

animal agriculture



THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR ANIMAL AGRICULTURE

YOUR SOURCE FOR INFORMATION, EDUCATION, & SOLUTIONS

SUMMER 2008

Secretary of Agriculture Schafer Addresses NIAA's Annual Meeting Opening General Session



SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE ED SCHAFER PRESENTED DURING THE OPENING GENERAL SESSION.

"When President Lincoln founded the USDA, he called it the 'People's Department' because it affects so many people in so many ways. And it also, in my opinion, was called the

'People's Department' because of the many people who work there," Secretary of Agriculture Ed Schafer told those attending NIAA's opening general session at its annual meeting in Indianapolis on Tuesday, April 1. He added that "it's been a thrill" for him to discover "how greatly the people are committed to agriculture to deliver the mission of USDA."

Secretary Schafer jumped into the theme of NIAA's meeting noting that his first day on the job coincided with the animal mistreatment that occurred in California.

"I can only describe what I saw on the video as shocking and disturbing," he stated. "I think all of you who have seen it will agree that no one wants the animals treated in this manner. We responded at USDA with all of the investigatory and the administrative tools at our disposal."

He explained that a Class II recall of beef was taken rather than a Class I recall since human health was not an issue.

The Secretary stressed that the USDA takes rules and standards of treatment of animals very seriously, and USDA's action "sent some strong messages."

"You know, those rules and regulations are important, and, for meat packers, the message is clear: at USDA the rules matter, and we are going to enforce them," he said. "And our responsibility for food safety isn't always just public health issues; it is the overall operations. And we take that very seriously."

Secretary Schafer underscored the importance of consumer confidence and safety when he stated, "USDA has no more critical issue than enforcing the standards that maintain our consumer confidence and safety in our food supply."

Veterinarian Shortage

The shortage of livestock veterinarians was top of mind for Secretary Schafer.

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Opening General Session Speakers Tackle Animal Care, Well-Being Issues Head-on

The 2008 NIAA Annual Meeting concentrated on "Animal Care and Well Being: Facts not Fiction," with this meeting described by many as one of the best, most successful in NIAA history. The animal care and well-being theme was at the core of messages and meetings held throughout the three-day event.

Animals Past, Animals Future: Development and Direction of the Animal Protection Movement...or What the Fate of Barbaro Tells Us About Animals.

Dr. Wes Jamison of the University of Florida delivered his presentation via telecommunication rather than in person due to a family emergency.

Referring to the public's great concern for and empathy with the race horse Barbaro, Dr. Jamison stressed that the American public's

historical relationship with animals has changed. He said the more urban society has become, the more valued its relationship is with pets and other non-production species, and this affects how all animals are perceived, including those for production agriculture.

Dr. Jamison pointed out that animals are no longer viewed as simply "tools" for labor and food but are quite frequently viewed as members of the family. Today, many consumers dress their pets and see them as having human characteristics. As such, human rights have naturally extended to animals rights, resulting in various animal protection and animal rights movements that go well beyond the scope of "humane practices" adopted in the past.

"The future," Dr. Jamison said, "is bridging

SEE *Opening Session Speakers* | PAGE 9

From the Chairman...

Greetings,

I am honored to serve as your new NIAA Chairman of the Board. Our organization is unique in that it represents the entire base of animal agriculture and can address those "big umbrella" issues that impact the industries that we serve—and do so in a fully representative way.



In many respects, NIAA is the "one-stop-shop" for those issues. It is also important to realize that, because of the diverse backgrounds of the members and the governance group, our discussions represent new and varied perspectives, generating a level of energy and enthusiasm that is not usually found in what I call "silo organizations."

NIAA's administrative structure has undergone significant changes in the past two years. Those changes have resulted in a stream-lined, efficient, hard-working staff led by CEO Michele Vise-Brown. Under Michele's guidance, two-way communication has been, and continues to be, a priority. The recent annual meeting in Indianapolis is an excellent example of the amazing things NIAA's staff of dedicated individuals can accomplish.

Your NIAA Board and Executive Committee have several new faces, and each

individual brings a tremendous skill set to the table. We are fortunate to have Dr. Robert Fourdraine as Vice Chair, Dr. Rafael Señeriz as Secretary and Kevin Kirk as Treasurer, with Dr. Mark Engle as your At-Large member on the Executive Committee.

NIAA has several exciting initiatives in the planning stages, and you will hear more about each of these as they move forward. That said, NIAA is open to doing and being more to animal agriculture. Please send us your suggestions regarding how we can serve the animal agriculture industry by being the #1 Source for Information, Education and Solutions!

Before I close, I would like to acknowledge Scott Stuart for his many years of service to NIAA and, most recently, his leadership role as Chairman of the Board. Scott's efforts have moved the organization to where it is today.

Animal agriculture is more than words to

me; it is my passion and how I earn a living. In addition to being your Chairman of the Board, I am an Animal Science faculty member at North Carolina State University and Associate Director of the Animal and Poultry Waste Management Center. My background in animal agriculture academia has crossed North Carolina, Vermont, Maine, Kentucky and Maryland, with degrees earned from Oklahoma State and Cornell. Species-wise, I was raised on a dairy, poultry (egg and turkey) and sheep farm in Massachusetts, with my professional life extending to all livestock and poultry. Past industry leadership roles include serving as President of the American Society of Animal Science and the American Registry of Professional Animal Scientists. My wife Angie and I live in Cary, N.C.

I look forward to the opportunity to serve NIAA and to interact with you to provide information, education and solutions to animal agriculture.

Secretary of Agriculture Schafer

(cont'd from page 1)

"To succeed in our mission of delivering safe and wholesome food to our consumers in both domestic and international fronts, we need more than good systems," he stated. "We need good people in place as well."

Noting that the USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service is the largest employer of veterinarians in the United States, Secretary Schafer said USDA shares the concern about the decline in large animal veterinarians. As such, he explained that the USDA is working to find the "right mix of incentives" to help persuade veterinarians to choose careers in government services and in large animal practices.

