



Western Canadian Association of

# BOVINE PRACTITIONERS

NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 5 NO.4 DECEMBER, 2000

## President's Message

The planning for the 2001 WCABP convention is nearly complete – Drs. Linde and Butler have organized a great meeting. I hope as many of you as possible are able to make it out to the meeting. There will be a lot of timely and interesting topics discussed, as well as a look at some important issues regarding the WCABP.

This has been a particularly busy year for those of us on the board of the WCABP. The addition of Dr. Joyce Van Donkersgoed as Secretary-



Treasurer and the introduction of Association Management Centre (AMC) have allowed us to continue the business of the association after the retirement of Dr. Ray Butler as our founding Secretary-Treasurer. We have taken a somewhat more active role regarding issues in our industry, such as questions regarding inspection of cattle being fed under the Restricted Feeder

Program and regionalization. We also recently hosted an evening meeting with the student Bovine Club at the WCVM, and can see that there is a lot of opportunity to increase our profile with the next generation of practitioners.

This brings us to the question of the cost of running our association, specifically our membership dues. We have run a very tight ship financially for the past number of years, and have a small surplus currently in reserve. Some years have been better than others, and making the numbers balance is always a bit of a challenge. Dr. Butler has been very generous with his time to our organization, and has allowed us to carry on our business using his own home, keeping costs to a bare minimum. With his retirement and the growth in both the size and scope of activity of our association, we find that we are in need of a substantial increase in association dues to continue with business as usual.

Our Board, in regard to membership dues, has agreed upon two general principles. First, membership dues should be sufficient to cover the management costs of the association. We cannot and should not expect to profit from the conference in order to cover day to day expenses.

A January blizzard could easily wipe out any hoped for profits, and could indeed cause a heavy loss to our association. Second, we should have a surplus sufficient to cover one year's operations – this is only prudent to help deal with possibilities like the one mentioned above. Keep in mind that we have never had a dues increase since the formation of the WCABP, and the most asked question we receive in regard to dues is, "Don't you need to increase them?"

Any increase in fees will be used to allow the Secretary-Treasurer and AMC to give us the framework to provide services the members will find useful and profitable to their own practices – more pertinent information, useful continuing education, and representation from **bovine** practitioners to other groups in the cattle industry. We feel more can be done to encourage young people to take a look at bovine practice, and we are the logical group to take on that task.

It has been decided to wait to collect membership dues until after the 2001 convention. This is to allow you—the members—to decide what our actual increase will be. We will provide all the information we can, and let you make the final decision. Although the bylaws currently set the actual figure of the dues, we will also ask to change that clause to allow future boards a little more flexibility than we currently have.

It seems the WCABP has become everything that its founding members could have hoped: a strong organization offering great continuing education to its members; one which fosters interest in bovine practice among future veterinarians, and being a voice for bovine practitioners to the rest of the cattle industry. I am confident you will find your investment in the WCABP to be a wise one.

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The WCABP Newsletter is published by the Association as a service to its members. The views expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of WCABP. Correspondence concerning the newsletter should be directed to the WCABP office.

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## **Conference 2001**

### *Practice Tips*

The Practice Tips session of the annual conference provides an opportunity to share innovative approaches to everyday problems encountered in practice. The tips shared have been proven to save time and expense, or minimize stress in any and all aspects of our daily duties. Tips can touch on any facet of practice including: surgical techniques; animal restraint; personnel management; client relations; practice management; accounting; inventory control; and/or equipment modification. The list is endless.

A maximum of six tips will be selected for presentation following the conference dinner on Friday evening, January 19, 2001. Each presenter will receive \$75.00 for his/her effort. The person presenting the most useful tip will receive in addition, a special award (value \$200.00).

Entries are to be received by the WCABP Secretary no later than December 15, 2000. Those selected to make a short presentation will be notified before Christmas.

Send entries to: Dr. Joyce Van Donkersgoed

#### **errata:**

Please note the 2001 Conference Dinner is being held Friday, January 19, 2001 (not the 18th as indicated on the registration form included in the conference package). We apologize for the inconvenience.

