

animal agriculture

summer 2007

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR ANIMAL AGRICULTURE

NIAA Conventioneers Hear Four Unique Perspectives on Biofuels and Animal Agriculture at the 'Crossroads'



BILL JONES ADDRESSES BIOFUELS AND LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION DURING THE 2007 NIAA ANNUAL MEETING IN CALIFORNIA

Ethanol and biodiesel, hot topics in rural coffee shops across the nation, were the focus of the Opening General Session of the National Institute for Animal Agriculture's annual meeting in Sacramento, April 2-5, as four speakers presented their unique perspectives on

"Biofuels Energy: Animal Agriculture at the Crossroads."

A California farmer, livestock producer, former politician and cofounder of that state's largest ethanol producing company, Bill Jones, opened the session with "Corn, Cattle and Carbon Credits—A California Perspective" with a positive assessment on the relationship between biofuels and livestock production.

Jones' company is Pacific Ethanol, Inc.

Meanwhile, Midwest economist with special emphasis on the swine industry, Dr. Steve Meyer, Paragon Economics, Inc., predicted that biofuels would negatively affect livestock producers over the next few years, "espe-

cially for pork and poultry producers who are less able to use the ethanol coproduct, DDGS (dried distillers grain with solubles).

Dr. Gavin Meerdink, Professor Emeritus for the University of Illinois College of Veterinary Medicine and now a nutrition consultant, cattle feeder and grain farmer, talked about the use of ethanol and biodiesel co-products and the effect of their nutritional composition on livestock health.

Finally, David Kaluzny, II, president of the National Renderers Association and vice president of Kaluzny Brothers, talked about his industry's perspective of biofuels in general and in particular as the role of rendered animal fats and oils (glycerin) would be used in biodiesel.

All of the speakers agreed that demand for ethanol, whether it's created by federal and state government poli-

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ID•INFO EXPO 2007

U.S. Secretary of Agriculture, Canadian and Mexican Counterparts Invited to Address Premier ID Event

Secretary Mike Johanns, Canadian Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Chuck Strahl and Mexico Minister of Agriculture, Alberto Cardenas have been invited to give their nations' perspective on animal identification at NIAA ID•INFO EXPO 2007.

The annual event, which has become the premier meeting regarding livestock identification and information systems technology, is scheduled for August 28-30, in Kansas City, Missouri, at the Westin Crown Center.

"For the past 2 years the focus of

ID•INFO EXPO has been on the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) National Animal Identification System (NAIS), but producers and industry partners are also using livestock identification and traceability for other purposes besides NAIS and animal health. These uses include Country of Origin Labeling (COOL), food safety, value added programs, and on farm use of ID which we will be addressing as well," states the event's chairman Robert Fourdraine.

His co-chair, Glenn Fischer, points out that because of our close partner-

ships with Canada and Mexico, "it is important that we begin the process of harmonizing all three nation's ID policies and systems. As close trade partners, it is critical that we work together both from governmental and commercial perspectives to ensure North America's competitiveness in an increasingly global livestock market."

"Information regarding the source and attributes of animals entering into the food chain is becoming an impor-

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Shortage of Food Animal Veterinarians: A Call to Action

A year ago the Spring/Summer 2006 Cattle Health Report featured the article "Projected Serious Food Supply Veterinarian Shortage Poses Threat to Industry, Society," that provided an overview of the Food Supply Veterinary Medicine Coalition Report conducted by Kansas State University's College of Business Administration on behalf of various veterinarian organizations. The article noted that, while America's livestock and meat industries have one of the world's best health and safety records, this status "may be threatened in the years ahead because of a projected severe shortage of food animal veterinarians."

Research findings were also published in three articles in the June 1, June 15 and July 1, 2006 issues of the Journal of American Veterinary Medical Association (JAVMA).

Mainstream media, including the Associated Press Wire, New York Times and the Brownfield Network, picked up the information and relayed it to the American public at the time. This spring, the story of the shortage of food animal veterinarians came alive again with a second round of mainstream media in the United States and outside the country.

A headline in the International Herald Tribune read, "Health experts in U.S. say shortage of farm animal veterinarians could lead to disease outbreaks." The first two sentences of the article expanded on the headline: "Public health experts are concerned that a shortage of farm animal veterinarians in the U.S. could lead to disease outbreaks, potentially endangering human health and threatening the nation's food supply. The American Veterinary Medical Association estimates the shortage at a relatively small 4 percent. But health officials say even the small gap increases the potential for diseases to go undetected."

In the same article, Dr. Lyle Vogel, director of the animal welfare division at the AVMA, was quoted, "It's not like the other 96 percent can pick up the slack. Because of the distances and workload of the remaining veterinarians, they just can't fill in that shortage."

Likewise, Robin Schoen, director of the Board on Agriculture and Natural Resources at the National Academy of Sciences, noted that, "We're kind of weakening the whole system. The vet-

erinarian is the front line."

More to Tell

Why is the U.S. media returning to the food animal veterinarian shortage?

"The reason for the second round of media attention is that the problem has not been solved," Dr. Vogel states. "The shortage still exists, and we believe state and federal legislatures should take action to help solve this shortage."

