

Western Canadian Association of

# BOVINE PRACTITIONERS

NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 5 NO.3 SEPTEMBER, 2000

## Get Excited in Calgary 2001!

Do you remember the thrills of vet school? No, not the extracurricular activities, but the stimulation of something new and challenging? Remember how you just could not wait to put your knowledge into practice? Perhaps it has been a while since you have experienced the feeling of wanting to take on the world; or maybe you just need more CE hours. Whatever the case, we have got the perfect opportunity for you! An impressive assembly of acclaimed speakers will challenge you with the most current, practical information on a variety of contemporary topics.

The pre-conference seminars start on Thursday, January 18, 2001. Designed with practicality in mind, they focus on the beef and dairy industry.

On Friday, Dairy producers who are looking to expand their facilities, possibly in response to expansion of their herds, will benefit from the full day seminar by Dr. Gordon Jones of Underwood, Washington. Dr. Jones is regarded as a leading authority on the modernization and expansion of bovine facilities to maximize cow comfort. His presentation will provide a wealth of ideas on minimizing bottlenecks and maximizing performance.

Veterinarians with beef interests will be treated to a morning of presentations by the full veterinary staff of Feedlot Health Management Services of Okotoks, Alberta. This organization presently provides production consulting services to beef feedlots and has an annual through-put of more than one million animals on ranches with 10,000 beef cows. The afternoon session will be presented by Dr. Mike Sanderson of Kansas State University who, in addition to his notable academic accomplishments, can call on seven years experience as a bovine practitioner in Colorado and Wyoming.

The Scientific sessions scheduled for Friday, January 19 and Saturday, January 20, have been designed to provide current information on topics of vital concern to the Western Bovine Practitioner. This includes reducing feed costs through winter grazing, current information on production-limiting disease, presentations on E. coli O157:H7 and the increasing antimicrobial resistance of Salmonella spp, an update on lung lesions associated with feedlot pneumonia; plus scientifically based industry presentations, "practice tips,".... and more!

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## New E. Coli Vaccine Being Tested on Cows

The Toronto Star

[http://www.thestar.com/thestar/editorial/news/20000809NEW15\\_ECOLI9.html](http://www.thestar.com/thestar/editorial/news/20000809NEW15_ECOLI9.html)

OTTAWA — Federal scientists have, according to this story, teamed up with a venture capital company to test a potential vaccine against deadly E. coli bacteria. This story explained that if successful, the vaccine could eradicate the E. coli 157 strain that contributed to the deaths of six people and left hundreds ill in Walkerton earlier this summer. The National Research Council has signed an agreement with Foragen Technology Ventures Inc. of Guelph to pay for testing of the vaccine on cattle. Cattle feces is, this story says, considered the primary source of E. coli, which sometimes infects community wells. Tests of the vaccine on lab mice have proven effective in killing the bacteria. Tests are being conducted this month on cattle at the Veterinary Infectious Disease Organization in Saskatoon. Results of the clinical trials are expected within two months. The vaccine works by attaching a harmless bacteria to the E. coli 157, creating antibodies to kill the deadly strain in animals. Foragen president Murray McLaughlin was cited as saying that if the

vaccine works, a company will be formed to sell the drug. "The focus on this particular vaccine would be to build a company that has the ability to market that vaccine into the farm community. But certainly it's another control mechanism that gives us the ability to help manage the problem," he said. McLaughlin doesn't know if the vaccine will be able to wipe out E. coli bacteria, but he expects the vaccine would also be sold outside Canada.

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## **WCABP Board of Directors 2000**