## **Two Vacancies to be Filled on WCABP Board of Directors**

Nominations have been called to fill two three-year term vacancies on the Board, one as a regular Board member; the other to serve as President Elect, President and Past President.

Further information is available from Dr. Joyce Van Donkersgoed or any other Board member.

Nomination forms were included in the 2001 Conference package that was sent to all members or can be obtained from the WCABP Office.

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## **From the Secretary-Treasurer's Desk**

Recently, the Forward Planning Committee of Past Presidents met to discuss bylaw changes and new initiatives for the association. The suggested bylaw changes will be presented at the annual meeting during January's convention in Calgary, for your input and approval. As well, at the convention's bear pit session, we will discuss the direction of the association and other ways



that we may serve you better. Topics that may be covered include the role of bovine practitioners in beef quality assurance program and certified on-farm food safety programs. We welcome your input to ensure that we anticipate and rise to meet your needs.

Dr. David Lightfoot, as Past President, continues to solicit articles from members for

publication in the Vet Advice column in Cattlemen's magazine. This magazine reaches beef producers across Canada and is a valuable extension tool. As well, it strengthens our image in the eyes of producers. If you are interested in writing an article, please contact David.

The Ontario Association of Bovine Practitioners (OABP) has recently contacted us to see how we might work together. If you have any ideas on how to strengthen our

ties with our peers in the east, please contact me or one of the Board members.

It is coming to be that time when BSE forms will be needed. Dr. Barth has updated the form and it is available from our association office, WDDC, or MidWest. Please check our website at <http://www.cattle.ca> under the heading of Cattle Associations for contact information. As well, Dr. Barth's book and software are also available.

Recently, we have been updating our web site. We encourage you to check it out and send us your suggestions for further additions or revisions that may better serve you and other members. The site includes information on the upcoming annual meeting, along with on-line registration. In addition, we have posted the newsletter in PDF format. You will need the Adobe Acrobat Reader to open and read it. The newsletter can be accessed by typing in the username: **animal**, and the password: **bovinevet**. We also included various links that may be of interest to you, along with weekly updates of issues that may be of interest to you and your clients.

As you are aware, this newsletter is produced quarterly. Generous advertising sponsorship by pharmaceutical companies allows us to continue to publish it for you. We have recently sent requests to members of various pharmaceutical companies asking for their support once again to further this quarterly newsletter in 2001. If there are any changes or additions to the newsletter that you would like to see in the upcoming year, please contact me.

## **Conference 2001 is Ropin' in the Finest Entertainment**

*Good Golly - Miss Molly!!*

Get ready to pick up your heels to the show of the year with Miss Molly's marvelous Country Music Show. Her accompanying band, The Tumbleweeds, will be wowing the audience with fiddle-playing, the guitar and the keyboard. This is one event that is sure to be a pleaser for all in attendance.

Miss Molly (Molly Hamilton) has been a favourite entertainer for the Calgary Stampede for fourteen years and also performed for the 1988 Winter Olympics. She has traveled the world over, and has even had the opportunity to delight His Royal Highness, Prince Phillip with her rootin'-tootin'-production.

Playing on the wide variety of talents she has, Miss Molly is sure to make your time at January's Conference 2001 one that will be fondly remembered. Incorporating comedy, upbeat country music and well loved show-tunes, Miss Molly will have you dancing in your seat, or at least tapping your feet. Take advantage of this opportunity to see Miss Molly's unique entertainment while having some fun, laughing and watching a world-class performer dazzle you.

Do not miss out on this truly exciting show - only playing at Conference 2001, Friday January 19, 2001!

For more information, please contact the WCABP office at: 1-866-COW-VETS (1-866-269-8387).

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## OABP News

It is with great pleasure that I am writing this inaugural column for the Western Canadian Association of Bovine Practitioners newsletter. Having worked in both the West and now Ontario as a large animal veterinarian, I feel most issues faced by practitioners cross the barriers of geographic location. Yet, I am fully aware that the every day concerns of feedlot consultants dealing with tens of thousands of heads of cattle in Western Canada may be very different than those of dairy practitioners in areas of rapid urbanization in Ontario. It is because of these regional differences that we, the OABP look forward to receiving your contributions to our newsletter. There are a few veterinarians in Ontario who are members of your association, and as such may benefit from your newsletter as well as the very informative CE events.