Dr. Vogel says one desired action is for Congress to appropriate money for debt forgiveness or loan repayment for new veterinarians who set up practices or work in the under-served rural areas. He points out that the National Veterinary Medical Service Act was passed in January 2004 but the dollar amount available is extremely low: \$500,000 in 2006 and 2007.

"This is simply not adequate assistance to make that program meaningful," Dr. Vogel elaborates.

According to a 2006 survey, the mean starting salary for veterinary graduates was \$45,546. The mean loan debt for the same graduates was \$105,805. Loan payments on that amount of debt is more than \$1,000/month, requiring average veterinary graduates to spend up to one-third of their monthly salaries on educational debt. The National Veterinary Medical Service Act authorizes the Secretary of Agriculture to establish a loan repayment program for veterinarians who agree to serve in areas of need, including government service. Yes, agencies such as the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service and Food Safety and Inspection Service in the USDA also have experienced difficulty recruiting veterinarians to satisfy staffing needs.

In exchange for additional debt repayment, eligible students could enter into additional agreements with the Secretary to assist the USDA in addressing disease outbreaks, bioterrorist threats or similar emergency situations.

Another reason cited by Dr. Vogel for keeping the shortage of food animal veterinarians "alive" in the mainstream media is to get the public support of federal legislation regarding The Veterinary Public Health Workforce Expansion Act (VPHWEA).

The Association of American Vet-

erinary Medical Colleges has been working very closely with the staffs of Senator Wayne Allard (R-CO) and Congresswoman Tammy Baldwin (D-WI) concerning the introduction of a veterinary workforce expansion. Their bill is similar to the Veterinary Workforce Expansion Act of the last Congress, with a few improved changes that the AAVMC has requested.

This legislation establishes a competitive grant program through the United States Department of Health and Human Services to build capacity in veterinary medical education and expand the workforce of veterinarians.

"We urge people to get involved and call their Congressmen and state legislators," Dr. Vogel states. "Your calls can have an impact and help spur the government into action."

Smith-Kilborne Program

In response to the food animal veterinarian shortage, USDA APHIS resurrected the Smith-Kilborne Program. The program acquaints chosen veterinary students with various foreign animal diseases which potentially threaten our domestic animal population. Upon completion of the course, participating students are asked to share their new knowledge with others at their respective veterinary schools. ▲

animal agriculture

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Johne's Update: Federal Budget Delays Held Up Program Implementation

Johne's plans for 2007 are materializing after being held up in the USDA funding snarl in Congress. Here are the highlights:

Producers - Plans are moving forward for a national producer survey to help identify barriers to participation in the Johne's program, as well as information and/or incentives that are likely to stimulate producer participation in the program. This is part of the Education and Outreach effort of the Johne's Disease Integrated Program (JDIP). Results will be used collaboratively by JDIP, the National Johne's Work Group (NJWG) and the Johne's Education Initiative (JEI) to develop materials that meet identified needs. Other JDIP researchers are evaluating the effectiveness and cost-benefit of currently recommended control practices as well as reviewing components of the current program. This information will be used in looking at the most effective and efficient way to operate the program in the future.

NJWG at NIAA - The meeting of NJWG at the NIAA Annual Meeting focused on needs and future directions for the *Voluntary Bovine Johne's Disease Control Program*. The following priorities were identified:

1) Risk Assessments;

- 2) The Producer Survey;
- 3) The Demonstration Herd Projects;
- 4) Johne's program representatives involvement in producer meetings.

Two other highlights of the meeting were updates on the Johne's "White Paper" being produced by JDIP and the initial economic analysis from the Demonstration Herd project. PowerPoint slide sets from meeting presentations may be found on the JEI site www.johnes-disease.org.

Best Test - Producers have access to a variety of tests for Johne's disease, but all have advantages and disadvantages. No single test is best in all situations. A group of nationally recognized Johne's researchers, working through JDIP, have developed a guide to help veterinarians and producers select the "best test" for a given herd situation. The publication is available at <http://avmajournals.avma.org/doi/pdf/10.2460/javma.229.12.1912>.

Milk ELISA - An increasing number of producers are using milk ELISA testing in their Johne's management or control programs. In February, Prionics and Antel BioSystems, Inc. received USDA approval for the extension of the label use of the Parachek/E test to include diagnosis of Johne's disease in bovine milk samples.

This does not make it an "Official Test," but does validate its use in this manner.

JEI Website - The JEI website www.johnesdisease.org continues to be updated as new information becomes available. Recent additions include added states with "program herd" information and updates on state Johne's contacts.

Johne's Interest Group At 2007 ADSA/ASAS Meeting - Several Johne's related papers and posters are scheduled to be presented at the 2007 Joint Meeting of ADSA and ASAS in San Antonio in Room 216B of the Convention Center from 5 to 6 PM on Tuesday, July 10.

Sheep and Goat Education - Johne's disease affects all ruminants, but programs and research frequently focus on cattle. While this is still the norm, more information is being targeted to sheep and goat producers. For example the University of Wisconsin-Madison College of Veterinary Medicine, JDIP, NJWG and the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection have combined to create two "Producers Courses on Johne's Disease" - one for goats and one for sheep. The "modules" and other educational resources can be found at <http://vetmedce.vetmed.wisc.edu/JDVCP/>.



