

Western Canadian Association of

BOVINE PRACTITIONERS

NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 6 NO.1 MARCH, 2001

President's Message - Ken Linde

Nothing keeps an organization healthier than an invigorating time of change, challenges and opportunities. Keeps the board on its toes as well! By way of introduction for those who don't know me, I am a dairy practitioner (WCVN '93) with the Langley Animal Clinic, in the heart of urban(ity) Fraser Valley, British Columbia. My wife, Joanne, and I are in the process of raising five, rambunctious, young children, and are cautiously optimistic about the future of the bovine practice. Four of the five children are already committed to careers as bovine veterinarians.



Ken Linde DVM

Things are optimistic for the WCABP as well. At the WCABP 2001 conference in Calgary we discussed what the association needs to do to keep the bovine veterinarian relevant in the cattle industry and in a country that is placing less and less value on agriculture. It was generally agreed that as an association, we need to keep front and centre on emerging issues in the cattle industry, including food safety, animal welfare, trade and import issues, etc. While our primary task is to provide cutting edge, continuing education for bovine practitioners, this education will become meaningless unless we involve ourselves in the important issues that other sectors of the cattle industry are already involved in. I think a lot of you will agree that the feed industry, equipment/machinery industry and government extension experts all are playing a larger role in cattle operations than in the past. We can't assume that the cattle industry will continue to place a high value on veterinary services, whether they are on-farm technical or consultative services, processing/food safety expertise or governmental advisory services. If, as an association, we

don't speak for the bovine veterinarian who will?

Without going into great detail, some of the new initiatives are:

1. Promotion of the bovine veterinarian career by:

- increased communication with WCVN students, as well as with pre-veterinary, high school students and 4-H groups. This communication involves the development of extension material that can be used by anyone in the profession. A career promotion committee, chaired by Dr. Andy Acton, is in the process of gathering material for this endeavour and welcomes any input.
- providing input into an initiative begun by Dr. Greg Andrews that encourages the industry to work with the WCVN to acquire sufficient funds from the provincial governments (more details later). We plan on working closely with the WCVN to let them know what we need

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DATE:

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Saturday,
January 19, 2002

PLACE:

Saskatoon Inn,
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Saskatchewan

See Page 11
for further details on this
exciting conference.

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From the Secretary-Treasurer's Desk

The January 2001 conference was a success. Attendance was good and feedback from members indicated that it was a good educational meeting. While the final financial figures are pending, it appears that we may have made a little profit on this conference, which will be used toward other CE activities for students and practitioners. Dr. Ray Butler will be coordinating the January 2002 conference in Saskatoon from January 17-19. The conference will be located at the Saskatoon Inn. If you have any ideas on speakers and topics, including what wet labs and case studies you would like included, please contact Dr. Bob Ruckman, who is in charge of next year's program.



Joyce Van Donkersgoed DVM

During the convention, a bear-pit session was held. Based on feedback from members, it was suggested that the WCABP become more involved in attracting young people to food animal practice. The Board will be developing a powerpoint presentation(s) that will be available to all members, which can be used to give presentations to local beef and dairy 4-H students, junior and senior high school students and pre-vet students. If you have any good ideas, video clips or pictures from bovine practice that can be used in the powerpoint presentations, please contact Dr. Andy Acton or myself. As well, we will continue to work with WCVM to promote externships in bovine practice for 3rd and 4th years.

Another item identified in the bearpit session was the need for more political involvement from the WCABP in food animal practice issues. It was identified that the CVMA has few food animal practitioners on the board and that CFIA is managed by non-veterinarians. Apparently, this is resulting in less of a role of veterinarians in food safety and animal health issues than in the past. Therefore, it was suggested by members that we approach other provincial food animal committee chairs, the Western Canadian Association of Swine Practitioners, and our counterpart bovine practitioner associations in Ontario, Quebec and the Atlantic Provinces, to see if we can develop a steering committee and offer our

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Agri-Food Surveillance Systems Branch Update: Johne's Disease and a Veterinary Practice Network for Alberta

H. Morgan Scott DVM, PhD
Veterinary Epidemiologist
Food Safety Division
Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development

This column, the first in a series of quarterly installments from the Agri-Food Surveillance Systems Branch, is designed to keep you, the bovine veterinary practitioner, apprised of our activities. Several years of restructuring the animal health role of the provincial government has left many in private practice wondering about what exactly it is that we do. It's my job to help you discover the changes that will be of importance to your practice and your clients, as well as some of the activities we have planned that may be of interest to you. We are working hard to promote a positive working relationship between veterinary practitioners and our agency. We hope that you will feel free to contact us with your concerns, ideas, and interest!