The OABP had a very successful fall conference. Drs. Bill Thatcher and David Galligan were the main speakers at this one-day event that focused on the economic impact of reproduction in dairy herds. Our spring meeting is scheduled for April 5, 2001, in Guelph, Ontario. This seminar is generally held in conjunction with the Ontario Agri Business Association. The focus will be on forage quality.

The executive of OABP has been very busy networking with several commodity groups, including the Dairy Farmers of Ontario (DFO, former marketing board), Ontario Cattleman's Association (OCA) and Ontario Veal

Association. We believe that both veterinary groups and farmers' organizations benefit from these closer ties. One direct result of this increased relationship between OABP and OCA has been the creation of guidelines to preconditioned calf sales that were adopted by farmers' groups as proposed by OABP.

In Ontario, a veterinarian must inspect all livestock sold in auction markets. The Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) has licensed veterinarians across the province to perform these duties. This new veterinarian function is now under review, due to a funding shortage. The OABP has been actively involved in determining guidelines for a continuation of effective inspections by lay persons within sales barns.

The problem of attracting students to large animal practice is generalized in this country. In an effort to promote bovine practice to veterinary students, the OABP is planning a student/practitioner night for the early part of February 2001, to try to increase interaction between OABP and veterinary students. We are all looking forward to this event.

We, the members of the OABP are excited and encouraged by this new interaction between our two associations. We look forward to receiving your column in our newsletter, and perhaps meeting members of your association at our CE events.

Clarice Lulai

## Imported Cattle Feeder Update

The Restricted Feeder Program that runs from October 1, 2000 to March 31, 2001 began this year in full swing, with 132,498 head of US feeders entering Canada as of December 2, 2000. The majority of cattle originated from Montana and went to Alberta feedlots. Currently, only Alaska, Hawaii, Idaho, North Dakota, New York, Montana, and Washington are approved "low risk" disease states. This means they are free of brucellosis and TB and are at low risk for bluetongue and anaplasmosis.

There were a few changes made in the program. The definition of cattle was tightened to try and eliminate breeding stock and suckling calves from entering under the feeder program. As well, the industry asked CFIA to recognize accredited practitioners as alternate designated

inspectors under the program. CFIA responded by saying they perceived vets to be under a conflict of interest if they were inspectors for imports. The WCABP Board subsequently discussed this issue and responded with a letter to CFIA requesting that accredited vets be recognized as alternate inspectors. The Board challenged CFIA's opinion by stating that vets were accredited by CFIA to do exports. Furthermore CFIA holds this license under their control. As well, vets are licensed under provincial laws to ensure ethical behavior. At this point, the Board has not had a response back from CFIA regarding our request.

The new regionalization regulations for animal health will be regazetted again shortly after feedback from the first

*continued page 5*

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## **Bovine Health Web Sites to Watch**

### **Dairy producers should watch for high potassium levels in dry feed rations because ARS researchers have proven that high potassium - not calcium - cause milk fever in cows**

This new finding will reduce the incidence of milk fever, which costs up to \$20 million in medications to treat affected cows each year. Based on a three-year study of the diets of sixty Jersey cows, the researchers concluded that calcium levels did not play a role in the development of milk fever, thus disproving a generally accepted belief in the milk industry.

<http://www.nadc.ars.usda.gov>/ Metabolic Diseases and Immunology, Ames, IA Jesse P. Goff, (515) 239-8343

### **The World Wide Web Clearinghouse for Information on Johne's Disease**

This information-rich site includes a frequently asked questions section, more detailed information about the disease, information on diagnostic testing, a link to the international association focusing on Johne's, and extensive charts and graphics regarding the incidence and spread of Johne's.

<http://www.vetmed.wisc.edu/pbs/johnes/>

**For an up-to-date description of Johne's**—This informative site describes the disease, its prevalence and impact, how it is transmitted, and concludes with tips for diagnosis and control.