### **President**

**Dr. Andy Acton** Bus: 306 459 2422  
Ogema, SK Fax: 306 459 2880  
dsac@sk.sympatico.ca

### **President Elect**

**Dr. Ken Linde** Bus: 604 534 4813  
Aldergrove, BC Fax: 604 534 2526  
klinde@vancouver.net

### **Past President**

**Dr. David Lightfoot** Bus: 604 850 7577  
Abbotsford, BC Fax: 604 853 2545  
dlightfoot@mindlink.bc.ca

### **Board Members**

**Dr. Richard Harland** Bus: 306 931 7500  
Saskatoon, SK Fax: 306 242 6186  
richard.harland@ah.novartis.com

**Dr. Carmen Millham** Bus: 306 782 6620  
Yorkton, SK Fax: 306 782 6624

**Dr. Bob Ruckman** Bus: 403 527 4345  
Medicine Hat, AB Fax: 403 529 1160  
ruckman@telusplanet.net

### **Ex officio Members**

#### **Director, District XIII, AABP**

**Dr. David Hamilton** Bus: 204 822 4333  
Morden, MB Fax: 204 822 4708

#### **Secretary - Treasurer**

**Dr. Joyce Van Donkersgoed**  
11 Bruns Road Bus: 403 782 5153  
Lacombe, AB Fax: 403 782 5120  
T0C 1S0 donkersg@telusplanet.net

**Dr. Ray Butler**  
39 Moxon Crescent Bus: 306 651-3383  
Saskatoon, SK Fax: 306 651-3383  
S7H 3B8 butlerd@sk.sympatico.ca

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 new WCABP office.

### **New WCABP Office Information**

Attention: **Marjorie Zingle**  
**Erika Rauser**

Courier Address: **200, 1603 - 10 Avenue SW**  
**Calgary, Alberta T3C 0J7**

Mail Address: **PO Box 6173, Station D**  
**Calgary, Alberta T2P 2C8**

Phone: **1-866-COW-VETS (269-8387)**  
Fax: **(403) 244-2340**  
Email: **wcabp@incentre.net**

## **President's Message**

Hopefully the summer has been treating all of you well – down here it is starting to feel like a tropical country, we have had that much rain. One thing for certain, however, is that southern Saskatchewan is never more than two weeks away from being in a drought, so we'll take whatever rain we can get.

The office changeover for the WCABP is nearing completion – now Ray can have the rest of his house back!



(or should I say Doreen can have her house back?) We have reached an agreement with the Association Management Centre out of Calgary to handle many of the day to day office duties on a trial basis, which will lighten the load of our new Secretary-Treasurer, Dr. Van Donkersgoed. We know Joyce will do a terrific job, and the experience of the Association Management Centre in dealings with associations such as ours will help us improve on the job we are doing for

the general membership.

Late summer is one of my favorite times of the year, mostly because this part of the year gives me a chance to get away from the day to day, take some time off, and prepare for the upcoming fall run. Looking at our business from a distance, rather than just tending to the next case that needs working on, has always been a great way to keep focused on the direction we want our practice to go.

Visiting other practitioners and their practices has always been something I have enjoyed. For my first few years in practice I did it religiously, stopping at every clinic I could, looking at facilities for new ideas. In the last few years it seems time has not permitted as many visits, but the chances I get are always rewarding. Seeing the different varieties of handling facilities, floor plans, and computer systems has given us some great ideas, and sometimes helped to avoid repeating someone else's mistakes. Sharing practice tips and marketing ideas has given me a lot of useful information which has improved our own

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

This past month there have been major changes occurring at WCABP. These are in relationship to the retirement of Dr. Ray Butler as the Secretary-Treasurer and the appointment of Dr. Joyce Van Donkersgoed to take over his responsibilities. As well, WCABP has hired Association Management Centre, a professional association management firm, to help the Board run the day to day operations of WCABP. The Board's contact at the Association Management Centre is Marjorie Zingle, or Erika Rauser.

Dr. Ray Butler will continue to be responsible for coordinating the 2001 Annual Conference, with the help of the Board and the office staff. Joyce will be responsible for overseeing the services provided by the office. Additionally, she will be the liaison between the WCABP Board and others. Joyce will be responsible for

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*President's Message  
continued from page 2*

practice a great deal. This may seem pretty basic and obvious, but I think it underlines a useful concept – the people we can learn the most from are all around us. The quality of practitioners in Western Canada is second to none, and sharing our skills with each other is a big part of what this association is all about. So if I am close to your place with a little free time, I will likely call. If you are coming by our clinic, come in from the east – the highway to the west is shot all to @#%\*\*!

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*Get Excited in Calgary 2001!  
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A new feature of the 2001 Conference will be Thursday evening's Bear Pit session. It will invite comment and discussion on the changing role of the WCABP. Our association was founded on the grassroots thinking of Western Canadian practitioners. After nine years of maturation, the time is right to reflect on our future development.