Pork Board, FFA Get USDA Premises Registration Grants

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has entered into a cooperative agreement with the National FFA Organization and the National Pork Board (NPB) to advance the implementation of the National Animal Identification System (NAIS).

In February, USDA announced \$6 million for cooperative agreements, subject to the availability of funding, to support nonprofit agricultural organizations to promote NAIS, and specifically, to increase participation in premises registration. USDA has awarded funding to NPB and FFA and is reviewing other applications.

FFA will use the cooperative agreement funds to develop and provide NAIS education programs for their current and alumni members as well as promote premises registration across the country.

"The youth involved in the National FFA Organization are the future of agriculture in the United States," said Bruce Knight, undersecretary for USDA's mar-

keting and regulatory programs. "By ensuring the success of NAIS, we are ensuring their future as farmers."

Dr. Larry D. Case, FFA Chief Executive Officer and National FFA Advisor, was equally as enthusiastic about the agreement.

"Together we can combine our talents and resources to educate the agriculture industry about NAIS and to help premises registration," Dr. Case stated.

NPB's Program

Meanwhile NPB, which has been funded for several months is bound and determined to have 100 percent of producer premises registered by the end of the year. To help achieve this goal, NPB has hired three regional swine ID program coordinators. Glenn Slack will cover the eastern region, Bruce Carrothers, the central region and Dallas McDermott, the western region.

"We need boots on the ground that provide facts, and these coordinators will

**pork
checkoff**



provide producers who have not registered their premises with information about the swine ID plan and dispel myths that may be stumbling blocks to premises registration," explains Dr. Patrick Webb, the National Pork Board's Director of Swine Health Programs, Science & Technology

"In addition, the three coordinators will educate and train other trainers to carry the message, and it is imperative that the message carried to producers is fact-based and consistent. In the end, we are multiplying the number of boots on the ground that can reach out and educate producers and have them register their premises." ▲

Clifford Reports NAIS Progress to NIAA ID Committee

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) Veterinary Services Deputy Administrator Dr. John Clifford said the implementation



DR. JOHN CLIFFORD

of the National Animal Identification System (NAIS) was making "excellent progress," citing the fact that nearly 380,000 (397,000 as of June 8, 2009) premises had been registered and 14 animal tracking databases (ATDs) and an animal identification numbering (AIN) system are in place.

Dr. Clifford opened the program for the Animal Identification and Information Systems Committee meeting at the NIAA annual meeting in Sacramento in early April.

Dr. Clifford reported that a grant had been awarded to the National Pork Board to register swine premises as part of a \$6 million fund established for non-profit organizations to conduct premises registration outreach and education. He encouraged other organizations to apply

for grants at www.grants.gov.

He also noted that a Tribal Premises Registration System is now available.

Official ID devices have been defined by USDA, according to Dr. Clifford, with "minimum performance standard and must have on it an AIN, the U.S. Shield and the words 'Unlawful to Remove' imprinted on each device." In addition, radio frequency identification (RFID) devices are allowed.

Regarding RFID devices, he said, "The USDA retains its policy of being 'technology neutral' and relies on industry to recommend ID methods, performance requirements and technology standards."

Dr. Clifford said that APHIS was in the process of printing specifications for sow tags for swine producers and that the Equine Working Group had recommended RFID tags using ISO 11784/85 frequencies. Also, manufacturers' applications for RFID injection transponders for use in horses are now being accepted.

While Dr. Clifford emphasized that APHIS will participate in industry initiatives to facilitate standards for emerging, developing technologies, he also discussed one of the oldest technologies used for animal ID. "Brands have always been a part of animal ID in this country. They are a part of various disease eradication programs such as tuberculosis and

brucellosis, and they will continue to be," Dr. Clifford declared. He said that an official Branding Group had been established and is working to develop how that system can be adopted for NAIS purposes.

Turning to the one AIN system regarding data collection, storage use and distribution, he said that an evaluation system, similar to the one used to develop Animal Tracking Databases (ATDs) is being used. Dr. Clifford also explained that the USDA will be working with industry on this process and will provide guidelines and timelines in the near future for the development of Animal Tracking Portals System (ATPS).

He concluded by reiterating the fact that access to the data through the ATPS is restricted to the following situations:

- Introduction or a confirmed positive test for a foreign animal disease (FAD);
- An animal disease emergency;
- Conducting tracebacks and traceforwards for the previous points.

In the question and answer session which followed the formal presentation, Dr. Clifford once again emphasized the point that NAIS would remain voluntary on the federal level and that with the databases being in private or state hands, producers could be assured that their data would remain confidential. ▲

Brand New NAIS Working Group

The National Animal Identification System (NAIS) has expanded beyond species working groups to issues working groups, and the first issues working group is the brand states working group. Formed by USDA, the brand states working group is comprised of animal brand authorities, state veterinarians and animal identification coordinators from states with existing brand inspection programs for the key purpose of promoting and advancing NAIS.

The first meeting of the working group was conducted in late January, with another meeting scheduled for July. The July meeting will center on interpreting the results of a survey that was sent to the brand states and using that information on a practical basis.