He also acknowledged that the government is working with Congress to implement the National Veterinary Medical Services Act that creates a loan repayment program at the federal level.

"But the final solution in this challenge is going to take more than that," he stated. "It's going to take experimentation at the state level and the active involvement of educators, industry leaders and organizations like yours (NIAA) before we come up with a comprehensive set of approaches that really work."

NIAA, NAIS

Secretary Schafer recognized NIAA for its support of USDA and the National Animal Identification System. And, he made it clear that USDA "remains strongly committed to moving forward with the best (animal identification) program on a voluntary basis, letting all the players of the industry continue to help us create the best possible platform."

He then pointed out the value of having a program such as NAIS in place: strengthening the safeguards for the domestic food supply and enhancing the appeal of American beef, pork, poultry and dairy products abroad.

"One of the best ways to resolve trade disputes is by bringing internationally accepted scientific standards to bear," Secretary Schafer stated. "Sound science can open doors, remove roadblocks and pave the way for future growth in trade."

Another tool for bringing greater access to animal and horticultural products abroad, the Secretary of Agriculture told attendees, are free trade agreements. Citing that agricultural exports to Canada and Mexico have more than doubled in the 14 years since NAFTA agreements took effect, Secretary Schafer said exports to these two countries are expected to increase from \$25 billion to \$30 billion this year alone.

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Michele Vise-Brown
Chief Executive Officer

Pamela Meador
Director of Operations

Teres Lambert
Director of Communications

Gale Johnson
Director of Special Programs

Anne Mann
Event Coordinator

**Ginny Arterburn, Jenna Brown
and Cora Newsom**
Staff Assistants

Kelly Gill
Graphic Designer

1910 Lyda Avenue • Bowling Green, KY 42104
Phone: (270) 782-9798 • Fax: (270) 782-0188
Email: NIAA@animalagriculture.org
Web address: www.animalagriculture.org

ID•INFO Workshop Results in NAIS Business Plan Comment Document to USDA



ID•INFO WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS LISTEN TO UNDER SECRETARY BRUCE KNIGHT DISCUSS THE SYNERGY OF NAIS AND COOL.

More than 170 individuals—from production agriculture to federal, state and local governments, livestock and breed associations, private industry and academia—gathered in Indianapolis, Ind., on April 3 for the 2008 ID•INFO Workshop to provide input regarding the USDA Draft National Animal Identification System (NAIS) Business Plan's scope, direction and vision. At the conclusion of the workshop, consensus was drawn, and the ID•INFO Committee Chair Glenn Fischer, Allflex USA Inc., and Vice Chair Victor Velez, California Department of Food and Agriculture, then developed a "NAIS Business Plan Comments" document that was sent to USDA on April 15.

The final eight comments emerged after two key workshop sessions: panel presentations by representatives of state, industry and information systems, sharing their perspectives of the plan, and four afternoon workshop sessions involving all attendees.

Each afternoon workshop session addressed a different topic, and participants were free to choose their session of interest: 1) "How can livestock services providers—i.e. veterinarians, ear tag companies and such—successfully implement the NAIS Business Plan standards?"; 2) "What challenges and opportunities are present with integration of NAIS standards into state and state-federal cooperative animal health programs?"; 3) "Is there common ground between the NAIS and COOL that can be leveraged for successful implementation of national disease traceability?"

and 4) "Are the key outcomes and the timelines in the NAIS Business Plan practical and achievable in the current animal agriculture industry?"

"Group participants did not hold back," Vice Chair Velez stated. "They were open and honest in their approach to the Business Plan. These individuals see the value of NAIS and want the plan to succeed."

Final Document

"The document sent to USDA represents a cooperative effort of the National Institute for Animal Agriculture," ID•INFO 2008 Chairman Fischer states. "The document does not contain an exhaustive review of all comments received at the workshop. Rather, it contains broad consensus views that were put forth."

"The paper focuses on eight comments to the USDA Draft NAIS Business Plan and final comments regarding use of NAIS for providing a 'safe harbor' for NAIS participants."

The eight comments listed in the paper include:

1. There remains broad industry support for continued funding of NAIS; USDA needs to stick to the plan and maintain integrity of published target dates and program elements.

2. For the NAIS to reach its stated goals, timeframes for mandatory implementation need to be reconsidered.

3. The focus of plan must remain on the goal of 48-hour disease traceback, while respecting the needs and practices of all

stakeholders.

4. Technology neutrality is problematic in executing the plan; USDA must respect the direction of the Species Working Groups in determining allowable ID devices for recognition as official devices.

5. USDA must continue to support the development of the market infrastructure needed to execute the plan.

6. Further effort must be expended to ensure proper data collection standards.

7. The segregation of public vs. private data must be clarified under the plan.

8. Expand the scope of USDA messaging to include for-profit stakeholders; provide clear and consistent messaging over time.

"Comments by Under Secretary Bruce Knight at the workshop and the release of the AMS Business Plan to advance NAIS that was released just prior to the workshop made convergence of NAIS and country of origin labeling (COOL) a topic of discussion at the workshop," Fischer added.

"Under Secretary Knight and other USDA staff also discussed plans to allow for the granting of 'safe harbor' for COOL compliance to all NAIS participants. This action was clearly seen by workshop attendees as accelerating interest and involvement with the plan. As such, workshop attendees wanted to provide USDA with certain considerations."

As such, the document submitted to the USDA on April 15 stated "USDA is encouraged to continue the effort to bring elements of these programs (NAIS and COOL) together, being cognizant of the following considerations:

1. State stakeholder flexibility should be recognized for determination of COOL compliance.

2. Provision for recognition of non-840 official devices for "safe harbor" status when used under a PVP or QSA program.

3. Complete rules for identification of imported animals—including mandatory hot branding for cattle—need to be published.

4. How will imported animals' information be treated? Will such information on ownership be subject to Freedom of Information Act?