Your presence at the 2001 Conference will allow you to renew contacts with your colleagues across Western Canada and play an active role in contributing to the future of this growing association. On January 21, 2001 there will only be two kinds of bovine practitioners in Western Canada: those who attended the Conference, and those who wish they had.

Dr. Ken Linde

responding to requests for information, managing the WCABP quarterly newsletter, updating the WCABP website, working with the Board to solicit new members, assisting with the Annual Conference, and working with the CE and Forward Planning Committees on new ventures.

The office staff will be responsible for providing administrative facilities and day-to-day administrative services. These will include receiving phone and fax calls maintaining correspondence, maintaining association files and an active membership list, managing the BSE forms and Barth Manuals', recording the minutes of Board meetings, providing accounting and financial record keeping, and packaging and mailing out the newsletter. The first six months will be a learning experience for all members. If you have any suggestions regarding this new arrangement, we would welcome your comments.

## **WCABP Updates**

### **Errata - Veterinarian of the Year**

My apologies to Dr. Rich Vanderwal of Abbotsford, B.C., in omitting his name from the list of recipients of the WCABP Veterinarian of the Year Award as reported in the June, 2000 issue of the Newsletter. Rich received the Award in 1998. To set the record straight, the full list of recipients, indicating the year in which the award was presented, is as follows:

Dr. Albert Barth (1995)	Dr. Rich Vanderwal (1998)
Dr. Rod Sydenham (1996)	Dr. Otto Radostits (1999)
Dr. Ray Butler (1997)	Dr. David Hamilton (2000)

Who will be the 2001 recipient? Now is the time for all WCABP members to be thinking about preparing a nomination. Nomination forms will be sent out with the November Newsletter.

Ray Butler

Check Out the WCABP Website at [www.cattle.ca](http://www.cattle.ca) (under cattle associations). Under news, we have weekly updates of current events affecting cattle production and your clients!

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## **Cattlemen push E. Coli Solution: Irradiation Would Eliminate Deadly Bacteria**

Michael Lau, Calgary Herald

The Calgary-based cattlemen's association is, according to this story, putting pressure on Health Canada to approve a treatment that would kill micro-organisms in beef, including the potentially deadly E. coli. The association says Ottawa is hampering efforts of treating new cases of E. coli in ground beef with its snail's-pace approval process for irradiation, a radiation treatment that wipes out micro-organisms and extends the shelf life of foods. Rob McNabb, assistant manager of the Canadian Cattlemen's Association, was cited as saying his group broached the idea with the health department two and a half years ago, adding, "While we are doing everything we can at the production and processing part of the industry, there is another tool out there that could be used to help minimize the risk."

Lynn LeSage, a spokesman for Health Canada, said, "Our responsibility is to do a thorough review to ensure the process doesn't impact negatively on health and not affect the nutritional quality, etcetera, of the food. Basically, with that responsibility, it takes time for us to go through the applications. We are ensuring this process is safe and efficacious." LeSage was also said she can't predict when the review will be completed. McNabb, of Calgary was further quoted as saying, "In light of recent events, as far

as recalls, we're getting a little anxious that we have a better indication of how soon we get an answer, one way or the other. Used properly, it's safe, has no detrimental effect on quality, nutrition or flavour, but is very effective in reducing the pathogen count in the product. It is unfair to assume consumers, if given a choice, can't make an intelligent selection."

Tim McAllister, a research scientist at Lethbridge Research Centre, was cited as saying there's a misconception that irradiation makes food radioactive, adding, "That's basically the bottom line of it's controversial scientific reasons, because of those kinds of concerns that are not really based on reality. In terms of improving the potential safety of the food, it is very positive. It controls the number one problem, which is food-borne pathogens. It can also change some of the proteins in meat a little bit, not to make them toxic, but potentially to alter their nutritional value. If you look at microbial populations on a plant, or exposed in the environment, and they get the irradiation from the sun, it will lower those populations as well. UV (ultraviolet) radiation, is the same thing we use sunglasses for. We use UV radiation in the lab as well to kill bacteria. Those are some of the things we encounter in the environment everyday, that use that same concept."