Although brand inspection programs tend to differ from state to state, in scope and in information recorded, states do not customarily use brands as identification for animal health purposes, Bruce

Knight, undersecretary for USDA's marketing and regulatory programs mission area stresses that all brand inspection programs have one commonality: "These groups interact frequently with the very producers affected by NAIS and help shape the program in a way that makes sense for all producers."

Knight explains that USDA's assignment to the working group is to identify opportunities whereby the 15 existing state animal brand programs might complement NAIS. As such, the working group will review the amount of information currently associated with brand inspection programs and determine how that information, if needed, might best be available to state and federal animal health officials.

The working group is also charged with investigating current methods state brand programs use to collect and distribute information. "This charge," Knight states, "is to avoid duplication with NAIS

and to make each effort more efficient for producers."

Co-chairs of the new working group are Sam Wilson, New Mexico Livestock Board Supervisory Inspector; John Picanso, Chief Information Officer, Colorado Department of Agriculture and Dr. John Maulsby, Colorado State Veterinarian.

"As brand inspectors, our job is to protect the livestock that we work for, and we take that job very seriously," co-chair Wilson states. "I believe this newly formed issues working group can add a lot to NAIS."

Wilson stresses that the Western states—the states where brands are a way of life—have been into animal identification for more than 100 years.

"We know identification and livestock, and we listen to our producers and their concerns," Wilson continues. "Livestock owners who brand have a great tracking mechanism in place when it comes to group ID." ▲

Responsible Use of Antibiotics in Food Animals

Activists continue to apply increased pressure on antibiotic use in food-producing animals, and activists' messages are being more than heard. They are being seen. Billboards posted by Chipolte Grill state "Get antibiotics from your doctor, not your beef." Similar Chipolte Grill billboards have been aimed at the poultry industry.

Numerous food service companies have zeroed in on the public's concern with antibiotic use in food animals and have developed their own antibiotic guidelines. Wendy's, for example, has developed its own antibiotic use policies. Under "Managed Use," Wendy's policy states that "antibiotics used to treat food animals must only be administered by licensed veterinarians that have met all training and certification requirements." Its "Human Health" guideline reads "Reduce overall antibiotic usage in food animals, especially when the class of antibiotics used is both a human and food animal medicine. Employ alternative therapies, or use antibiotics not used to treat human disease whenever possible."

Negative and frequently inaccurate headlines, editorials and messages on the Internet feed the frenzy.

Concerned groups have been heard. On Feb. 8, 2007, Rep. Louise Slaughter (D-NY) sponsored H.R. 962, The Preservation of Antibiotics for Medical Treatment Act of 2007, which seeks to cut antibiotic resistance linked to the misuse of antibiotics in animal agriculture. Just four days later on Feb. 12, Sen. Edward Kennedy (D-MA) introduced the same bill in the Senate, S. 549.

Other bills with the same title were introduced in previous Congressional sessions: 109th Congress, H.R. 2562; 109th Congress, S. 742; and 108th Congress, S. 1460. These bills failed to make it through the legislative process.

The 2007 Bill would phase out the use as animal feed additives of antibiotics that are also important in human medicine, including penicillin, within two years. The bill also requires pharmaceutical companies manufacturing and marketing agricultural antibiotics to submit data on the quantity of drugs they sell, along with information on the claimed purpose and dosage for those drugs. The intention is to help public health officials track the implementation of the phase-out.

(Note: To track this bill, visit www.govtrack.us, then click on "New

Bills" under "Track Congress".)

Antibiotic-Resistant Bacteria Concern

The American Medical Association, the Infectious Diseases Society of America and the American Academy of Pediatrics are among the more than 350 health and other groups nationwide that have endorsed The Preservation of Antibiotics for Medical Treatment Act of 2007.

Public concerns about the potential for antibiotic-resistant bacteria to develop in animals and transfer to humans are not a new issue. Concerns can be traced to the late 1960s—just 20-some years after the first antibiotic, penicillin, was available to the general public.

The food animal industry has taken numerous steps to address the concerns.

"Numerous safeguards have been put into place to ensure that antibiotics are used properly in animals and to minimize the potential for antibiotic-resistant bacteria to transfer to humans," states Forrest L. Roberts, Marketing Manager, Beef Business Unit, Elanco Animal Health.

"Judicious use guidelines developed by the American Veterinary Medical Association with the assistance from several species-specific veterinary organizations have also been adopted for each individual animal species to ensure the right drug is used at the right time for the right bacteria."

The guidelines are supported by both the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Food and Drug Administration.

Government surveillance programs serve as early warning systems to monitor changes in antibiotic-resistance levels. Through the National Antimicrobial Resistance Monitoring System (NARMS), the U.S. Department of Agriculture monitors antibiotic resistance levels in animals, and the CCC monitors for changes in levels of antibiotic resistant food-borne human pathogens. Data shows levels of antibiotic resistance in animals have been low and stable, and levels in humans have generally declined since monitoring began in the late 1990s.

Judicious Use of Antimicrobials

The Center for Veterinary Medicine (CVM) emphasizes the judicious use of antimicrobials in food-producing animals and has developed products targeting

veterinarians as a part of its Food Safety Initiative (FSI) Education Program.