The complete NAIS Business Plan Comments document resulting from the 2008 ID•INFO workshop and submitted to USDA is available online at www.animalagriculture.org.

Johne's Disease Control

Integrating Cutting Edge Research Into On-farm Practice

The Johne's Disease Integrated Program (JDIP) hosted a workshop as part of its 4th Annual Conference in East Lansing, Mich., in mid April, with researchers covering a variety of topics—from testing and best management to vaccination, super-shedders and diagnostics and strain differentiation. Workshop presentations were a part of JDIP's goal to shorten the time between discovery research and application of the findings in the field.

Johne's disease, a progressive contagious bacterial disease of the intestinal tract that affects ruminants, is caused by the bacterium *Mycobacterium paratuberculosis*, a relative of the bacterium that causes tuberculosis in cattle.

Animals found to have the least resistance to the bacterium are calves three months of age and younger. That said, however, research also shows that older cattle can become infected.

"Research has brought many, many good Johne's tests to the table," stated Dr. Mike Collins, School of Veterinary Medicine, University of Wisconsin-Madison. "Which test is best was answered by research conducted by the 'Best Test Team.'"

This "Best Test Team," Dr. Collins elaborated, consisted of researchers from five universities: Colorado State University, Texas A&M University, University of California-Davis, University of Minnesota and University of Wisconsin. The team's objective was "to clearly define the best course of action regarding testing for paratuberculosis in dairy and beef herds by business type—commercial or seedstock, paratuberculosis infection status and infection prevalence."

Dr. Collins shared that the "best" test has many considerations. Among these are economics of industry, paratuberculosis prevalence in the industry, purpose for testing, predictive value of positive and negative tests, consequences of positive or negative results and accuracy, cost and speed of test.

The team identified eight reasons veterinarians might need to test a dairy or beef herd for Johne's disease: 1) to classify a herd as infected; 2) to estimate within-herd prevalence; 3) to control the disease; 4) surveillance; 5) eradication; 6) to confirm a clinical diagnosis in a herd with no confirmed Johne's disease cases; 7) to confirm a clinical diagnosis in known infected herds; and 8) bio-security—to test an animal before it enters the herd.

"It is important to understand why we should test," Dr. Collins stated. "It also must be emphasized that cows are leaving herds way too fast—before diagnosis.

"Producers need to know if they have

Johne's or another problem. They need to know why their cull rate is increasing. Testing will tell them the 'why.'"

To learn about testing, Dr. Collins urged veterinarians to read "Consensus recommendations on diagnostic testing for the detection of paratuberculosis in cattle in the United States" which appeared in the Dec. 15, 2006 issue of JAVMA, Vol. 229, No. 12.

Managing Johne's

Dr. Scott Wells, associate professor in the Department of Veterinary Population Medicine, University of Minnesota, reminded attendees that *Mycobacterium paratuberculosis* is a "very hardy organism."

"Transmission can be between herds with the introduction of infected animals or within herds," Dr. Wells stated. "The most prevalent transmission method within herds is fecal-oral. Two other common transmission methods are via colostrum and milk to calves and transplacental.

"If there's fecal material around anywhere, the opportunity for the organism's presence is there—and it's a risk."

To help control Johne's disease, Dr. Wells urged individuals to take a proactive approach through implementing various management practices.

Practices that top Dr. Wells' management practice lists were removing clinically ill cows, calving cows in a clean area, raising replacement heifers separately from older cows and only adding low-risk herd replacements—perhaps even limiting herd additions to animals from a test-negative herd.

Dr. Wells also advises dairy producers to take a "one dam, one calf" approach and to feed calves either milk replacer or pasteurized milk.

"Minnesota's Johne's Disease Demonstration Herd Project covers six years of work and shows that management practices can reduce prevalence of Johne's by as much as 50 percent," Dr. Wells stated. "That change can definitely have a positive influence on a producer's bottom line."

Dr. Wells underscored the fact that there are lots of management practices that producers can implement that can help control Johne's disease. He urged producers to learn more about Johne's by talking to their veterinarians and to become involved in the Voluntary Bovine Johne's Disease

Control Program in their state.

Researchers have found that it takes only a tiny bit of contaminated feces to infect herd mates and newborn and young calves. In fact, a calf can become infected from simply sucking on a contaminated teat.

Dr. Bob Whitlock, University of Pennsylvania and former co-chair of the National Johne's Working Group for 12 years, stressed that the single most significant hazard of maintenance and spread of infection are the subclinical animals—those that have the bacterium but have yet to exhibit clinical signs. That's definitely a piece of the Johne's challenge as animals infected with *M. paratuberculosis* tend not to show clinical signs until they are adults.

As infected animals progress through the disease, the disease advances, and shedding of the bacterium increases.

In his "Diagnostics and Strain Differentiation" presentation, Dr. Srinand Steevatsan of the University of Minnesota pointed out that only five percent of animals progress to the critical stages of the disease—waste away despite a normal appetite—where producers might just say "Hey, she must have Johne's disease." By then, numerous animals in the herd have been infected and may not be reaching their genetic potential, which have a negative influence on a producer's bottom line.

"The overall challenges in Johne's disease diagnosis is unified by the fact that subclinically infected animals are the single most significant hazard of maintenance and spread of infection," Dr. Steevatsan said. "The advent of molecular typing of *M. paratuberculosis* may allow researchers to describe strain-specific variation in clinical phenotypes such as virulence, growth characteristics, immunogenicity and transmissibility."

Education

Dr. Collins shared information about a key component of a successful Johne's program: education of veterinarians and producers.

Because veterinarians are extremely busy, and time is money, an online course for Johne's certification is available and customized for each state. The Online Johne's Disease Veterinary Certificate Program has seven segments: introduction and orientation; Johne's disease basics; Johne's disease testing and test interpretation; dairy herd assessment for Johne's disease; beef herd assessment for Johne's disease; Johne's disease rules and regulations—state information; and update and review. Some states require a clinical proficiency verification, and this is available online for veterinarians in those states.