<http://johnes.outreach.uiuc.edu/index.html>

*Imported Cattle Feeder Update  
continued from page 4*

comment period. There will be thirty days to respond to the second gazetted regulations. The aim is that regionalization will become regulation no later than March 31, 2001. Then other programs may be developed to allow other areas/zones to be recognized as equivalent to our health status. For those of "low risk" status, it is hoped that programs, such as the draft of the Terminal Feeder Program, will be put in place. This will allow movement of US feeders into Canada from states with healthy cattle. Various protocols will be put in place to reduce risk. Currently, the Terminal Feeder Program is being reviewed by CFIA through risk assessment.

### **Johne's Disease Web Site Features Management Strategies**

A web site maintained by the United States Animal Health Association is stocked with information and ideas about prevention and control of Johne's Disease in Dairy Cattle. Included in the resources you will find, there is a manual for dairy producers and veterinarians, and brief fact sheets on control options for dairy herds, application and interpretation of diagnostic tests, and tips for developing a specific plan for prevention of Johne's.

<http://www.usaha.org/njwg/jddairy.html>

**Johne's Disease - What do I Need to Know?**—Johne's Disease (pronounced YO-knees) was identified more than a century ago, yet remains a common and sometimes costly infectious disease of dairy cattle. In spite of this, many US dairy producers are unfamiliar with Johne's Disease. A recent NAHMS Dairy '96 Study report shows that forty-five percent of dairy producers were either unaware of Johne's Disease or recognized the name but knew little else about it. This article answers the basic questions and provides dairy farmers with strategies for identifying risk factors, preventing the disease, and follow-up suggestions if the disease is found.

<http://extranet.aphis.usda.gov/vs/ceah/cahm/cahm-act.htm>

### **New Program to Reduce Johne's Disease in Herds**

A new program to help beef and dairy cattle producers control Johne's Disease within their herds has been developed jointly by the Pennsylvania State University College of Agricultural Sciences and the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture. Penn State's role in the program is to provide educational materials for farmers and veterinarians and to provide training for both veterinarians and industry professionals.

<http://www.aginfo.psu.edu/newsletter/2000jan/johnes.html>

**Johne's Disease Tool Now Patented**—A diagnostic tool for identifying dairy cattle in the early stages of this costly disease has been patented by Agricultural Research Service scientists in Ames, Iowa. The new test detects Johne's Disease.

<http://www.ars.usda.gov/is/pr/1999/991221.htm>

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## **AABP District 13 Report**

The 2000 AABP annual conference in Rapid City was a very successful meeting. Total registration reached 1,973, of which 1,225 were veterinarians. There was good representation from our district. It was especially pleasing to have twenty-five WCVN students make the long drive from Saskatoon. This was the largest contingent of students from any of the veterinary colleges at the meeting. Our new WCABP student liaison, Dr. Fritz Schumann deserves credit helping the students organize the trip. I hope they learned a lot, and it certainly appeared they had some fun.



I thought the scientific sessions this year were especially strong and very well attended. The annual meeting proceedings should have all arrived, and I encourage you to review some very good presentations. Audio tapes for most of the sessions can also be ordered.

At the annual meeting in Rapid City, it was great to have a fellow Canadian

bovine practitioner, Dr. Ewen Ferguson, Campbellford, Ontario, receive the prestigious Bovine Practitioner of the Year Award. Ewen, who spoke at the WCABP meeting in Banff a few years ago, is certainly very deserving of this award.

I just returned from a planning meeting for the 2001 Vancouver AABP meeting. The program is certainly taking shape and it looks like a very strong one. The Vancouver meeting is a joint effort with the Society of Theriogenology and the National Mastitis Council and there will be some sessions facilitated by both. The Vancouver Convention Center is a truly impressive venue on the scenic ocean front in Vancouver, and I am sure there will be record attendance. So plan on attending the Vancouver AABP meeting September 12-15, 2001.

If you have questions regarding the AABP please contact me at (204) 822-4333, or the AABP headquarters at 1-800-269-2227.