CVM guidelines and videos are available for veterinarians on beef and dairy cattle, poultry and swine as well as on aquatic animals at <http://www.fda.gov/cvm/JudUse.htm>. Likewise CVM judicious use of antimicrobial guidelines and videos are available for beef, dairy, pork and poultry producers at <http://www.fda.gov/cvm/JudUse.htm>.

Various national species organizations also have developed judicious use of antimicrobial guidelines that underpin those created by the CVM.

The American Veterinary Medical Association's 15 general principles of judicious use that Roberts referred to gave impetus to the National Pork Board's shared program between pork producers, veterinarians, animal health companies and feed companies. Called Take Care™, the program educates the swine industry on responsible antibiotic use and assures consumers the right steps are being taken. Developed in cooperation with the American Association of Swine Veterinarians as well as other industry organizations, the program consists of five principles for responsible antibiotic use and six specific guidelines for implementation.

"Take Care" defines the standards for responsible use of antibiotics in pork production in a way that is producer friendly and takes into account existing science, animal welfare and animal health," said Dr. Liz Wagstrom, assistant vice president of science and technology for National Pork Board. "It intends to set the standards for antibiotic use in the pork industry before consumer groups or food service companies dictate them for us."

Responsible Food Animal Industry

The Coalition for Animal Health serves as the food animal industry's watchdog and spokesman, overseeing food animal health issues. The Coalition's mission is to support the use of sound science and risk assessment in decision-making by government regulatory agencies and to provide sound scientific information for use in policy changes and debate. This group also responds to public dialog on issues related to animal health.

In addition to monitoring trends in animal health product usage, the Coalition advocates prudent use of animal drugs in food animal production. ▲

Members in the News at the NIAA Annual Meeting

Colorado Veterinarian Wins NIAA Meritorious Service Award



DR. MARVIN BEEMAN RECEIVES THE NIAA MERITORIOUS SERVICE AWARD FROM NIAA CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD R. SCOTT STUART

Dr. G. Marvin Beeman, was awarded the 2007 Meritorious Service Award of the NIAA at the association's annual meeting. Dr. Beeman, who operates the Littleton Large Animal Clinic in Colorado, was recognized for his years of participation in NIAA and especially for his leadership role in creating and establishing NIAA's Equine Committee and resulting equine programs. "I am honored and humbled to be receiving this award. I have, for a long period of time, appreciated the work NIAA does on behalf of the equine industry and was pleased when the equine industry became part of the association," said Dr. Beeman. In making the presentation, past Meritorious Service Award recipient Dr. Donald Lein said, "Dr. Beeman has been extremely active in the horse industry all of his life. Aside from being an internationally-known expert in the equine veterinary field, he has also provided a great deal of leadership to many different organizations including past president of the American Association of Equine Practitioners; past president of the Colorado Veterinary Medical Association; and is a former trustee of the AVMA Professional Liability Insurance

Trust. He currently serves as the president of the Master of Foxhounds Association of America. "In addition to helping organize the NIAA's Equine Committee and being its Chairman, Dr. Beeman has served on the NIAA Board of Directors and has been very heavily involved in the work of the Equine Identification Subcommittee. Dr. Beeman explained, "One of the most beneficial aspects of NIAA has been its leadership in the area of planning for national animal identification. It has done a very good job of bringing together all the groups necessary to further this effort."

Interim NIAA CEO Named Chairman's Award Winner

Dr. Nevil Speer, who served as the Interim Chief Executive Officer of the National Institute for Animal Agriculture (NIAA), was awarded the association's Chairman's Award at the annual meeting in April in Sacramento. NIAA Board Chairman R. Scott Stuart, in presenting the award, praised Dr. Speer for his leadership of the association from June through December 2006. "Dr. Speer made what could have been a very difficult period for the association a period of great progress and growth, including executing the very successful ID•INFO EXPO 2006. We owe him a huge debt of gratitude." While serving NIAA, Dr. Speer continued his duties at Western Kentucky University in Bowling Green as Professor of Animal Science in the Department of Agriculture. As such he teaches, conducts applied research and industry outreach as well as oversees the university's beef unit. He is very active in various other university



DR. NEVIL SPEER

activities including serving on its Senate. In addition, Dr. Speer writes a column entitled "Monthly Market Profile" for CattleNetwork.

N.C. Vet., Livestock Producer Wins NIAA President's Award



DR. KAREN JORDAN RECEIVES THE NIAA PRESIDENT'S AWARD FROM NIAA CEO MICHELE VISE-BROWN

Dr. Karen Jordan, a practicing veterinarian as well as dairy, beef and horse farmer/producer, was named the winner of the National Institute for Animal Agriculture's (NIAA) President's Award for her leadership of the Cattle Health Committee at the association's annual meeting. In presenting the award, NIAA Chief Executive Officer Michele Vise-Brown said, "Dr. Jordan's commitment to animal agriculture industry, NIAA and the Cattle Health Committee is outstanding. She is always willing to go the extra mile." Dr. Jordan is involved in numerous other animal agriculture organizations nationally and in North Carolina. She and her husband, Norman, operate a 60-head Brown Swiss dairy herd and raise Percheron horses. ▲



'State-of-the-Organization' Update by New CEO

Delivering her first "State-of-the-Organization" speech, new NIAA CEO Michele Vise-Brown noted that the association's last fiscal year had been one of "transitions" with staff and program changes as well as significant trends which affected the entire industry.