"Online course participants visit five different virtual dairies and receive a score," Dr. Collins explained. "This online program delivers a uniform base of knowledge and has consistent

Johne's Focus of Fourth NAHMS Study of U.S. Dairies

At least one-fourth of U.S. dairy operations may have a relatively high percentage of Johne's-infected cows in their herds. This was one item brought forth at the conclusion of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Animal Health Monitoring System's (NAHMS) fourth study of the U.S. dairy industry, Dairy 2007.

Dairy 2007 focused on Johne's disease, a disease caused by *Mycobacterium avium* subspecies paratuberculosis (MAP) and involved 17 of the nation's major dairy states. West region states included California, Idaho, New Mexico, Texas and Washington. East region study states included Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Vermont, Virginia and Wisconsin. The 17 states involved in the study represented 79.5 percent of U.S. dairy operations and 82.5 percent of U.S. dairy cows.

The two key objectives of Dairy 2007 were:

1. To estimate herd-level prevalence (number of herds infected with MAP) in the United States.
2. To compare and evaluate management

Johne's Disease Control

(cont'd from previous page)

messaging, and veterinarians can become certified anytime, anywhere. There's no loss of income from attending a course since it's online."

An Online Johne's Disease Producer Education Course allows producers to learn about Johne's at the click of a mouse in their own home. The course can be accessed at <http://www.vetmedce.org/index.pl?id=110337>. Producer modules cover all species, with the dairy version also having a Spanish module.

Dr. Ernest Hovingh, Department of Veterinary and Biomedical Sciences, Pennsylvania State University, urged producers and veterinarians to partake in another online event: a survey.

"Our goal is to find out what engages, motivates, deters and frustrates producers and veterinarians with Johne's Disease certification programs," Dr. Hovingh said. He explained that a survey had been mailed to a stratified random sample of dairy farms across the country, with the online survey extending that reach.

"The results of the survey will be used to develop outreach strategies, to target spending in appropriate areas and to guide national funding research and technology transfer efforts to maximize the participation of herds in voluntary bovine Johne's Disease control efforts," he summarized.

The online survey can be accessed at <http://online.survey.psu.edu/johnesdisease>. ■

practices related to perceived risks of MAP transmission between the previous NAHMS dairy studies.

The following information is a summary of Dairy 2007.

Management Practices

- 31.7 percent of dairies surveyed in Dairy 2007 participated in a Johne's disease certification or control program.
- Although separating calves from cows and their manure immediately after calving reduces the potential of newborn calves ingesting MAP, only 55.9 percent of producers in the Dairy 2007 study removed calves immediately after birth.

Bringing animals onto an operation can introduce new diseases or add to the disease burden of the herd. Careful scrutiny of the source of new additions and a brief isolation or quarantine once the animals are on the dairy are good management practices.

- Less than one in five operations, 17.2 percent, that brought cattle onto the operation during the previous year required herd-of-origin information regarding MAP-infection status.
- 11.4 percent of operations tested individual animals brought onto the operation.
- A higher percentage of medium operations, 16.6 percent, tested purchased animals compared to large operations, 7.2 percent.
- For operations that did not individually test animals brought on, 22.3 percent reported that testing had been done by the herd-of-origin.
- For operations that did not individually test animals brought on, 28.6 percent reported that MAP infection was not a concern to their operation.

Johne's Testing

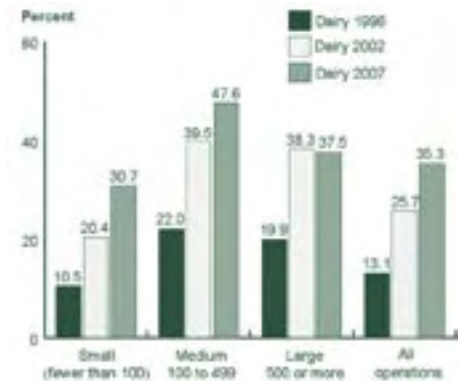
Organism detection and measuring antibody response are the two main methods used to test for MAP infection. During the 12 months prior to the Dairy 2007 study:

- A higher percentage of operations with 100 to 499 cows performed any testing for Johne's disease compared with small operations with fewer than 100 cows: 46.7 percent vs. 30.7 percent. This finding was consistent with the Dairy 1996 and Dairy 2002 studies.

Confirmed Johne's Disease in the Herd

- More than two of 10 operations—22.7 percent—reported Johne's disease was confirmed in their herd during the previous 12 months.
- 17.4 percent of small operations—fewer

Percentage of Operations that Tested for Johne's



than 100 cows—confirmed Johne's disease in their herds during the previous 12 months.

- 35.0 percent of medium operations—100 to 499 cows—confirmed Johne's disease in their herds during the previous 12 months.
- 34.1 percent of large operations—500 or more cows—confirmed Johne's disease in their herds during the previous 12 months.
- 23.6 percent of operations in the East region confirmed Johne's disease compared to 12.8 percent in the West region.

Johne's Vaccination Practice

- The percent of operations that normally vaccinate heifers against Johne's disease has remained essentially unchanged since 1996, with 5.0 percent of operations reporting this practice in 2007.

Environmental Sample Testing, Culture Results

To establish Johne's herd-level prevalence for the Dairy 2007 study, six composite environmental samples were taken from each of 524 participating operations. The environmental samples were taken from six different adult-cow areas where manure accumulates. Positives were confirmed by PCR methods.

- MAP was isolated from at least one environmental sample on 68.1 percent of operations during the Dairy 2007 study.
- Prevalence of MAP increased as herd size increased.
- There were no differences in MAP prevalence between operations in the West and East study regions.