David G. Hamilton  
District 13

## **Water Quality Improves Performance**

*Excerpt from Canadian Cattlemen/Fall 2000*

Five years of research from AAFC have shown that cattle performance improves when cattle drink fresh water compared to drinking directly from a dugout. The differences in cattle performance appear to be due to behaviour changes. Cattle drink less when they do not like it. Drinking less water also reduces their feed intake, which reduces the overall weight gain performance. Trials with yearling cattle showed that cattle with access to fresh water performed better than those with water pumped from the source, and much better than those who drank directly from the dugout. Thus, according to the researchers, it makes sense to fence off water areas and pump a trough using electric, solar, wind or gravity-fed systems.

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## **CCIA Moves Forward**

The CCIA have determined the dates the program is to be implemented as follows:

As of January 1, 2001

- All cattle are to be tagged with an approved CCIA eartag by the time they leave the herd of origin

As of July 1, 2001

- All cattle that have already moved beyond their herd of origin are to be tagged before they leave the herd in which they are located for that date
- All packing plants will be required to read all tags and transfer the information to the carcass and maintain identity to the point of carcass inspection. This includes provincially inspected and non-inspected plants

As of July 1, 2002

- Enforcement will take place.

## **New Tracking System for Health**

Dr. Jake Bulet and Jennifer Woods have created an internet database company, Viewtrak Technologies Inc. It is set up to track individual animals on-line from farm to packing plant.

For details, see their web site at <http://www.viewtrak.com>.

## **Bill C-17 is Cruel to Producers & Veterinarians**

Bill C-17 includes amendments to the Criminal Code. Part of this omnibus bill contains changes to the animal cruelty provisions in the code. The CCA has addressed three key changes that they would like to see included in the Act before its next reading. Bill C-17 would move animal cruelty from a crime against property in with sexual offenses, public morals, and disorderly conduct. This elevates the status of animals under law. Thus, those who work with animals will lose an important legal defense. This includes veterinarians. As well, CCA has asked that they drop the definition "animal." Historically, the code provided protection to domesticated or captive mammals and birds. But Bill C-17 would narrow the definition to

## **FDA/CVM Proposes to Withdraw Poultry use of Fluoroquinolones**

*Sets precedent for other withdrawals*

*Excerpt from Feedstuffs, October 30, 2000*

The Food & Drug Administration's Center for Veterinary Medicine issued notice on October 26 that it is considering withdrawal of fluoroquinolone antimicrobial enrofloxacin in poultry. This ban does not include Baytril in cattle, which is licensed in the USA. The Coalition for Animal Health, which includes the AVMA, is extremely dismayed at the approach CVM is taking toward regulating fluoroquinolones use in food-producing animals. The Coalition said the action will establish the precedent for all future regulatory activity. Since fluoroquinolones are important to animal and human health, the regulatory process must be science-based and adhere to the policy guidance outlined in the Framework document. However, the Coalition says that the process currently underway does neither. In order to make sure the regulatory process with regard to fluoroquinolones and antibiotics in general is fair, open and based on sound science, the Coalition recommended the following actions: 1) suspend any regulatory action based on the current risk assessment until an appropriate review is completed; 2) convene a group of risk assessment experts to conduct a review of the FDA/CVM model to determine its ability to support effective public policy that manages the risk from antibiotic use in food animals, and to determine if that risk, if any, is unacceptable; 3) conduct an in-depth review of the FDA/CVM framework document and risk assessment by the Interagency Task Force on Antimicrobial Resistance—such an action would be consistent with the General Accounting Office's recommendation from April 1999; and 4) specifically identify the impact on potential resistance of recent USDA and industry successes in reducing the prevalence of pathogens in meat and poultry. The Coalition believes that these actions will result in a science-based policy that will enjoy the support of everyone affected by the issue.

mean, "a vertebrate, other than a human being, and any other animal that has the capacity to feel pain". Thus, it would bring in fish and wildlife, giving animals a standing in law. This would create all kinds of problems for producers who could be dragged before courts to prove that they were not causing unreasonable pain and suffering to animals. The third change involves returning the word "willfulness" to the definition of offenses under animal cruelty. Together these three changes shift the burden of proof off the Crown and put it more on the accused. Thus, it places people who use animals under greater threat of prosecution. For more information on these amendments, please attend our annual convention, where Susan Church from AFAC will fill us in more on the implications of Bill C-17.