Vise-Brown called special attention to the success of ID•INFO EXPO 2006

and what it portends for the 2007 event. She also took time to thank Dr. Nevil Speer for his leadership as Interim NIAA CEO.

Looking to the future, Vise-Brown noted that the long-range planning process, Vision 2020 was underway and would continue charting NIAA's course throughout its next fiscal year. ▲

New Board Members Elected, Retirees Recognized

Four industry leaders representing a diverse cross-section of animal agriculture were newly elected to the Board of Directors of the National Institute for Animal Agriculture at the association's annual meeting in April in Sacramento. They were John Adams, National Milk Producers Federation, Dr. Robert Fourdraine, Wisconsin Livestock Identification Consortium, Perry Mobley, Alabama Farmers Federation, and Dr. Cindy Wolf, University of Minnesota College of Veterinary Medicine and sheep producer.

"We are very pleased that these outstanding leaders have agreed to join our board. We are certain that they will help us meet the challenges that face animal



JON CASPERS AND SCOTT STUART HONOR RETIRING BOARD MEMBERS KEVIN MAHER AND JON JOHNSON

agriculture in the years ahead," said Board Chairman R. Scott Stuart.

Current board members who were reelected include Dr. Rafael Seneriz, Elanco Animal Health, and Dr. Annette Whiteford, California Department of Food and Agriculture.

Retiring from the Board this year are

2006 NIAA Annual Report

The NIAA Annual Report for 2006 was distributed for the first time at the



annual meeting in Sacramento last April with a new cover and format. As usual, it covers the year's major events and activities. "It also pays tribute to all of the members who really are the power behind NIAA," explains CEO Michele Vise-Brown. To receive a copy please call or email Jenna Brown at 270-782-9798 or jbrown@animalagriculture.org.

Dr. Lawrence Heider, the Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges, Jon Johnson, Texas Farm Bureau, and Kevin Maher, GlobalVetLink, LC.

In presenting the out-going board members a plaque of appreciation, Stuart said, "These very busy individuals have contributed their time and talent for as long as six years, and we, the industry, owe them a huge debt of gratitude." ▲



2007 NIAA SYMPOSIUM PLANNING COMMITTEE (L-R): ANNETTE WHITEFORD, MICHELE VISE-BROWN, JIM FRALEY, NANCY ROBINSON, TOM COOK, KAREN JORDAN, RIA DEGRASSI, SCOTT STUART AND JAMES MCKEAN



THE HORSE TREADMILL IS DEMONSTRATED DURING A TOUR OF THE EQUINE ATHLETIC PERFORMANCE LAB AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA-DAVIS SCHOOL OF VETERINARY MEDICINE.



DURING THE "WELCOME TO CALIFORNIA" RECEPTION, RIA DE GRASSI, CALIFORNIA SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE KAWAMURA, AND JON CASPERS DRAW FOR DOOR PRIZES.



ANNUAL MEETING GUESTS NETWORK DURING A RECEPTION BEFORE THE NIAA MEMBERSHIP MEETING AND RECOGNITION BANQUET.

NIAA Conventioneers (cont'd from page 1)

cies, the high cost of oil or both, would keep the price of corn at its current price or higher for at least the next two years or until production can catch up with demand. Dr. Meyer observed that the high cost of corn is politically driven by federal and state energy policies rather than market forces. "So as long as the price of oil stays high and our energy policies remain in effect, the price of corn is likely to remain high," he said.

Further, Dr. Meyer predicted that ethanol might very likely be an "event" in agriculture equal to the introduction of soybeans as a U.S. crop or even the widespread adoption of the tractor.

As with many things, California has its own unique situation that is atypical of the rest of the country when it comes to ethanol. Due to the heavy concentration of dairy cattle, the ever-present issues relating to water availability and use and state environmental air quality policies which created carbon credits, ethanol works well in all respects in California. "Yes, the cost of corn is high," concedes Jones, "but the value of wet distillers grain as dairy feed helps offset that expense. And, price signals sent to the American corn farmer will quickly encourage significant corn production."

In fact, Jones predicts that California farmers may become significant corn producers, "and not just for silage."

The use of the coproducts, distillers grains—wet and dried, was discussed by each presenter from their varying perspectives. All agree, to date, that inconsistency in the nutritional content of these products is a problem for livestock and poultry producers. However, with the demand for these products rising, ethanol producers will eventually find ways to make their coproducts more reliable and easier to use.

Dr. Meerdink warned that cattle producers in particular will need to be aware of health issues resulting from distillers grains. For example, they can cause calcium and phosphorus imbalance to the point where cattle develop kidney stones. High sulfur levels can cause several problems including polioencephalomalacia (which is not the polio virus humans can contract, but rather a condition in which the cow's brain is damaged). Another is copper deficiencies because sulfur & copper readily combine rendering the copper unavailable to the animal.

In addition to the difference in nutrient level between whole corn and DDGS products, "what's in the grain comes with the DDGS," Dr. Meerdink explained. This includes mycotoxins such as aflatoxin, ochratoxin and fumonisins, and antimicrobial agents such as virginiamycin. Fumonisin is particularly dangerous in the equine diet.