The full Dairy 2007 report can be obtained by contacting: USDA/APHIS/VS/CEAH, NRRC Building B, M.S. 2E7, 2150 Centre Ave., Fort Collins, CO 80526-8117. Phone: 970.494.7000, E-mail: NAHMS@aphis.usda.gov, <http://nahms.aphis.usda.gov>. ■

NIAA Presents Three Members with Distinguished Awards



NIAA'S MERITORIOUS SERVICE AWARD WENT TO DR. RICK SIBBEL, CENTER. PICTURED WITH DR. SIBBEL ARE R. SCOTT STUART, PAST BOARD CHAIRMAN, LEFT, AND DR. LEONARD BULL, NEW BOARD CHAIRMAN.

The National Institute for Animal Agriculture honored three outstanding individuals at its annual meeting and banquet on Tuesday, April 1, in Indianapolis, Ind. These individuals were handpicked from among NIAA's membership.

Dr. Rick Sibbel, Director of Technical Services, Global Ruminant, Schering-Plough Animal Health, was presented the NIAA's highly regarded Meritorious Service Award, which is given in recognition of leadership, dedication and

contributions to the organization and animal agriculture.

Presented the organization's coveted President's Award, which recognizes an NIAA committee chairman for exemplary leadership and dedication to NIAA, was Dr. Jerome Geiger, U.S. Health Assurance Veterinarian with



DR. RAFAEL SEÑERIZ, CENTER, WAS PRESENTED THE NIAA CHAIRMAN'S AWARD BY 2007 BOARD CHAIRMAN R. SCOTT STUART, LEFT, AND DR. LEONARD BULL, 2008 BOARD CHAIRMAN.

PIC North America.

The Chairman's Award, the organization's volunteer of the year award given in recognition of unselfish dedication and tireless devotion to the advancement of NIAA, was given to Dr. Rafael Señeriz, Senior Research Scientist for Elanco Animal Health.



DR. JEROME GEIGER RECEIVES THE NIAA PRESIDENT'S AWARD FROM NIAA CEO MICHELE VISE-BROWN.

ANNUAL MEETING



THE VISION 20/20 COMMITTEE WAS RECOGNIZED FOR THEIR EFFORTS. PICTURED FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: KEVIN MAHER, DR. NEVIL SPEER, TOM COOK, DR. ANNETTE WHITEFORD, DR. LEONARD BULL, R. SCOTT STUART, AND DR. PETER TIMONEY.



DR. JEROME GEIGER SERVED AS NIAA'S ANNUAL MEETING CHAIRMAN AND DID A BANG-UP JOB.



TRENT LOOS CAPTIVATED ANNUAL MEETING BANQUET ATTENDEES WITH HIS WORDS OF WISDOM.



RETIRING COMMITTEE LEADERS WERE RECOGNIZED FOR THEIR DEDICATION. PICTURED FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: DR. PAUL KUBER, DR. ROBERT FOURDRAINE, PERRY MOBLEY, DR. CHRIS ASHWORTH, AND DR. LEONARD BULL.

NIAA Elects Key Officers, Board Members at Annual Meeting

Dr. Leonard Bull, professor of animal science and associate director of the Animal and Poultry Waste Management Center, North Carolina State University, was elected Chairman of the Board of Directors of the National Institute for Animal Agriculture during the organization's annual meeting.

Other individuals elected to NIAA's five-member executive committee were Dr. Robert Fourdraine, chief operating officer, Wisconsin Livestock Identification Consortium, Vice Chairman; Dr. Rafael Señeriz, researcher, Elanco Animal Health, Secretary; Kevin Kirk, Michigan Department of Agriculture, Treasurer; and Dr. Mark Engle, director of health assurance and transportation, PIC North America, member At-Large.

Five new board members were elected to serve on NIAA's board of directors. New board members include John Adams, beef producer and president of Rock Croft Farm Services; Dr. Tony Forshey, state veterinarian, Ohio Department of Agriculture; Dr. David Meeker, vice



RETIRING NIAA CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD R. SCOTT STUART, RIGHT, PASSES THE GAVEL TO NEWLY ELECTED CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD DR. LEONARD BULL.

president, Scientific Services, National Renderers Association; Dr. Richard Meiring, clinical professor, Veterinary Preventative Medicine, The Ohio State University College of Veterinary Medicine; and Joy Philippi, pork producer and immediate past president of the National Pork Producers

Council. Dr. Meiring will join the Mississippi State University College of Veterinary Medicine as a clinical professor of Veterinary Pathobiology and Population Medicine on July 1, 2008.

The NIAA membership also voted to include the immediate past Chairman as an ex-officio member of its board of directors. As such, retiring NIAA Chairman of the Board R. Scott Stuart of the National Livestock Producers Association will serve in that capacity for the coming year.

"NIAA is honored to have individuals of this high caliber on its board," states Michele Vise-Brown, NIAA chief executive officer. "NIAA board members give freely of their time, talent and knowledge to serve animal agriculture—the beef, dairy, swine, sheep, goat, equine and poultry industries. They are the decision-makers regarding resolutions brought forth by the association's species-based and issues-based committees, and it is these resolutions that address challenges within animal agriculture and help bring solutions that advance animal agriculture." ■

HIGHLIGHTS



ATTENDING THE NIAA ANNUAL MEETING ALLOWS FOR THE GREAT OPPORTUNITY TO NETWORK, BUILD CONSENSUS, AND ADVANCE SOLUTIONS WITHIN ANIMAL AGRICULTURE.



ANNUAL MEETING ATTENDEES HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO LISTEN TO ELEVEN SPECIES AND ISSUES-BASED COMMITTEES SPREAD OUT OVER A DAY AND A HALF FOLLOWING THE OPENING GENERAL SESSION.



NIAA COMMITTEE LEADERS DEVELOPED OUTSTANDING COMMITTEE AGENDAS INCORPORATING ANIMAL CARE AND WELL-BEING (SUCH AS THE CATTLE HEALTH COMMITTEE VICE CHAIR, JON JOHNSON.)