## **WCABP Welcomes New Headquarters Office**

WCABP's Board of Directors are receiving a new helping hand. Recently, the assistance of Association Management Centre (AMC) was enlisted to perform a variety of tasks for WCABP. With a qualified and professional personnel to call upon, the association office will enable the Board of WCABP to accomplish much in reaching its objectives.

The office offers a multitude of facilities equipped to handle all the administrative needs of WCABP. In this, the office now brings a wealth of experience to call upon.

Erika Rauser will be overseeing the administration of WCABP. "I'm always up for a challenge," says Erika. Gwen Blowatt will be coordinating the production of the newsletter. Having worked in the capacity of research and editing, she offers comprehensive experience to ensure that the newsletter remains a professional resource of WCABP. Working closely with Gwen will be Rhea. Rhea is the talent behind the desktop production of the newsletter. In addition, Monita Poon will be complementing the personnel by working with WCABP in the capacity of accounting and the keeping of WCABP's financial records.

The association office welcomes all members who are interested in a tour of our facilities and we will be happy to provide answers to any questions you might have. Please feel free to contact us with your comments or suggestions by phone **1-866-COW-VETS**; fax **(403) 244-2340**; or email **wcabp@incentre.net**.

If you prefer, you can also mail us at:  
**PO Box 6173, Station D, Calgary, Alberta, T2P 2C8.**

To courier us, please send your packages to:  
**200, 1603 - 10 Avenue SW, Calgary, Alberta, T2C 0J7.**

We look forward to hearing from you!

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## **Milk Down As Cows Heat Up - Australia**

CSIRO

Ref 2000/203

<http://www.csiro.au/>

Rising temperatures associated with climate change are likely to lower milk yield from cows, according to a CSIRO study. Milk losses will be minimized, say researchers, if farmers adapt by providing shade and sprinklers for their herd. The study uses a new approach, measuring future changes in terms of risk to farm productivity rather than in climatic terms. The study was conducted in the Hunter Valley for the NSW Cabinet Office. "Primary producers who are users of climate information and often vulnerable to changes in the weather want to know how climate change will affect their activities," says Dr. Roger Jones from CSIRO Atmospheric Research. "We have analysed and presented the results of the study showing how much dairy farmers may need to adapt to the impacts of climate change to maintain their productivity. Under current climate, dairy cows in the Hunter Valley that are kept out in the open produce about three per cent less milk than those kept under shelter. This loss represents about 230 litres of

milk per cow each year for a high-yielding herd." He added that "By adapting to hot weather by using shade sheds and sprinklers, milk losses can be reduced to about fifty litres per cow per year." However, because of climate change likely by the year 2030, milk losses are apt to be between 250 and 310 litres per cow per year, depending on the rate of warming. "Importantly, the study has found that if farmers use shade sheds and sprinklers, each of their cows will produce 190 to 220 litres more milk per year than cows left exposed in paddocks. This would limit milk losses after adaptation to about sixty-ninety litres per cow per year," says Dr Jones. CSIRO has discussed its findings with staff from government departments, conservation councils and the NSW Dairy Farmers Association. "We studied hot cows because they were relatively simple to model," says Dr Jones, "and we wanted to demonstrate our methods of risk assessment to the government and community." The researchers are hoping to apply their methods to study the risk that climate change poses for integrated catchment management in the Hunter Valley.

## **USDA Moves to Require Destruction of Drug-tainted Carcasses**

The Associated Press/Reuters,

WASHINGTON —

It seems the US government is preparing to stop packers from selling any meat from carcasses in which excessive chemical residue is found. The stories say that under current rules, packers can discard the drug tested organ, typically the liver or kidney, and sell the rest.

The new policy, which may become final as early as September 2000, would require that the entire carcass be destroyed. US Agriculture Department officials said the policy would apply to all livestock, but it would primarily affect slaughtered dairy cows, the source of about forty percent of the nation's hamburger meat. USDA officials say the intent is to bring their procedures in line with the Food and Drug Administration's policy on chemical residues in food. FDA sets the limits, or tolerances, for drug residues in food animals.