Recent changes to international trade agreements, through the Sanitary and Phyto-sanitary agreements (SPS) of the World Trade Organization (WTO), have designated that national and regional jurisdictions shall not require trading partners to meet animal health status requirements in excess of their own. In addition, risk assessments and trade import restrictions based on those requirements shall be based on sound and acceptable scientific methods. The WTO has also allowed for regionalization of trade boundaries within countries, giving geographically distinct regions (e.g., western Canada) the opportunity to establish regional trading partnerships with other regions (e.g., northern US states). In terms of animal health, the Organization International des Epizooties (OIE) has been identified as the agency to oversee and establish credible disease status reports for some 150+ countries around the world. OIE lists two categories of animal disease: List A, which includes rapidly spread infectious foreign animal diseases such as Foot and Mouth disease, and List B, which includes other infectious diseases such as Johne's.

The mandate of the Food Safety Division of AAFRD is to provide the necessary support to Alberta agri-food industries to ensure domestic and export market access and protect public health through various food safety initiatives. The Agri-Food Surveillance Systems branch helps fulfil this mandate by conducting passive and active (targeted) surveillance activities. Passive surveillance includes



H. Morgan Scott DVM, PhD

recording and reporting on the disease status of Alberta livestock via existing sources of animal health data such as veterinary diagnostic laboratories and field reports from private practitioners. OIE requires that a suitable passive surveillance system be in place. We are presently fulfilling the first requirement (laboratory data); we need to work with practitioners to establish the necessary network infrastructure to ensure the second. Active (targeted) surveillance encompasses specific research projects designed to survey the disease status more intensely (e.g., prevalence or incidence) of important diseases in Alberta. Recent examples of these projects include *Salmonella* in swine operations, examinations of the brains of mature slaughtered cattle for Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy, and determining the prevalence of Johne's disease in beef and dairy cattle.

As a result of findings from the Johne's prevalence studies in Alberta, indicating up to fifty-eight percent herd prevalence on dairy farms in the province, we have been directed to initiate an integrated Johne's disease control program for the province. A Johne's Working Group (JWG), comprising representatives of the AVMA, WCABP, laboratories, government, cattle (beef and dairy), sheep and elk industries, will be guiding the operations of this control program. The Alberta Government and the cattle industry have committed funds to this initiative. We are in pursuit of additional funding to extend the earlier Johne's research to other ruminant species, and to include cattle herd management risk factors and examine disease ecology in upcoming studies. We are initiating a voluntary herd status program, and developing an awareness campaign and educational materials to assist veterinarians and their clients to work through the challenges of dealing with Johne's disease.

Should our funding applications be successful, we will be seeking to work with Alberta bovine veterinary practitioners in promoting the herd status program. It is our plan to give

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OABP News

Who would have thought that a person could leave this inclement winter we are having in Ontario and arrive in Calgary to a balmy 2 degrees!?! But that is how things turned out during the recent WCABP annual conference. The conference was excellent continuing education with many topics relevant to our every day in practice. I couldn't help but notice the massive participation of students – very encouraging to see! It was also important for us to clarify the kind of relationship sought between OABP and WCABP. It is clear that bovine veterinarians need more representation in organizations such as CVMA, as well as consultation in other issues that cross the provincial barriers

Our board of executives wishes to thank you for the hospitality and warm reception I encountered while in Calgary. We want to extend an invitation to your board to come and participate in our conference to be held in the fall, with date to be announced after the April 19, 2001 spring meeting.

Here in Ontario the executive of the OABP has continued working on medical records in bovine practice. The adoption of on-farm quality assurance programs within the different commodity groups requires accurate on-farm records. Therefore, suppliers of all goods and services to farms will also need documentation. A working group was formed in 1999 to create a set of *expected* records for bovine practice. The expected medical record for an individual animal was relatively simple to achieve, whereas for herd visits it has proven to be a little more difficult to

create. This week the working group got together again and it was concluded that programs such as Dairy Comp 305 can be used to generate meaningful records of herd visits for dairy practitioners. A copy of the document containing the outline of expected medical records is available through the CVO (College of Veterinarian of Ontario) for those interested.