NIAA RETIRED BOARD MEMBERS WERE RECOGNIZED WITH A PLAQUE OF APPRECIATION FOR THEIR MANY YEARS OF SERVICE TO THE ORGANIZATION. LEFT TO RIGHT; TOM COOK, JIM FRALEY, DAVID MILLER, R. SCOTT STUART (NOT PICTURED, JON CASPERS)

EXTRA! EXTRA! Read All About It! Get Your 2008 NIAA Annual Report

The 2008 NIAA Annual Report was distributed for the first time at the Annual Meeting in Indianapolis.

"It has a fresh new look and new format," says CEO Michele Vise-Brown. "It highlights the outstanding year (2007) that NIAA had and is a tribute to NIAA's membership." To receive a copy please email niaa@animalagriculture.org and we'll send you one today!



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Meril Ltd.



National Pork Board



Pfizer Animal Health, Inc.



Contributors

- American Association of Avian Pathologists
- American Dairy Association of Indiana
- Cargill
- Dairy Farmers of America, Inc.
- Hawkeye Steel Products, Inc.
- Indiana Wine Grape Council
- Indiana Horse Council
- Livestock Marketing Association
- National Livestock Producers Association
- National Pork Producers Council

Opening Session Speakers

(cont'd from page 1)

the legitimacy gap. On one side you have modern production methods such as confinement, current slaughter processing procedures and accepted consumption patterns of livestock products. On the other side of the gap you start with consumption, then tend towards humanizing animals and finally making them a part of the family."

"Therefore, meat consumers face enormous dissonance—or lack of a harmony. On the one hand, they enjoy eating meat, but on the other hand they view most animals anthropomorphically—or as human-like. They won't stop eating meat, but will increasingly support 'innocuous' regulations and legislation to manage dissonance."

To solve this problem, Dr. Jamison said the livestock industry must change society or change industry practices—the latter of which is the only possible course of action—and create new marketing approaches coupled with alliances.

Animal Care: Diverging Ethical Perspectives

Dr. W. Ray Stricklin, University of Maryland, began his presentation by explaining why many Americans and Europeans have divergent views on animal welfare. He explained that, historically, the Europeans have approached the study of animals—natural history—from an evolutionary point of view: Both human and animal relationships have evolved; they are both part of nature. He said a sow must rut, and a cow must eat grass as it's part of their heritage and has evolved through many generations of humans and other species. It is their right, naturally.

"This is called 'ethology,' and it is based on evolution," Dr. Stricklin stated.

But Dr. Stricklin noted that today's U.S. mindset is more to control nature for the benefit of man. Thus animal behavior is less a matter of instinct and more a matter of sciences such as preventive medicine, optimal nutritional diets, etc.

"We call this 'behaviorism,' and it is based on physiology," Dr. Stricklin stated.

"These are deep-rooted differences and help one understand why we approach animal care and welfare differently on either side of the Atlantic."

Regarding science and ethics, Dr. Stricklin said, "Science deals with what is; ethics deals with what ought to be. Animal welfare, ultimately, is what ought to be but should be in harmony with the knowledge of what is."

He also said that studies in the U.S. have shown that women tend to align themselves more closely with the European "ethics" or "justice" approach while men are more likely to favor the "behavioral" or "care" perspective. Urban versus



W. RAY STRICKLIN

rural attitudes tend to break down the same way, respectively.

Dr. Stricklin says the goals of U.S. animal agriculture should be to minimize costs in terms of animals, humans—health, worker safety, etc.—and to maximize the benefits to each party in a balanced way.

He also told the audience, "Don't give up the high ground. Advocate ethics, which means doing the right thing based on science. Address the issue of animal 'quality of life' and, finally, why not create Farmers for Ethical Treatment of Animals (FETA)?"

The U.S. Political Arena: On the Table and On the Horizon

Steve Kopperud of Policy Directions Inc. shared his take on the U.S. political scene in relation to animal agriculture.

Kopperud, a professional lobbyist, said animal agriculture, aided by specific species groups, was able to repel various efforts by animal rights and welfare groups to hinder production in the current Farm Bill which is yet to be enacted. The most serious threat, Kopperud said, came when House leadership agreed with the Humane Society of the United States to hold hearings on animal welfare.

"We in animal agriculture decided the time was right to make lemonade out of lemons," he stated. "We brought in our best spokespeople—actual producers—to explain not only how they take excellent care of their animals, but also to point out that, since their livelihoods depend upon it, it would be stupid not to give their animals the best possible care."

"This common sense approach worked beautifully."

Kopperud cited the Humane Society as being the largest promoter of various animal welfare schemes that could seriously hurt animal agriculture, adding that this group is also very well financed. He discussed the group's initiative

regarding the elimination of U.S. horse slaughter, noting that the society offered no solution to the problem of the 100,000-plus horses that have been turned loose with no care or protection.

"Looming on the horizon is an effort to make U.S. animal transportation of animal regulations identical to those of Europe," he stated.

Among those provisions would be to make drivers of transport vehicles "animal welfare officers."

"In other words, the drivers would decide if an animal is fit to travel, not owners," he explained. "Drivers would decide when livestock must be off loaded for feed, water and exercise."

Kopperud stressed that the country's "current 28-hour rule has worked very well in this



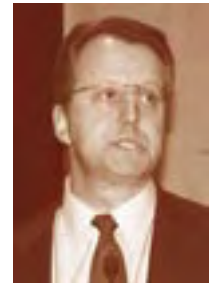
STEVE KOPPERUD

country for many years" and said he sees no need for new regulations in the United States.

He concluded by reminding the NIAA audience that producers are the best spokespersons because of their knowledge and credibility.

How Do We Maintain Our Social License to Protect Our Freedom to Operate?

Charlie Arnot, CMA Consulting, told attendees that modern agriculture, including animal production, has shifted from an agrarian to an industrial model in the last half of the 20th Century. As such, he maintains that, to maintain its social license to operate freely, the new forms of animal agriculture must change the way it does things—particularly communicate.