"The department doesn't believe," Karen Hulebak, chief scientist for USDA Food and Safety and Inspection Service said, "that unsafe meat is reaching consumers." About 0.2% of the cattle tested in 1997 had drug residues in excess of the FDA limits, or 12,400 of the 6.2 million cattle

slaughtered that year. Animals are tested for more than fifty different compounds, including a variety of antibiotics. Mike Hanson, a food-safety expert with Consumers Union, said the new policy would be a "step forward in increasing the safety of the food supply." The stories say that consumer advocacy groups assert that livestock producers are giving excessive amounts of hormones, antibiotics and other drugs to their animals. Among scientists there is concern that harmful bacteria can develop resistance to antibiotics when they are exposed to the drugs in animals and become more of a threat to humans.

There is also evidence certain human illnesses and allergic reactions are due to drug residues in meat. Industry officials say the new policy would have a significant economic impact on meatpackers. Profit margins in the packing industry are so thin that slaughter houses process or resell every bit of the cattle they kill, including the blood, bones and even the intestinal contents. Janet Riley, a spokeswoman for the American Meat Institute, said, "This would be a pretty dramatic shift. Packers can't control the use of drugs in animals they buy. We want to solve this problem before it gets to the plant. We're working on that."

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## AABP District 13 Report

I am writing this report prior to the AABP annual convention in Rapid City, South Dakota. Pre-registration has been very strong and it looks like we will have a very successful convention. Hopefully many of you are able to attend and have an enjoyable and educational time. For those of you who have not been able to attend an AABP convention, maybe this coming year will be your year. The 2001 annual meeting will be in Vancouver from Sept 13-15 (pre-convention seminars earlier). This is a joint meeting with the Society of Theriogenology and the National Mastitis Council. It should be a great meeting in a great location.



Many of you should have received a recruitment letter from the AABP encouraging those of you who aren't members to join the AABP. The \$95 US per year membership fee provides you with a monthly newsletter full of useful information, two issues of the peer reviewed Bovine Practitioner journal, Proceedings of the annual meeting, access to the very popular email

discussion group AABP-L, reduced registration fee at the annual AABP convention (the reduced registration fee is

equal to the annual membership fee), and maybe the most valuable of all - a chance to interact and learn from veterinarians from Canada, the USA and abroad. I have always been impressed and thankful that I am a member of a profession that readily shares knowledge and expertise. While attending an AABP meeting you will almost certainly meet several practitioners that have similar interests as yours, and they will be more than willing to answer any of your queries. Why re-invent the wheel? Ask them how they handled a certain herd problem, etc. The AABP-L email discussion group is also very useful when you have a problem and don't know where to go for the answer. Chances are that at least one of the 1500 + AABP member subscribers can help solve your problem. In my career, AABP membership has been instrumental and critical in my development as a bovine veterinarian and in developing my specialized interests.

If you have any questions about AABP membership, contact the AABP head office at 1-800-269-2227, email [aabphq@aabp.org](mailto:aabphq@aabp.org), or on the Internet at <http://www.aabp.org>, or contact myself at (204) 822-4333.

David Hamilton

District 13 AABP Representative

## British Study Finds No Evidence of BSE in Sheep

Alex Richardson  
Reuters

LONDON — A published report was cited as saying that British scientists investigating a brain-wasting disorder in sheep found no evidence of an increase in the disease during the country's mad cow epidemic. The findings come amid fears in Europe and the U.S. that mad cow disease, or BSE, could have crossed over into sheep, posing a potential threat to humans. Mike Gravenor, one of the report's authors, was quoted as telling Reuters, "What we were interested in was...was there a large increase in this kind of disease during that time (of the BSE outbreak)? What we essentially found is that a very similar disease called scrapie didn't change in incidence during the time of the BSE epidemic. Before the importance of BSE in cows was recognized, a lot of infected cattle were recycled in animal feed and some was fed to sheep. It is possible it sparked something new in the sheep population, but we

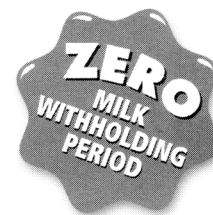
found no evidence of that." The study, carried out by scientists at the Institute for Animal Health in Berkshire, southern England, and published in the journal *Nature*, does not prove BSE was not passed to sheep.