Recently the OABP had an evening of interaction between veterinary students and bovine practitioners. Good food, some drinks and continuing education were the background to a very informative session, where both students and veterinarians had an opportunity to discuss their concerns regarding the hiring of new graduates in bovine practice. Many issues such as long hours worked and the ability to attract students from rural areas into veterinary school were revisited. The consensus was, however, that the externship program is extremely important to introduce future veterinarians to both life in practice as well as a particular area. More programs are needed to allow students to gain practical experience before going into practice.

Finally, for a relationship between our two associations to flourish, we need communication to stay open and current. I am delighted to have attended your conference and look forward to further interaction with your membership at our fall conference.

Clarice Lulai, DVM

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What You Can Do to Prevent Foot and Mouth Disease From Entering Canada

- An outbreak of Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) has been confirmed in the United Kingdom (which includes Great Britain, England, Wales, Scotland) and Northern Ireland, and it has spread to France. Argentina also recently reported a confirmed case of FMD.
- FMD is a reportable disease in Canada and it is classified as a List A disease by the Office International des Epizooties (OIE), meaning it has serious implications for trade.
- FMD is a highly contagious viral disease that affects cattle and pigs, as well as sheep, goats, deer, elk and other cloven hoofed animals. It causes blisters and ulcers on the mouth, tongue, lips, feet and teats. If you see any of these signs on your cattle, contact your district veterinarian. Should disease be suspected, farms will be quarantined until confirmatory tests are completed. Control of FMD is through quarantine, eradication of all infected animals, disinfecting and possibly vaccination.
- FMD is a zoonotic disease; however, very few human cases have ever occurred. Those cases have been due to close contact with infected animals or drinking infected unpasteurized milk. FMD has never been spread to humans by infected meat or meat products, nor from person to person. The human disease is mild, consists of blisters mainly on the hands, feet, mouth or tongue, fever and sore throat. Recovery is usually within one week. People who work with animals can protect themselves by avoiding contact with infected animals, drinking pasteurized milk, and practicing good personal hygiene.
- Should FMD occur in Canada, it will result in an immediate closure of our borders for export of live cattle, sheep and swine, meat and other byproducts, including semen, embryos and hides. The borders would be closed until Canada contains and eliminates the disease, which could be longer than six months.
- This summer, Canada, USA and Mexico conducted a simulated foreign disease outbreak using FMD as the example. The results indicated that FMD could spread quickly through North America and containment would be difficult, resulting in large losses to livestock in all three countries. Therefore, a united effort is needed by NAFTA to prevent disease entry.
- The virus can be spread by inhalation (airborne) or ingestion from;
 - infected people (may survive in nasal passages for up to thirty-six hours), contaminated hair, skin, clothes and footwear
 - infected animals (virus shed in breath, saliva, manure, urine, milk, semen)
 - improperly cooked meat products e.g. sausage
 - infected semen, embryos, biologics, hides
 - infected equipment, vehicles, feed (including water) and food waste
- CFIA has banned all susceptible imports from Europe and increased inspection of passengers and baggage arriving from international flights.

What can you do as a veterinarian and producer?

- Avoid visiting countries experiencing an acute outbreak of FMD until it is contained.
- If you must travel to such a country, do not visit farms or areas with livestock.
- Do not bring any meat, dairy or other animal products back with you.
- Disinfect all clothes (dry clean), footwear (best is to burn) and equipment (e.g. cameras) and take a thorough shower before arriving home.
- Stay away from Canadian farms for at least fourteen days (longer is better).
- Do not host any farm tours or allow visits of anyone who has recently visited or resided in Europe, while the FMD outbreak continues (same will apply to any other countries that may subsequently become infected with FMD in Europe during this outbreak). If you must allow such visitors, then follow the cautions above. Suggest to your European relatives to reschedule their visits until the outbreak in their country has been contained.
- Stay attuned to the news to keep abreast of the latest information on FMD spread and containment. More details on FMD at <http://cattlefeeder.ab.ca>.

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BSE Fact Sheet

Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) - "Mad Cow Disease"

Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE), widely known as "mad cow disease" is a chronic, degenerative disease affecting the central nervous system of cattle. BSE belongs to the family of rare diseases known as transmissible spongiform encephalopathies (TSEs).

Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies

TSEs Affecting Animals

- Scrapie in sheep and goats
- Transmissible Mink Encephalopathy
- Chronic Wasting Disease in deer and elk
- Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE)
- TSEs in captive wild ruminants, cats and monkeys in Europe are believed to have resulted from BSE-contaminated feed. Feline Spongiform Encephalopathy in Europe is also believed to have occurred in this way.