CHARLIE ARNOT

Arnot pointed to the financial industry, which as a result of the sub-prime mortgage problem, is in the process of losing its social license to operate freely and will likely face new, tough regulations and restrictions in the way it does business.

He urged the poultry and livestock industries to understand that "NGOs"—or Non-Government Organizations—are America's most trusted sources of information. He noted that the category of "people like me" or "ourselves" rate as most trusted source of information while traditional information sources such as the federal government, churches and even scientists are no longer at the top of the public's "most trusted" list.

Further, the NGOs of the world have recognized that the way to get things done most efficiently is not through government but through international brands or the goods and services sold by global corporations.

"These companies are usually happy to have the 'Green Peace' seal of approval on their products and ads," he said.

Arnot said animal agriculture must give its customers, policy makers, community leaders and consumers "permission to believe" that contemporary animal agriculture aligns with their values and expectations, or animal agriculture risks losing its social license and freedom to operate.

"We have to build and communicate an ethical foundation for our activity and engage in value-based communications if we want to build that trust that protects our freedom to operate," he concluded.

Additional annual meeting highlights and information shared at NIAA's many sessions can be found at www.animalagriculture.org. ■

news briefs news briefs news briefs news briefs news briefs

Meat Industry Requests Ban

Three meat industry organizations—the National Meat Association (NMA), American Meat Institute and National Milk Producers Federation—have filed a citizens petition with the USDA's Food Safety & Inspection Service to ban all non-ambulatory cattle from entering the food supply chain. The organizations want changes in USDA regulations “to revoke FSIS public health veterinarians discretion on cattle that have become non-ambulatory after passing ante-mortem inspection.”

NMA chief executive officer Barry Carpenter said the organizations “want to send a clear message to consumers that we're putting their concerns ahead of economics.”

Anthrax Confirmed in Minnesota

The first anthrax cases in 2008 have been confirmed by the Minnesota Board of Animal Health. Two cows died in mid April of the disease, with the herd under quarantine for 30 days from the day the last death occurred. Anthrax is a naturally occurring disease caused by the bacteria *Bacillus anthracis*. All warm-blooded

animals are susceptible to the disease, with cattle, sheep and goats the most commonly affected species.

Animals are most likely to be affected by anthrax in the summer while out on pasture. Although it is unusual to see a case of anthrax so early in the year, these animals were on pasture in an area where cases had been detected in the past. Cases typically occur in areas where animals have previously died of anthrax.

“Anthrax spores can survive for many years in the soil,” said Board of Animal Health Senior Veterinarian Dr. Linda Glaser. “In recent years, anthrax has been found in northwestern Minnesota, but it is important to understand that western Minnesota does have a history of anthrax, and producers should seriously consider anthrax vaccinations for grazing animals.” Cattle producers should contact a veterinarian for information on vaccinating animals.

Electronic Signatures Approved

The USDA has approved GlobalVetlink's (GVL) security enhancement for electronic signatures which will allow veterinarians to

electronically sign official electronic certificates of inspection and route them to appropriate animal health officials. Kevin Maher, GVL president and founder, notes that the Internet-based animal health system allows veterinarians and diagnostic laboratories to more efficiently and accurately complete the regulatory requirements for interstate animal movement and EIA (Coggins) testing. The GVL system also allows state animal health authorities to track and regulate animal movement nationally in real time.

“The time savings for the veterinary practitioner and technicians are a huge advantage for the practice, plus the client's needs can be met more quickly and efficiently—whether it is in updating an annual Coggins test in horses or emailing a replacement certificate for one that is lost or misplaced,” Maher adds. Electronic certificates of veterinary inspection contain various forms of animal ID, including digital photos and required tests, vaccinations and other regulatory requirements to allow animal entry into a state or event. The web-based platform provides real-time reporting of animal movements to all 50 state animal health authorities. ■



AMS Encourages Program Participants to Use the NAIS

Participants in voluntary marketing programs such as the USDA Process Verified, the Quality Systems Assessment and the Non-Hormone Treated Cattle Programs are being encouraged by USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) to meet the inherent animal identification requirements by using the National Animal Identification System (NAIS). This was brought forth in a draft Business Plan released by AMS.

“The AMS Business Plan will allow for integration of the National Animal Identification System with AMS audit-based marketing programs,” stated Bruce Knight, Under Secretary for Marketing and Regulatory Programs.

Noting that NAIS is a voluntary partnership among producers and government, Knight

pointed out that producers receive a “two-fold reward for a single investment.”

“It ensures traceback of their animals for herd health reasons and provides benefits for marketing value-added animals domestically and internationally,” he explained.

AMS partners with approved marketing programs and actively encourages the use of premise registration and NAIS-compliant Animal Identification Numbers (AIN).

Use of NAIS along with enrollment in these voluntary AMS marketing programs ensures that cattle are eligible for the AMS Export Verification Program for Japan—with an opportunity for significant premiums for cattle producers.

A USDA news release notes: “NAIS would single out product derived from these cattle so

that it can be labeled properly when presented for sale at U.S. grocery stores for American consumers. This helps meet the objectives of the Country of Origin Labeling (COOL) program by identifying the origin of cattle upon arrival at harvest facilities.”

“Contingent upon the publication of a Final Rule implementing COOL for meat and poultry products, AMS and USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service will coordinate efforts to develop a COOL ‘safe harbor’ for NAIS participants: packers that rely upon NAIS to determine the origin of their livestock and poultry will subsequently be recognized by the Department as demonstrating compliance with the COOL program's record keeping requirements.” ■

NIAA welcomes the following new and renewing members!