However the authors were cited as saying that since they found no peak in scrapie cases when the British mad cow epidemic in the late 1980s and early 1990s broke out, it was "unlikely that a substantial epidemic of BSE has occurred in the sheep population." They also were cited as finding that farms raising sheep and cattle were no more likely to have scrapie, and no regional correlation between scrapie and BSE cases. Although no cases of sheep harboring BSE have been found, laboratory experiments have shown it to be theoretically possible.

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## **Delegation Attempts to Settle Cattle Dispute**

The Regina Leader-Post

Lisa Schmidt

Saskatchewan officials were, according to this story, among a Canadian delegation attempting to head off another border dispute with North Dakota Thursday, this time over that state's proposal to test incoming cattle for disease. Rick Burton, a spokesman for Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food, was quoted as saying, "Our livestock is already internationally recognized for high health standards. These additional regulations are unnecessary barriers to trade that results in unnecessary expense to our industry."

The proposed regulations, under a bill passed last year, would require testing Canadian cattle for tuberculosis, brucellosis, bluetongue and anaplasmosis. If approved, they would take effect this fall. At a public hearing in Bismark, N.D., on Thursday, officials from Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Alberta were cited as arguing that the regulations break international trade rules because it will single out Canadian cattle. The additional testing is, this story says, also contrary to a recent agreement in November between

the Prairie provinces and four northern states calling for more communication, harmonization and co-operation on agricultural issues. Burton was quoted as saying, "This certainly seems to be stepping back. Unless the state is experiencing some serious health issues with its herd, Canadian cattle producers can't understand why such regulations are even being proposed." Bill Jameson, owner of JGL Livestock in Moose Jaw, was quoted as saying, "I think they are being very protective. It's just another form of a tariff." Producers would have to cover the added expense of tests and risk other diseases and complications from housing the cattle over the seventy-two hour period required to check the animals, he said. Terry Norman, a trade policy expert with the federal Agriculture Department, was cited as saying that Canada has already raised the issue with the US government, adding, "The US federal government is also concerned about what North Dakota intends to do. We don't know if that will result in any changes. We are waiting to see what they do and are preparing to challenge this under WTO and NAFTA if necessary."

## **Use of Antimicrobials in Food Animals: New WHO Recommendations**

World Health Organization Weekly

Epidemiological Report

No. 33, 2000, 75, 265-272

<http://www.who.int/wer>

WHO has just released global principles aimed at mitigating the risks related to the use of antimicrobials in food animals. Among other uses, antimicrobials kill bacteria in animals used for human food. Over seventy experts from human and veterinary medicine, national licensing authorities, pharmaceutical companies and international organizations (such as the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the World Animal Health Organization), met from June 5 to 9, 2000. They discussed six important areas of intervention: antimicrobial registration, distribution/sales, advertising, surveillance, education/training and prudent use. The new recommendations are designed for use by governments, veterinary and other professional societies, industry and academia. Some of the most important measures included in the new global principles were for the containment of antimicrobial resistance which have caused

diarrhea, sepsis (blood-poisoning) and death in humans. Another example is Enterococci infections which present severe treatment problems, particularly in immunocompromised patients, because these bacteria have become resistant to all available antimicrobials. WHO had already convened meetings of experts in 1997 and 1998 to identify and assess the risks associated with the use of antimicrobials in food animals. These meetings recognized the existence of the risk for public health and encouraged WHO to develop principles for prudent use of antimicrobials in food animals. This is one part of WHO's Global Strategy for the Containment of Antimicrobial Resistance. WHO has just issued a major new report on the use of antimicrobials in treating all types of infectious disease.

More information can be obtained on request from: CDS Information Resource Centre, World Health Organization, 1211 Geneva 27, Switzerland; fax:+41 22 791 42 85; email: [cgsdoc@who.int](mailto:cdsdoc@who.int)

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## ***Much Still to Learn About E. Coli and Animals***

Better Farming  
Don Stoneman

<http://www.betterfarming.com/nov99/a-s00-2.htm#muc>

Earlier studies may have been wrong; the E. coli may have been around a lot longer than we thought. Is the water on your farm more at risk from E. coli contamination because you have a large livestock facility? Is your farm more susceptible because your neighbour has one? The questions are, according to this story, common. The answers are not so easy. Scott McEwen, professor, Department of Population Medicine, Ontario Veterinary College, was cited as saying that in spite of a decade of work on E. coli O157:H7, there is still much that is unknown about the bacteria and that tacking the blame for spread of these bacteria onto large farms is "intuitively appealing," but the fact is the E. coli 157:H7 is found in small farms too. It could be that large operations contribute more of the organism to the food chain because of their greater output, but, says McEwen, "It is clearly speculative."