TSEs Affecting Humans

- Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease (CJD)
- Fatal Familial Insomnia
- Gerstmann-Sträussler-Scheinker Disease
- Kuru
- variant CJD (vCJD).

These diseases are caused by a transmissible agent that has yet to be fully characterized. "Prion" is the name used by some, but not all scientists, to refer to the infectious causative agent of TSEs, which differs from bacteria, viruses, fungi, viroids and plasmids. It consists of a single protein and is resistant to common antibacterial procedures, such as cooking heat and freezing. The protein can be destroyed by prolonged autoclaving and prolonged application of disinfectants.

TSEs are associated with a change in the structure of a naturally occurring protein in the cells of the central nervous system and other tissues with the accumulation of this abnormal protein in the brain (PrP - prion protein). These diseases share:

- a prolonged incubation period of months or years between infection and signs of clinical disease;
- a progressive debilitating neurological illness which is always fatal (no treatment or vaccine available);
- specific pathological changes in the nervous tissue; and
- failure to elicit an immune response in the host, making development of a live animal diagnostic test difficult.

Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease (CJD)

Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease (CJD) and vCJD (variant CJD) in humans are distinctly separate TSEs, each with its own clinical and histopathological features. BSE has been

associated with the newly recognized variant form of CJD (vCJD) but not with CJD.

Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease (CJD) occurs as:

- a familial or genetically inherited form (five to ten percent of cases);
- a sporadic form of unknown origin (eighty-five to ninety percent of cases); or
- an iatrogenic form (less than five percent of cases) caused from inadvertent exposure to CJD contaminated surgical equipment or material as a result of brain surgery, corneal grafts, dura mater grafts or use of human pituitary-derived growth hormones or gonadotrophin.

CJD affects approximately one to two people per million each year worldwide, including in countries that do not have BSE and among vegetarians and meat eaters alike. The global incidence of sporadic CJD cases has remained consistent in those countries monitoring it.

Variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease (vCJD)

Variant CJD was first reported in the United Kingdom in 1996 and the number of definite and probable cases as of January 3, 2001 is ninety-two people in Europe (eighty-eight in UK, three in France, 1 in Ireland). To date, there have been no reported cases of vCJD in North America.

Variant CJD differs from CJD in that it

- occurs in younger people (twenty-nine years versus sixty-five years in CJD),
- longer duration of illness (fourteen months versus four to six months for CJD), and
- earlier psychiatric symptoms occur.

Variant CJD likely developed as a result of people consuming products contaminated with central nervous system tissue of BSE-infected cattle. This theory appears to be supported by new research. To date, the BSE agent has only been found in brain, spinal cord and retina (eye) of naturally infected cattle. However, in experimentally infected cattle, it has been found in the dorsal root ganglia (nervous tissue connected to the brain), trigeminal ganglia (nervous tissue connected to the brain), distal ileum (small intestine - presumed associated with lymphoreticular tissues) and bone marrow. Muscle meat and other tissues were not infective in experimental studies.

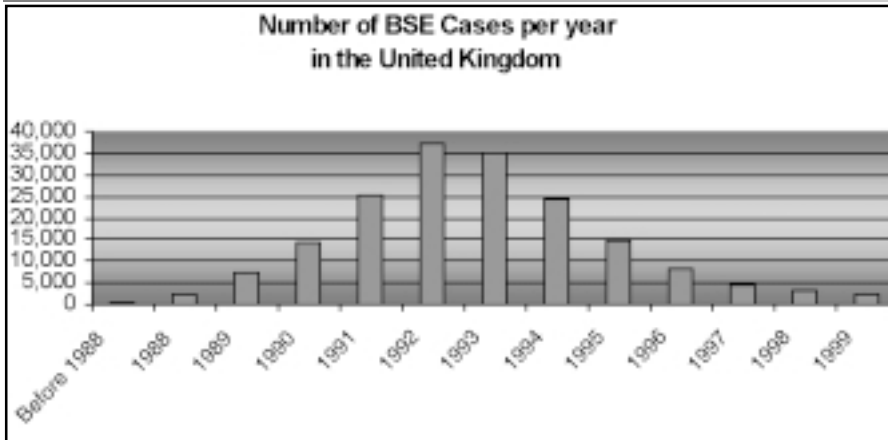
Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE)

Occurrence

BSE was officially identified in November 1986. As of October 31, 2000 the total number of confirmed BSE cases in UK cattle was 180,501. The epidemic peaked in 1992-

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Source: Office of International Epizootics/World Organization for Animal Health, January 2000. http://www.oie.int/eng/info/en_esbru.htm

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1993 with almost 1,000 cases per week.

