training of laboratory staff, sharing of diagnostic test protocols and inter-laboratory tests of harmonization panels.

The three Working Groups continue to review their progress and to fine

tune various aspects of their established road maps and working schedules for diagnostic test harmonization. The Vesicular Diseases and the Avian Influenza Working Groups met in Huatulco, Mexico, in February 2008 and the Bovine Tuberculosis Working Group plans a June meeting in Ottawa, Ontario, Can. The Working Groups are focusing their efforts on a number of specific diagnostic tests previously agreed upon. As part of their harmonization efforts, the Tuberculosis Working Group plans to take advantage of the results of the comparative purified poultry derivative (PPD) project initiated before collaborative efforts on the North American Animal Health Laboratory Network had begun.

Since the winter 2007 meeting at NCFAD in Winnipeg there has been considerable progress not only with the North American Animal Health Laboratory Network but also other countries, continents, world associations and organizations that have collaborated to form similar laboratory networks. Global collaboration and participation is the ultimate goal.

Submitted by Rick Willer and Bob Frost

Domestic Sheep/Wild Sheep Disease Interaction Working Group Established

The Committees on Sheep and Goats and Wildlife Diseases are collaborating through an newly established working group to develop best management practices for raising domestic sheep and goats on public land where contact with wild sheep may occur.

The Working Group will be co-chaired by Walt Cook, State Veterinarian of Wyoming and Mike Miller, Wildlife Veterinarian, Colorado. Members of the



working group is comprised of representatives of state and federal animal health agencies, wildlife and public land management, the American Sheep Industry and Foundation for North American Wild Sheep (FNAWS) to develop best management practices for raising domestic sheep (and goats) on public lands

where contact between domestic sheep and bighorn sheep may occur.

National Feral Swine Mapping System

Committee on Wildlife Diseases

Feral swine are free-ranging Eurasian wild boar, recently escaped or released domestic swine or their descendants, as well as hybrids of any of these animals. Feral swine are well known for the damage they cause to crops and wildlife habitat and for carrying domestic swine diseases, such as pseudorabies (PRV) and swine brucellosis. Feral swine populations represent a risk for transmission of these diseases to domestic pigs, particularly those in facilities with inadequate biosecurity.

The significance of PRV and *Brucella suis* in the feral swine reservoir has been elevated by the eradication of these diseases from domestic swine in the United States, and a recently implemented real-time map of feral swine distribution now allows animal health officials, wildlife biologists and swine producers to assess the risk that feral hogs currently represent on a local basis. In 1982, the Southeastern Cooperative Wildlife Disease Study (SCWDS) produced a set of maps depicting the nationwide distribution of feral swine and several other species of cloven-hoofed native wildlife that are susceptible to foot and mouth disease. SCWDS updated the feral swine map in 1988 and 2004 to meet the continuous demand for infor-

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mation on the dramatically expanding range of these animals: In 1982, 17 states reported feral swine in 475 counties, and by 2004, 28 states reported feral swine in 1,014 counties.

In response to the need for current data on feral swine distribution, SCWDS has developed the National Feral Swine Mapping System (NFSMS) in cooperation with USDA-APHIS-Veterinary Services. This is an interactive data collection system that can be accessed at <http://www.feralswinemap.org/>. The site was developed to collect and display current distribution data on feral swine in the United States. The home page is available to the public, but a password available only to designated personnel is necessary to access the interactive data collection areas of the site. Operation of the NFSMS is a collaborative effort between SCWDS, the University of Georgia's (UGA) College of Veterinary Medicine's Information Technology Department, and the Center for Remote Sensing and Mapping Science in the UGA Department of Geography.

As with previous maps, personnel with state and territorial natural resources agencies, as well as with USDA-APHIS-Wildlife Services, provide distribution data for the NFSMS. Agency personnel can submit this information at any time, the data are carefully evaluated by SCWDS, and the national map is updated on a monthly basis. The NFSMS allows data collection on a continual basis and the opportunity to differentiate established populations from one-time sightings. Agency personnel simply locate the selected areas on the website map and draw additions to the feral swine distribution directly onto the map using a computer mouse. Populations and sightings are differentiated as shaded areas or single points. Areas where feral swine have been eliminated can be deleted from the map in the same manner.

In addition to providing the national map through the website, SCWDS can furnish state or regional maps on request. Although it was developed primarily for evaluating the local risk of PRV and swine brucellosis posed by feral swine, the NFSMS also can provide critical information for emergency responders attempting to stamp out an incursion of foot-and-mouth disease or other foreign animal disease affecting feral hogs.