"One-third—or 11.5 billion pounds—of all the fats and oils produced in the U.S. come from rendered livestock products. The other two-thirds come mainly from soybeans, but also from other grains such as corn and canola." Mr. Kaluzny pointed out. "We have a surplus of these feedstocks which are used to make biodiesel, from whichever source."

PowerPoint presentations from Drs. Meyer and Meerdink and Mr. Kaluzny are available at the NIAA website, www.animalagriculture.org, under the NIAA News tab, click on the second "Zimmcomm" Release. You can view their presentations and hear recorded interviews of each of the four speakers. You can also see their presentations on the 2007 Annual Meeting proceedings tab. ▲

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2007 Annual Meeting Symposium

Impact of Animal Production Safety Practices on the Food Supply



DR. MICHAEL DOYLE

Dr. Michael Doyle of the University of Georgia Center for Food Supply gave the keynote address during the special one-day symposium: "Foodborne Illnesses and Antibiotic Resistance Associated with Zoonotic Pathogens." He noted that the major bacteriological causes of enteric foodborne illnesses were *Campylobacter jejuni*, 2.4 million cases per year; *Salmonella*, 1.4 cases per year; and *E. coli* 0157:H7, 75,000 cases per year. These pathogens are carried in the intestinal tract of wild and domestic animals and humans.

They can be spread by direct or indirect contact but generally by fecal contamination of foods. This may also occur via fertilizers, polluted irrigation or processing water.

Doyle made remarks about a "manure glut," noting that five tons of animal manure is produced annually nationwide for every person living in the U.S. The amount of animal manure is 130 times greater than the amount of human waste produced. Livestock produce about 1.37 billion tons of manure, and 90% of that comes from cattle.

He presented results from a British study showing that 20.8% of fresh sheep manure contained *E. coli*, 8.3%, *Salmonella* and 20.8% *Campylobacter*.

A New York study compared conventional and organic farms in several states noting that there have been increased cases of *E. coli* on fresh produce. This is primarily of ruminant origin – mainly cattle.

He noted that from 1996 – 2005, there have been 8,151 cases of foodborne illness attributed to produce.

Lettuce has been the main problem. The 2006 spinach case was traced to a 50 acre plot in San Benoit County, CA. The plot was in the second year of a 3-year transition to organic production. Most of the ranch was used for cattle grazing (grass-fed beef). A December 2006 case occurred in several states with bagged lettuce, and *E. coli* was found to be similar to *E. coli* in dairy cows in the vicinity.

He mentioned the durability of *E. coli* 0157:H7, noting that it survives on produce – parsley, 177 days; carrots 175 days; onions, 84 days; and leaf lettuce, 77 days. It survives in the soil of parsley fields, 217 days; carrot fields, 196 days; onion fields, 168 days; and leaf lettuce fields, 154 days.

Doyle moved on to public health issues associated with antibiotic resistant foodborne pathogens, noting that Europe's elimination of using antibiotics for growth promotion may have resulted in increased intestinal disease in animals, and thus, increased the use of therapeutic antibiotics with resultant increases in resistance. Denmark, for example, banned antibiotics for growth promotion in 1998. However, by 2004, there was a 41% increase in therapeutic uses. So he cautions that a sweeping rule banning antibiotics for growth promotion may have unintended effects. Minimizing the use of antimicrobials should be weighted

against the likelihood of increasing the level of pathogens in food. Sick animals must be treated for humanitarian reasons. Thorough risk assessments should be used to guide decisions.

Dr. Morris Potter of Food and Drug Administration, Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition (FDA) spoke on "Agricultural and Environmental Implications of *E. coli*."

He also reviewed the California spinach and lettuce situation. He noted that in both instances there were cattle operations adjacent to the problem produce fields. He encouraged attendees to reconsider the terms "Farm Worker" and "Food Worker," noting that the term Food Worker is perhaps more

descriptive because it infers that the workers are producing a food item. He also questioned how clean irrigation water needs to be and how far livestock should be from produce fields. Should we consider irradiation of fresh produce, noting that so many more produce items are now consumed fresh rather than cooked? He made an interesting comment that when nutritionists recommend five servings of vegetables per day that does NOT say five servings of raw vegetables. He suggested areas needing improvement: animal management issues, water quality and safety, processing/packing operations, worker health/hygiene and harvest tools and equipment. Potter commented on problems with ready-to-eat crops in close proximity to livestock waste, suggesting that similar types of bacteria have been found as far as 20 miles from produce fields. But it depends so much on soil type, slope and many other factors. Both Doyle and Potter commented that in many instances, *E. coli* is not just ON the leaf; somehow the organism may also be IN the leaf so that washing is not necessarily going to solve the problem with some raw produce.



MR. BENSON YEE

Mr. Benson Yee, Chair of the California Department of Food and Agriculture Food Emergency Response Unit, described the phases of an environmental investigation: surveillance, epidemiological / laboratory investigation, traceback/traceforward investigation, environmental investigation, farm investigation and final report. He noted that the CDC estimates that for every case of 0157, approximately 20 are unreported. There have been 22 leafy



DR. MORRIS POTTER

Impact on Food Supply (continued from page 9)



DR. BIRGIT PUSCHNER

green outbreaks associated with 0157 in the last 12 years. Of the 22, 12 have been traced to California. Most out-

breaks have been in late summer and early fall. California has developed CALFERT – California Foods Emergency Response Team. Yee commented that it is better to get to know others working in food emergency responses before an emergency occurs.