Currently, approximately thirty cases per week are identified and this number continues to drop. More than ninety-five percent (95%) of BSE cases have been reported in cattle born in the United Kingdom. Ireland, France, Portugal, Belgium, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, Liechtenstein, Denmark, Switzerland, Germany, Spain and Italy have reported cases of BSE in native cattle, but the incidence rate in these countries is significantly lower than in the UK. BSE has not been identified in native cattle in North America. The one case of BSE in Canada was in a single beef cow imported from Great Britain in 1987 and all its herd mates, as well as other cattle determined to be at risk by animal health officials in Canada, were destroyed and incinerated.

Transmission

There are different scientific hypotheses concerning the origins of BSE. The epidemiological data suggest that BSE in the UK is an extended common source epidemic involving feed containing TSE-contaminated meat and bone meal (MBM) as a protein source. The causative agent is suspected to be from either Scrapie-affected sheep or cattle with a previously unidentified TSE. If this theory were true and BSE were to emerge in North America, the federal feed ban would be expected to reduce any amplification of the disease in cattle in the US and Canada.

Changes in rendering operations in the early 1980s, particularly the removal of a solvent extraction process that included a steam heat treatment, may have played a part in the appearance of BSE and the subsequent amplification of the agent in the cattle population. Cases that have been detected in other countries appear to be a result of importation of live cattle or, more significantly, contaminated feed from the UK. There is no evidence that BSE spreads horizontally (i.e., by contact between unrelated adult cattle and from cattle to other species). Limited evidence suggests that maternal transmission may occur at an extremely low level but that it would not perpetuate the

epidemic under current British farming conditions. Research continues in this area.

Successful experimental infection of sheep with BSE has shown that sheep are also susceptible to BSE by the oral route. Thus, importation of sheep exposed to potentially BSE-contaminated protein concentrates in Europe were banned in the United States. In 2000, the United States Department of Agriculture initiated efforts to acquire about 375 sheep imported to Vermont from Europe in 1996, when no import ban on such sheep was in force. These flocks of sheep had been under quarantine since 1998 because of their potential exposure to

BSE-contaminated feed in Europe and, in 2000, four of these sheep were confirmed with an atypical Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathy. Results of strain typing of the agent infecting these sheep to determine whether the atypical agent is BSE, is anticipated to take about two years. Currently, however, cattle remain the only known food animal species with disease caused by the BSE agent.

The long-awaited but controversial final BSE Inquiry Report in the UK released October 24, 2000 (<http://www.bseinquiry.gov.uk/>) concluded that BSE probably originated from a novel source early in the 1970s, possibly a cow or other animal that developed the disease as a consequence of a gene mutation. The report asserts that the cases of BSE identified between 1986 and 1988 were not index cases, nor were they the result of the transmission of Scrapie. They were the consequences of recycling of cattle infected with BSE itself. The BSE agent was spread in meat-and-bone-meal (MBM). The origin of the disease will probably never be known with certainty. Other assertions from the report stated:

- the theory that BSE developed from changes in rendering methods has no validity, because rendering methods have never been capable of completely inactivating TSEs;
- the theory that BSE is caused by application to cattle of organophosphate pesticides is not viable, although there is the possibility that these can increase the susceptibility of cattle to BSE; and
- the theory that BSE is caused by an autoimmune reaction is not viable.

Clinical Signs

Cattle with BSE display gradual changes in several aspects of their behavior, including:

- temperament changes such as increased nervousness or aggression

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- abnormal posture
- coordination problems
- difficulty in rising or walking
- decreased milk production
- severe muscular twitching
- loss of body weight despite a continued appetite

The incubation period for BSE ranges from two to eight years. Following the onset of clinical signs, the animal's condition rapidly deteriorates until it dies (between 2 weeks to six months) or is destroyed. The disease is fatal, and there is no treatment or vaccine to prevent BSE.