Prepared by Joseph Corn for the April 2008 issue of the SCWDS BRIEFS.

Committees on Feed Safety, Food Safety Combine

The Committees on Food Safety and Feed Safety met jointly at the 2007 Annual Meeting, heavily focused on the melamine issue. With the success of that committee session, the chairs requested that the committees meet permanently together, effectively combining them. After review and discussion by the Executive Committee, the decision was made to combine the two under the direction that the newly formed committee would be responsible for addressing issues affecting both feed and food safety. Dr. Daniel LaFontaine will serve as chair, and Dr. Bonnie Buntain will remain as vice chair. The memberships have been combined.

Brucellosis

The Committee on Brucellosis, under direction of Chair Glenn Plumb and Vice chair Claude Barton, has established a new subcommittee to specifically address issues surrounding the Greater Yellowstone Area (GYA).

The purpose of the Subcommittee on Brucellosis in the Greater Yellowstone Area is to provide support and recommendations to the Committee on Brucellosis. Arising from the highly successful

national brucellosis eradication program among domestic livestock and captive wildlife, free-ranging wild elk and bison in the GYA are now recognized as the last reservoir of *Brucella abortus* in the United States. The Subcommittee on Brucellosis in the Greater Yellowstone Area serves as a forum and clearing house for ideas and proposals that have been submitted to it by state and federal members, industry representatives, wildlife interests, researchers, and others.

Additionally, the Special Committee on Brucellosis in the GYA created by Dr. Willer in 2004 has been stood down.

Animal Emergency Management

The USAHA/AAVLD Committee on Animal Emergency Management has remained active since the annual meeting, hosting monthly conference calls and representing industry at a number of meetings.

Most recently, the Committee has heard presentations on:

- Navajo Nation livestock emergency management.
- Updates on DHS organization.
- Avian Influenza tabletop exercise developed for NAHLN labs by CNA Corp.
- American Veterinary Medical Association, Committee on Disaster and Emergency Issues update on history, structure and changes of the Veterinary Medical Assistance Team.
- "Terror and the Food Supply" class being taught at the University of Georgia.
- Experience using CO₂ methods for depopulation relative to emergency management.

Additionally, co-chair Dr. Keith Roehr presented information on carcass management at the Western Region Extension Disaster Education Network meeting in May. ■

OIE Report (cont'd from page 5)

Several chapters and appendices were adopted to update the 2008 Terrestrial Animal Health Code.

III. Aquatic Animal Health Standards Commission (AAHSC). The activities of the AAHSC for the 2007 calendar year were presented by Dr. Eva-Maria Bernoth, president of the Commission. The Commission met twice during the preceding year (October 2007 and March 2008).

IV. Biological Standards (Laboratories) Commission

The activities of the Laboratories Commission for the preceding year were presented by Dr. Steven Edwards, president of the Laboratories Commission. (A much more comprehensive report on the activities of the Commissions is available from Dr. Michael David, Director, Sanitary International Standards Team, USDA, APHIS, VS).

Impressions and personal reflections on the OIE meeting:

1) Since the role of the USAHA representative to the OIE meeting is primarily to observe, I had a more of a detached feeling than most other meetings I attend since only the delegates are permitted to speak. The other members of the US delegation and I sat in the balcony of the hall, overlooking the delegates and listening to the proceedings on headphones (the meeting is simultaneously translated into at least four languages but many times English is the common denominator).

2) With few exceptions, politics is kept at a minimum and science rules the day although I'm sure there were many behind-the-scenes negotiations which did not come to our attention. The only time that controversy almost boiled to the surface concerned a difference of opinion on the issue of containment/buffer zones in

relation to FMD. This was deftly handled by President Barry O'Neal, the Chief Veterinary Officer for New Zealand, by offering to meet with the principal parties in private.

3) The meeting is not run by Robert's Rules of Order but by means of a consensus building process. Motions were never offered- the President just entertained discussion until all opinions were heard and then asked, "Does everyone agree? Is there anyone opposed?" In this way, consensus was almost always achieved.

4) The technical item on the participation of small farmers in animal health programs, presented by Dr. Jeffrey Marriner, was extremely interesting and provocative. Dr. Marriner made the point that 85 percent of all farmers in the world meet the definition of "small". The method employed for this technical study was a survey of 119 countries. OIE allows countries to develop their own system of animal health service but they must be able to describe it. Veterinarians are not able to deliver the services to all small farmers; therefore, community animal health workers in many countries need more involvement- "recognize, accept, train, regulate," according to Dr. Marriner. Ultimately, a resolution on this topic was passed by the OIE at the conclusion of the meeting. This resolution is available on the OIE website, www.oie.int.