Dr. Birgit Puschner of the University of California-Davis was the final speaker of the day, and she gave a fascinating presentation: "The Importance of Veterinary Toxicology for Animal Agriculture and the Food Supply." She presented a number of case studies of animal poisonings with pesticides, chemicals, mycotoxins, algal toxins and even poisonous plants. She

demonstrated the difficulty of testing for large numbers of toxins but also showed a number of significant investigative successes. Her main point was that both producers and veterinarians especially need to be more aware that animal illness can be caused by something other than viruses or bacteria, including the materials listed above. ▲

This article was submitted by Lyndon Irwin, PhD, Missouri State University, Chairman of the NIAA Sheep and Goat Health Committee. It was also published in *Sheep Industry News*.

Members in the News • Members in the News • Members in the News

Dr. Ron DeHaven Named Executive Vice President of AVMA

Dr. Ron DeHaven has been named executive vice president of the American Veterinary Medical Association, succeeding Dr. Bruce Little who retired. Dr. DeHaven steps into the position after having served



DR. RON DEHAVEN

as the USDA's top animal health official. He began his career with APHIS in 1979, then was named to lead APHIS in April 2004. Although Dr. DeHaven accepted the AVMA position in late March, he remained at APHIS for a few months to attend the 75th General Conference of the World Organization for Animal Health, May 20-25, in his governmental role and to complete several projects.

Dr. Heider to Retire from AAVMC

Dr. Lawrence E. Heider, executive director of the Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges (AAVMC), has announced his plans to retire in August.

Dr. Heider has been active in NIAA activities and served on the Board of Directors from 2004 - 2006.

"Dr. Heider is a visionary leader who has taken the AAVMC to a new level of prominence," said Dr. Lance Perryman, AAVMC president and Dean of the College of Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences at Colorado State University. "His leadership, especially in workforce development and diversity, will benefit the entire profession for years to come."

Among his many other accomplishments, Dr. Heider oversaw the introduction of federal legislation to increase capacity in veterinary medical education. He also initiated a long range planning exercise, which will assist veterinary colleges as they prepare to meet the challenges of 2040.

Dr. Heider graduated from The Ohio State University School of Veterinary Medicine in 1964 and then practiced for a short while before returning to OSU. In 1991 he became dean of the Atlantic Veterinary College at the University of Prince Edward Island and held that position until he became that university's President. He has been with AAVMC since 2002.

In the future he plans to stay active in organized veterinary medicine and academia, and states, "my retirement from this job isn't the end of a career, it's just the start of a new chapter."

Smith Lands New Role at USDA/APHIS

Cindy Smith has been appointed the USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service's new associate administrator. In her new role, Smith will assist in managing one of USDA's most multi-faceted agencies, charged with defending America's animal and plant resources from agricultural pests and diseases. In making the announcement, Dr. Ron DeHaven, administrator for USDA/APHIS, acknowledged Smith's 28-year career at APHIS and her commitment to "public service, vast knowledge of agency activities and dedication to protecting American agriculture."

Ivy Animal Health at Eli Lilly

Ivy Animal Health, Inc. will become an operating unit of Eli Lilly and Company's Elanco Animal Health division under an acquisition agreement announced May 25 by Lilly. The transaction is expected to close near the end of the second quarter of 2007, contingent upon regulatory approval. Privately held Ivy was established in 1982 and includes four divisions—Ivy Laboratories, VetLife, Ivy Natural Solutions and AgSpan—and will continue to operate from its current location in Overland Park, Kan. Upon deal closing, Ivy will become a wholly owned subsidiary of Lilly. ▲

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For more details on the many benefits of NIAA membership or to receive a DVD about NIAA, visit our website at www.animalagriculture.org or call 270-782-9798.

ID•INFO EXPO 2007 (continued from page 1)

tant prerequisite to trade, both globally and here in our home markets. From enhancing producer efficiency to improving food safety, identification technology is expanding marketing options at all levels of the supply chain. The presentations, discussions and tradeshow exhibits at ID•INFO EXPO will spotlight our progress and the opportunities that still lie ahead that will continue to revolutionize the way we all do business," agree both chairmen.

The format of the 2007 event will change slightly in that it will open with the Keynote General Session, at 1:00 p.m., Tuesday, August 28 and will close at noon, Thursday, August 30.

Following the Keynote Session will be a session devoted to the current status of various North American Traceability Programs, then a reception at the opening of the trade show.

Wednesday sessions will cover "Practical Solutions in Place Today," "Where Will Technology Take Us," "Creating Value from Traceability," and "Gaining Production Efficiencies." The final topics scheduled for Thursday morning are "What Does the Future Hold" and "Bringing It All Together."

The ever-popular trade show, where attendees can see the latest technologies and systems, will be open for a Tuesday 5:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. reception and all day Wednesday beginning at 7:00 a.m., then closing Thursday morning following a continental breakfast. ▲

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