Differential Diagnosis

- hypomagnesaemia
- nervous ketosis
- encephalic listeriosis and other encephalitides (e.g. rabies)
- polioencephalomalacia or cerebro-cortical necrosis
- intra-cranial tumors

Diagnosis/Diagnostic Tests

There currently are no proven practical tests available to detect the disease in live cattle. Several laboratories are in the process of developing new tests with practical applications, but these methods are still being evaluated. Farmers may suspect BSE based on a cow's behavior, but cases are confirmed only when veterinary pathologists perform microscopic examination of brain tissue.

There are also supplemental tests, which include detection of Scrapie Associated Fibrils (SAF), by electron microscopy or detection of aberrant prion protein (PrP) through immunohistochemistry, the immunoblot analysis and other techniques that detect unique protein markers.

Surveillance

Many countries, including Canada, have taken precautions to prevent the introduction or spread of BSE. The measures in Canada include:

- halting imports of livestock from countries where BSE was diagnosed. The last importation of live cattle from the UK occurred in 1989. In 1994, all cattle imported from the UK from 1982 forward were destroyed and incinerated. All other cattle imported from the EU have been monitored since 1991 with no evidence of BSE detected.
- making BSE a reportable disease, such that any suspect case of BSE must be reported to a federal veterinarian. Scrapies in sheep and Chronic Wasting Disease in deer and elk are also reportable diseases. If diagnosed, a control and eradication program is in place where all infected animals are destroyed and incinerated or buried.

- creating a BSE surveillance program in 1992 in which the brains of all cattle that might potentially have BSE are tested for the disease. Cattle that are raised for the production of beef are usually too young for detection of the disease, so the program concentrates on older animals, especially those showing suspicious disease signs. A long-standing rabies control program has assisted the effectiveness of the BSE surveillance system. Rabies has similar symptoms to BSE. Any bovine exhibiting symptoms of a central nervous system disorder is subject to a BSE diagnostic test. Since 1992 there have been 4,512 head of cattle tested for BSE with just one cow, an import from the UK, testing positive. That cow, its herd-mates and offspring were destroyed and incinerated as were all UK imports.
- banning the feeding of high-risk materials. Even though very little animal-based protein was used in beef cattle rations, in 1997 new regulations were passed that banned the feeding of ruminant (sheep or cattle) based protein to cattle. Feed manufacturers have embraced this regulation and inspections by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency show 100% compliance. Feeds containing ruminant-based protein destined for other species are labelled "Do Not Feed to Cattle, Sheep, Deer or Other Ruminants". Procedures to avoid cross-contamination are strictly adhered to.
- restricting the importation of animal-based protein feed ingredients. In December, 2000 Canada's import policies were updated to prohibit the importation of all rendered animal protein from all species from any country that Canada has not recognized as being free of BSE. (Currently Canada recognizes only the United States, Australia, New Zealand and Argentina as being free of BSE.) Prior to that rendered animal protein from ruminants had been prohibited but rendered protein from non-ruminants had been allowed. Even so, due to economic factors, these feed ingredients were rarely imported from anywhere other than the US. It is believed that BSE may have been spread in the EU from infected feed exported from the UK. Canada has not imported any meat and bone meal from the UK since 1982.
- controlling the importation of products that are assessed to have a high risk of introducing BSE into Canada. Countries that wish to export meat or meat products to Canada are assessed on an individual basis according to the level of risk involved.
- introducing measures to speed up tracing of any serious disease of cattle. On January 1, 2001 the cattle industry launched the Canadian Cattle Identification Program which individually identifies Canadian cattle with a unique number printed on an ear tag. Should a serious

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health problem ever occur in Canadian cattle this program will facilitate rapid tracing and elimination of the disease.

It's important to note that the reported BSE status of a country may not accurately reflect the risk of importing meat or meat products from that country, for several reasons. First, because of the long period between when an animal becomes infected with BSE and when it becomes ill. A report of BSE in a country may still occur after new controls have been put in place. Also, the disease may not be accurately reported in all countries, thus making it difficult to assess the risk of importing products from those countries.

What beef and dairy producers can do . . .

- If you notice an animal showing any of the signs of BSE, contact your veterinarian, or notify your local district veterinarian of the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, who is listed in the blue government pages of the phone book.
- Check your feedbags carefully for the label "Do not feed to cattle, sheep, deer or other ruminants." This feed contains materials prohibited for ruminants.
- If you mix feed on your farm, make sure that you don't mix feeds for non-ruminants (such as horses, swine, poultry, etc.) with any feed for ruminants.
- If you have both ruminants and non-ruminants on your farm, or if you mix your own feeds on your farm, keep all invoices for feeds. January 29, 2001.