Microbiologists believe that it "has been around for a long time but the acquisition of disease-causing abilities is more recent." Often farms were found to be O157:H7 free, when it is possible that the bacteria were there in very low levels and not detected. This has two implications. The first is that a study which found that dairy farms were relatively free of the disease in the early 1990s may be wrong-headed. That study found that the killer bacteria strain was more likely to be found on small farms with relatively few animals than on larger operations. It's possible that the study simply didn't find extremely low levels of the bacteria. Secondly, because testing methods have improved so

much in the last few years, it is possible that the disease has been around for a long time and wasn't detected before. Now most people believe that the infective bacteria are there more often than previously thought. McEwen isn't sure if US studies have taken herd size into account. Farm size is important in the epidemiology of any disease, McEwen points out. "It stands to reason as we centralize agriculture more and more...it changes the factors that are involved." That said, we have to be careful interpreting this information. Just because the disease isn't found in many cattle in large operations doesn't mean that larger herds aren't putting out more of the bacterium. "Some factors encourage more disease, some mitigate against it," McEwen explains. Expanding herds bring in animals that were raised elsewhere and possibly carrying disease. McEwen is working with scientists in the United Kingdom who found that sales barns were a major contributor in spreading drug-resistant salmonella. "The practice of buying calves and moving them around the country" was a factor in the spread of the disease. Larger herds can be changed for the better if bio-security measures are brought into play. These practices are widespread in pork and poultry operations, less so in dairy and beef. As for how O157:H7 has been spread between animals and herds, no one knows for sure, according to McEwen. Scientists believe that it has been in the background for some time. "Is the larger contaminant a function of the larger number of animals present? I don't think we have the information to make that judgement now," McEwen says. "If we had a vaccine to use strategically, we would like to do that."

## ***Alberta Hires Scientist to Review Air-Quality Findings at Lethbridge Feedlots***

EDMONTON — Alberta's environment minister has, according to this story, hired a scientist to conduct a review of the department's air quality survey on feedlots in the Lethbridge area. The review was prompted by comments made by Dr. Paul Hasselback, head of the Chinook Health Region, questioning the results of the survey. Steve Hrudehy, an expert in Human Health Risk Assessment and Environmental Science at the University of Alberta, will conduct the review. Environment Minister Halvar Jonson, was quoted as saying, "Dr. Hasselback's comments may raise serious concerns with Albertans about the integrity of our air quality surveys. Albertans must be confident that Alberta Environment's air quality surveys are professional and scientifically sound. Dr. Hrudehy's review will determine whether the feedlot survey met those requirements after the Chinook Health Region questioned the validity of the survey's findings." Hasselback's technical response to the survey, released July 12, was cited as questioning the department's interpretation of some of the data and called for more study of the impact of livestock odour on humans, adding, "I don't and the CHR has absolutely no objection to

the quality, methodology or validity of the survey. Where we have a difference of opinion is on what, exactly, those results mean. It's their interpretation on whether health is impacted." Jonson said his department will make the results of the review public but did not say when. Alberta Environment conducted air quality monitoring of intensive livestock operations in the Lethbridge area from September 1998 to July 1999.

Air quality was tested at seventeen sites near Lethbridge in southern Alberta using a mobile air monitoring lab. The survey was cited as identifying the amounts of odour-causing compounds such as hydrogen sulphide, ammonia, hydrocarbons and dust. Fourteen surveys were conducted downwind of livestock feeding operations, while three targeted average control sites in Lethbridge, Picture Butte and Stirling. The survey's results showed almost all the compounds measured were within Alberta's air quality guidelines and within accepted health limits. Only two exceptions were found, both involving hydrogen sulphide at hog facilities. Officials from Alberta Agriculture met with the owners of both facilities.