NEW MEMBERS

National Associations & Commercial Organizations

National Cattlemen's Beef Association
Dr. G. Ashby Green
9110 E Nichols Avenue, Suite 300
Centennial, CO 80112

State-level Associations & Publicly Supported Institutions/Agencies

Tennessee Livestock Producers
Mr. Darrell Ailshie
PO Box 313
Columbia, TN 38402

Individual Members (Self-employed)

Mr. Joe Miller
PO Box 1250
Seymour, IN 47274

Ms. Marcine Moldenhauer
550 N 159th Street E, Suite 211
Wichita, KS 67203

Dr. Carolyn Orr
1545 Mundy's Landing
Harrodsburg, KY 40330

Mr. Bryce Reece
811 N Glenn Road
Casper, WY 82601

Dr. Nevil Speer
451 Will Bohannon Road
Smiths Grove, KY 42171

Affiliate Membership (Non-voting)

National Swine Registry
Mr. Darrell D. Anderson
PO Box 2417
West Lafayette, IN 47996

RENEWING MEMBERS

National Associations & Commercial Organizations

AgInfoLink USA Inc.
American Association of Bovine Practitioners
American Association of Equine Practitioners
American Association of Swine Veterinarians
American Association of Veterinary Lab Diagnosticians
American Horse Council
American Veal Association
APC, Inc.
Cooperative Resources International
Dairy Farmers of America, Inc.
Destron Fearing
Elanco Animal Health
EZ -ID/AVID ID Systems
Farnam Companies, Inc.
Fort Dodge Animal Health
GlobalVetLink, L.C.
IDEXX Laboratories, Inc.
Intervet, Inc.
Iowa Select Farms
Merial Ltd.
MetaFarms, Inc.
Micro Beef Technologies Ltd.
Monsanto Dairy Business
National Pork Board
National Pork Producers Council
National Renderers Association, Inc.
PIC North America
Propig.com
Schering-Plough Animal Health Corporation

WestfaliaSurge, Inc.
Wiechman Pig Co., Inc.
Y-TEX Corporation

State-level Associations & Publicly Supported Institutions/Agencies

Agri-Tracabilite Quebec Inc.
Alabama Dept. of Agriculture & Industries
Arizona Dept. of Agriculture
California Animal Health & Food Safety Laboratory Systems
California Dept. of Food & Agriculture
California Farm Bureau Federation
Clemson University, Livestock & Poultry Health Division
Colorado Dept. of Agriculture
Colorado State University
Idaho State Dept. of Agriculture
Illinois Dept. of Agriculture
Illinois Farm Bureau Federation
Illinois Pork Producers Association
Indiana Farm Bureau Federation
Indiana State Board of Animal Health
Iowa Pork Producers Association
Iowa State University, Veterinary Diagnostic & Production Animal Medicine
Kansas Animal Health Dept.
Kentucky Dept. of Agriculture
Michigan Pork Producers Association
Montana Dept. of Livestock
Nebraska Dept. of Agriculture
Nevada Dept. of Agriculture

New Mexico Livestock Board
North Carolina State University, Department of Animal & Poultry Science
Ohio Farm Bureau Federation
Oklahoma Dept. of Agriculture, Food, & Forestry
Ontario Pork Producers Marketing Board
South Carolina Pork Board
Tennessee Dept. of Agriculture
Texas Farm Bureau Federation
University of Illinois, College of Veterinary Medicine
Utah Dept. of Agriculture & Food
Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food, & Markets
Wisconsin Livestock Identification Consortium

Individual Members (Self-employed)

Dr. Joseph F. Connor
Mr. Robert Kleemeier
Dr. Beth Lautner
Ms. Amy Mann
Dr. Wendell Peden

Affiliate Membership (Non-voting)

Dalton EID Systems Ltd.
Diachemix, LLC
Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory
MAF Vet Services
National Bison Association
USDA/APHIS/VS/National Veterinary Services Laboratory

Eradicate Scrapie PowerPoint Available Free from NIAA

Goat producers and individuals involved in the goat industries—livestock market owners, extension personnel, show coordinators, processors, etc.—are urged to obtain a copy of “Goat Identification: Visual and Electronic,” a newly released slide presentation available from the National Institute for Animal Agriculture. The CD is free thanks to funding from the USDA.

Dr. Cindy Wolf, a scrapie expert with the University of Minnesota who leads the nation’s Eradicate Scrapie! charge, explains that scrapie is a fatal, degenerative disease that affects sheep and goats and can significantly diminish profitability for sheep and goat producers. The USDA implemented an accelerated National Scrapie Eradication Program (NSEP) eight years ago, with the goal of helping to eradicate scrapie by the year 2010. To that regard, the USDA has provided funding for this project so goat producers and those within the goat industry are informed and adhere to federal and state identification requirements.

“The first step to eradicating scrapie

among the nation’s sheep flocks and goat herds is to know which animals need an official ear tag or other official identification for interstate and intrastate movement, and to tag or officially identify those animals prior to movement,” states Dr. Cindy Wolf. “This new slide set covers meat and fiber goats as well as dairy goats.

“When you finish watching this slide presentation, you will know which specific goats must be identified with an individual eartag, tattoo or microchip. You’ll also be informed about record keeping requirements, factors that contribute to optimal eartag retention and minimal infection and tissue reaction and how to obtain free official USDA eartags for individual identification.”

Dr. Wolf adds that the slide set also shares several identification tips as well as outlines the steps that must be taken to obtain a flock/herd identification number for the National Scrapie Eradication Program.

“The NSEP is not tied to the National Animal Identification System,” Dr. Wolf

explains. “You do not need a NAIS (National Animal Identification System) Premises Identification Number to obtain a NSEP flock/herd identification number. These are separate programs.”

This detailed slide set was underwritten by the USDA’s National Scrapie Eradication Program and produced by the staff of the University of Minnesota’s College of Veterinary Medicine, the University of California and the National Institute for Animal Agriculture. The National Scrapie Eradication Program is coordinated by the USDA and is a joint effort that includes participation by state governments and industry, particularly producers.

You can obtain your free copy of the “Goat Identification: Visual and Electronic” slide set on CD by contacting the National Institute for Animal Agriculture at 270-782-9798 or by visiting the NIAA website at www.animalagriculture.org and clicking on the “Issues” tab at the top of the home page where you will find the “Eradicate Scrapie!” link. ■



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