Dr. Joyce Van Donkersgoed

Collated from excerpts from reports by WHO, OIE, USDA/APHIS, NCBA, CFIA and CCA.

CCA's response to BSE - <http://www.cattle.ca/NEWSROOM/NewsCurrent/BSEreport.htm>

CFIA's fact sheet on BSE - <http://www.cfia-acia.agr.ca/english/anima/heasan/disemala/bseesbe.shtml>

USDA-APHIS information on BSE -

<http://www.aphis.usda.gov/oa/bse/>

USDA-APHIS ban on animal protein - <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/lpa/press/2000/12/reed.12.19.txt>

NCBA's response to BSE - http://www.beef.org/newsroom/ncba/ncba01_0125a.htm

NCBA information site on BSE - <http://www.bseinfo.org>

OIE information on BSE - http://www.oie.int/eng/maladies/fiches/A_B115.HTM

WHO site on BSE - <http://www.who.int/emc/diseases/bse/>

WHO fact sheet on BSE - <http://www.who.int/inf-fs/en/fact113.html>

WHO fact sheet on vCJD - <http://www.who.int/inf-fs/en/fact180.html>

WHO program for surveillance of BSE - <http://www.who.int/emc/disease/bse/index.html>

McDonald's Enforcing Beef Rules

The Associated Press
Philip Brasher

WASHINGTON – McDonald's Corp. is, according to this story, starting on its own to enforce widely disregarded federal regulations aimed at keeping the nation's beef supply free of mad cow disease.

The fast-food giant has given packers until April 1 to document that the cattle they buy have been fed in accordance with the federal rules. Officials were cited as saying the action by the nation's largest buyer of beef has had a ripple effect throughout the industry, and that major meatpackers, including IBP Inc., Excel and ConAgra, have told their cattle suppliers they must document their compliance with feed rules. Janet Riley, a spokeswoman for the American Meat Institute, which represents packers, was quoted as saying, "If McDonald's is requiring something of their suppliers, it has a pretty profound effect."

The Livestock Marketing Association has advised its members to begin requiring documentation from cattle producers or risk being unable to sell to slaughterhouses.

In a recent memo advising its member auction yards on how to comply with the documentation requirement, the

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the program a "kick-start" by contracting with practitioners to blood sample dairy and beef herds for Johne's, administer a herd management survey, and advise their clients as to appropriate actions to take based on the sampling results. Details of the herd status program are still to be ironed out, but it is in our design strategy that test-negative herds from this survey will be offered entry into Level I of the program. Details of the complete Johne's Control Program and the process for herd veterinarians interested in the herd status certification process will be mailed to all mixed and large animal veterinary practices in the province by this summer. We will also be working with the newly formed National Johne's Working Group to develop a national control program.

We see this aspect of the program as a unique opportunity to establish the beginnings of a more formal veterinary practice network. We foresee this building into an on-going relationship that could include the development of a network with continuing education opportunities, other joint research programs, a secure web-access site for anonymous animal health data reporting and first/exclusive access to summary and trend reports for the province. We hope that you will see an opportunity in working with us in the near future to further the animal health needs of Alberta's agri-food industries.

from them (graduates, continuing education), and what we can do for them to achieve those goals.

2. Promotion of ongoing research through:
 - providing input to the National Production Limiting Diseases Committee.
3. Increased activity with other organizations and associations:
 - liaison with the CVMA, CFIA, Ontario Bovine Practitioners Association, Quebec Bovine Practitioners Association and Atlantic Bovine Practitioners Association. We're also very fortunate to have Dr. Joyce Van Donkersgoed, our secretary-treasurer, play an integral role on the board, since she is very much involved with veterinarian and non-veterinarian groups within the cattle industry.

In short, we are committed to the best continuing education, but also are aware that we need to profile the bovine veterinarian. We look forward to hearing from you concerning these initiatives.

Ken Linde, DVM

services to the CVMA. This is in progress.

As well, members suggested that we develop subcommittees to deal with rising issues e.g. feed medications, Johnes. This is under advisement.