## **Accurate Diagnosis for Johne's Disease in Cattle Herds**

*Excerpt from 33<sup>rd</sup> AABP Annual Convention, David Smith*

Programs to classify cattle herds by Mycobacterium paratuberculosis infection status must satisfy buyer's concerns that cattle from tested herds are unlikely to be infected. Veterinarians recommending these programs need confidence that a high percentage of herds will be classified correctly. Three diagnostic methods were evaluated: 1) ELISA serology, 2) culture of feces, and 3) ELISA serology in series with confirmatory culture of feces. By ELISA serology alone, false-positive herd classifications would prevent the majority of herds from being classified correctly. By culturing feces or serial testing more than 95 percent of herds tested could be correctly classified (with sufficient sample size). Incorrect classification using those strategies is more likely, due to false negatives, in populations where the prevalence of infected herds is high and the prevalence within herds is low. In small herds, it is difficult to detect infection.

For more information please consult the web site addresses listed on page five of this issue.

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**Business Group Animal Health**

## **Forward Planning Committee Report**

The Forward Planning Committee (FPC) of the WCABP is to serve as an advisory body to the current Board of Directors. The FPC consists of all the Past Presidents of the WCABP and is chaired by the immediate Past President.

The FPC held a teleconference in 1999, and identified three important initiatives for consideration by the WCABP board. These were:

- 1) Expansion of continuing education
- 2) Increase political involvement of the WCABP
- 3) Increase membership of association of both veterinarians and students.

The FPC held a teleconference on September 15, 2000 to discuss these initiatives and others.

Providing continuing education was deemed to be the most important function of the WCABP. It was suggested that the Board could expand the CE already presented and provide other CE options such as short courses, educational tours, etc.

The FPC suggested that the WCABP should become more politically involved in issues affecting the cattle industry. A discussion was held on striking a committee to develop a Johne's control program. Other topics that the WCABP could be involved in included mastitis control, pharmaceuticals, antimicrobial resistance, and drinking water contamination of pathogenic-organisms. The Board was encouraged to develop liaison with other associations such as provincial veterinary associations, Ontario Association of Bovine Practitioners, and others involved in the cattle industry.

It was recommended that the Board continue working with WCVM on developing externships for veterinary students

during the busy times of the year in bovine practices, and to consider preparing material for presentations to junior and senior high school students to encourage entry into veterinary school and large animal practice.

It was suggested and approved by the FPC and Board to invite Dr. Fritz Schumann, WCABP's student representative at WCVM, to the periodic teleconference of the WCABP Board. This would serve to increase communication between the students of WCVM and the WCABP.

It was recommended to the Board that the travel expenses of bovine practitioners should be billed to WCVM, so that they may talk to students about bovine practice.

The FPC suggested there should be an increase in the annual fees to finance these new initiatives by the WCABP. The FPC discussed the drafting of a tentative budget to determine how much of an increase is required or not required. This would be discussed with the Board and then at the annual meeting for member approval.

The FPC reviewed the WCABP bylaws for changes and presented these to the Board for submission to the membership at the annual general meeting.

There are a few important topics that need to be discussed at the annual general meeting to be held in January 2001 in Calgary. The WCABP is at a critical point in the development of the association. I seriously encourage all members to attend the bear pit session in Calgary and provide your input.

Respectfully submitted,

David E. Lightfoot  
Chair, Forward Planning Committee

## **WCABP Veterinarian of the Year Award**

Nominations will be open until December 23, 2000 for the 2000 *Veterinarian of the Year Award* which will be presented at the 2001 Conference. Boehringer-Ingelheim annually presents a wall plaque and cash award to a veterinarian in recognition of his/her contributions in the field of veterinary medicine. The selection is made by the WCABP Board of Directors.

Nomination forms are available from the WCABP Office.



**Happy Holidays  
and Joyful Tidings**

**To all Western Canadian Association  
of Bovine Practitioners members  
and their families!**

**Wishing the very best  
to everyone in 2001.**

*From the WCABP  
Board of Directors and office*