5) Dr. John Clifford is the United States delegate to the OIE and this was his second meeting. Each country has two seats in the delegates section and John was often accompanied by either Bruce Knight, Michael David, Dan Sheesley or Peter Merrill. All of us had ample opportunity to discuss the issues of concern with John and the other USDA officials during breaks or at mealtime.

6) Member updates: During this part of the meeting, member countries

have an opportunity to report on activities in their respective country. Interestingly, FMD is still considered to be a minor disease in at least 100 countries because they have more devastating diseases either from a zoonotic point of view or from an animal health standpoint.

7) The head of the Terrestrial Animal Health Standards Commission (the Code Commission), Dr. Alex Thierman, presented a new definition of animal welfare which has been somewhat controversial in this country. We will be discussing this further during our annual meeting in Greensboro in October.

8) Many countries, especially the European Union, vote as a bloc i.e. "the 27 member states of the EU" or "Swaziland and the 51 member states of the African Union."

9) There is an OIE "lab twinning" program to help developing countries gain expertise from more experienced laboratories and their diagnosticians.

10) During the course of the meeting I met veterinarians and animal health officials from: Saudi Arabia, Australia, Canada, Cuba, Afghanistan, Holland, Brazil, Argentina, France, Germany, Japan and others I can't remember. As always, the interactions with other folks during breaks and over meals were the most valuable.

11) I certainly appreciated the opportunity to represent the USAHA in Paris. There is value in continuing this tradition for it not only exposes our incoming President to the development of animal health policy at an international level but it also continues to enhance the visibility of the USAHA to international animal health policy makers. Thanks to all the folks at USDA who helped make this trip enjoyable and a true learning experience. ■

Looking Back at the 111th Annual Meeting



2007 USAHA and AAVLD Presidents Lee Myers and Barb Powers share the podium. AAVLD celebrated its 50th Anniversary in Reno.



J Lee Alley and Linda Ragland were honored with the USAHA Medal of Distinction. Alley was president in 1992 and served as USAHA Secretary from 1999 until retiring in 2007. Ragland has served on the USAHA staff for more than 30 years. Both are still active in USAHA



Francois Elvinger (left) was the recipient of the 2007 APHIS Administrator's Award, presented by Cindy Smith.



AAVLD Secretary/Treasurer Alex Ardans (center) was presented with a special goose to commemorate his retirement. Pictured (from left) are Don Hoenig, Sharon Hein, Ardans, Sharon Hietala, and Don Lein.

(Top Left) Bob Hillman receives the National Assembly award from outgoing NASAHO president Jim Watson.
 (Top right) Ron DeHaven was given a special President's Award from USAHA President Lee Myers and AAVLD President Barb Powers, for his partnership as APHIS Administrator with the organizations.
 (Bottom left) Dick McCapes was presented with a plaque during the Board of Directors Meeting, as he retired from his post as parliamentarian.
 (Bottom right) Lee Myers takes a moment to visit with Glenn Rea. Rea served as USAHA President in 1982 and was welcomed back at the Board of Directors meeting after returning to his first USAHA meeting in several years.



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FAD Books Available

The nation's key reference book on foreign animal diseases, commonly referred to as "The Gray Book," has been revised into its Seventh Edition and is now available from the United States Animal Health Association (USAHA). *Foreign Animal Diseases* is a product of USAHA's Committee on Foreign and Emerging Diseases, with support of a number of individual, government and academic partners.

"The new edition of *Foreign Animal Diseases* brings together the historical knowledge of diseases, with the latest research of new and emerging diseases," says co-editor Corrie Brown, DVM, PhD, DACVP and Professor at the University of Georgia. "As chair of the Committee on Foreign and Emerging Diseases, we are pleased to make the new edition available to the animal

health community."

The book was first published in 1953 by USAHA, then the United States Live Stock Sanitary Association, and is used by veterinarians of all areas, from private practitioners to federal and state officials, students and other animal health stakeholders. The book includes 48 foreign animal diseases (FADs), as well as 34 color pages of diseases in various species. Also included are general considerations when dealing with potential FADs, from sampling and diagnostic procedures to disinfection and disposal management.

"The authors of this book deserve the highest gratitude for their contributions to this great publication," says co-editor Alfonso Torres, DVM, MS, PhD and Professor and Associate Dean of Public Policy at Cornell University.

The book, with a newly designed cover, sells for \$25, including shipping and handling (\$30 for international orders). Order forms are available at www.usaha.org, or by contacting the USAHA office at 816-671-1144 or usaha@usaha.org. □