During the bearpit session and Annual General Meeting, the financial statements of the WCABP were reviewed, and the annual dues were discussed. With changes in office structure and rising costs, it was identified that WCABP could not continue to function with the current membership dues of \$50.00 per annum. Three options of dues were presented to the members, and they voted on increasing the membership dues to \$145.00 per year, equivalent to the dues from AABP and other associations. This increase in dues will cover office administration costs and allow for a one-year reserve to cover off unexpected losses e.g. bad weather and poor attendance at the convention. As well, members will have reduced convention registration rates. Any profit from the annual convention will be used to deal with the new initiatives described above and identifying other CE opportunities for bovine practitioners.

Dr. Andy Acton is in charge of the Vet Advice column for Cattlemen's magazine. If any of you are interested in submitting an article, please contact Andy. The Board has also decided to approach Cattlemen's magazine and ask for \$150.00 payment for the articles, which were previously submitted at no charge. It was suggested that this \$150.00 should go into a fund to support activities to encourage young people into bovine practice.

Dr. Joyce Van Donkersgoed

association said, "While this latest food safety effort will involve considerable additional work and inconvenience to the markets and dealers as well as our customers, we must all do our part to assure high consumer confidence in the meat supply."

The Food and Drug Administration reported recently that hundreds of feed makers had failed to comply with its feed regulations, which are designed to keep brain-wasting disease, bovine spongiform encephalopathy, from spreading if it ever reaches this country.

Europe's cattle industry suffered severe losses after consumers began shunning beef because of fears that humans can contract a similar brain disease from eating meat infected with BSE.

"Here in the US, it's always been BSE-free. We want to keep it that way," McDonald's spokesman Walt Riker said Tuesday.

2002 Conference News

Mark your calendar now for the tenth anniversary conference of the WCABP, which will be held from Thursday to Saturday, January 17 to 19, 2002 in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan.

Conference Chairman, Bob Ruckman, with the assistance of Ray Butler, is well ahead with organizing a first-rate educational program.



Oded Nir

A full-dairy workshop will be held on the Thursday concurrent with a similar program for beef practitioners.

The pre-conference dairy workshop will be conducted by Oded Nir (Markusfeld), Director of Veterinary Services and Animal Health for the Israeli Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development.

Following graduation from the Liverpool University Veterinary School in 1963, Oded embarked on a distinguished career in veterinary medicine. He has held posts as District Veterinarian in western Galilee, taught Dairy Herd and Clinical Medicine at the Koret Veterinary School and has presented international postgraduate courses in Italy and Denmark; all this while rising to the rank of Brigadier General in the Israeli Defence Force.

Despite the fact that they operate under adverse conditions, including a limited land base and a formidable climate, Israeli dairy producers lead the world in terms of milk production per cow. Much of this success can be attributed to a progressive national herd health program in which Oded is a principal player.

The newly renovated Saskatoon Inn will be the site of most of the sessions. (Some thought is being given to hold one or two wet labs at the Western College of Veterinary Medicine.) An attractive room rate has been offered by the hotel.

Watch upcoming editions of the *Bovine Practitioners Newsletter* and the WCABP website for further announcements on the 2002 Conference. Rooms can be booked by calling 1-800-667-8789. Room reservations can also be made online at www.saskatooninn.com

Letter From Dr. Butler DVM

39 Moxon Crescent
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan S7H 3B8

March 7, 2001

Members of the WCABP,

Doreen and I send the WCABP Board and membership our sincere thanks for your thoughtfulness regarding the presentations that were made in Calgary.

The attractive bronze, *The Pail Bunter* by Don Begg, has already been placed in a prominent place in our home and will remind us of our many ties with the WCABP.

Establishment of a WCABP scholarship or bursary program that will encourage young people to pursue a career in bovine practice will be a tangible means for the Association to demonstrate our interest in the future development of bovine practice. I look forward to working with the Board and other members in determining the most appropriate means of implementing the program. Providing assistance to undergraduate veterinary students who wish to "see practice" is being given serious consideration along with the provision bursaries to deserving students. Your suggestions and comments would be most welcome. They can be directed to me at the above address, by phone (306-651-3383), fax (306-651-4179) or e-mail butlerd@sk.sympatico.ca.

I look back on my involvement with the WCABP as among the most rewarding work of my forty-seven years as a veterinarian. I look forward to my continuing involvement with the WCABP educational program.

Food animal practice has always faced challenges but, to my mind, none as serious as those which we are currently experiencing. The maintenance of a vigorous WCABP may well prove to be a critical component in maintaining the effectiveness of bovine practitioners in the food production industry.

Kind regards



R.S. Butler, DVM

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