

WCABP

Western Canadian Association
of Bovine Practitioners



newsletter

Volume 8 No.3 December 2003

President's Message: WCABP Newsletter

Dr. John R. Campbell




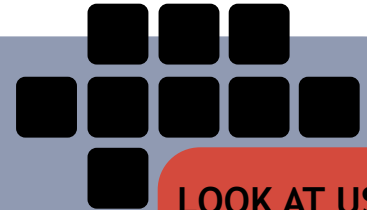
Over the last few weeks, we have seen more progress towards the importation of live Canadian cattle under 30 months into the USA. Hopefully, by the time our annual meeting and conference are held, that will be nearing fruition. The impacts of BSE have been felt widely throughout many of our practices. Unfortunately, the impacts of BSE on the cull cow market may have the longest lasting and largest impact on many of our practices and our clients. The implementation of a cull cow assistance program is still up in the air, but it would appear that our borders will remain closed in terms of cull cows for some time to come. If there is an opportunity for the WCABP to voice the concerns of our members to government we will endeavour to do so.

I was fortunate to be able to recently attend the Ontario Association of Bovine Practitioner's annual meeting in Guelph, Ontario. The continuing education was excellent and just as at our annual conference, many stories were told and friendships renewed during the coffee and meal breaks. Many of the issues that their association are addressing are issues that the WCABP

Board are also grappling with. I am hopeful that over the next few years the WCABP would be able to improve our liaisons with the other bovine practitioner groups within Canada so that on at least some issues, we could speak with a united voice.

The WCABP Board recently made a decision to change to a new management association. Ken Barteski, Phyllis Mierau, Cheryl Pasulyko, and Deborah Beddome make up K3 Kensingling Inc., a management association group based in Saskatoon. No doubt many of you will get a chance to meet them in the future whenever you need to contact the WCABP. The K3 team have just recently taken over our office management and I am confident that we will have a great team helping us out with WCABP affairs.

Dr. Richard Harland and Dr. Ray Butler have put together a great program for our annual conference in Calgary. Thanks go to all our sponsors who make our annual conference possible. We'll have the opportunity to hear from several experts on the latest on the BSE problem as well as lots of other hot topics and there are excellent opportunities for continuing education in the pre-conference beef and dairy seminars. I hope to see many of you there in January. 



LOOK AT US!

The WCABP is proud to unveil a new look for 2004. Check out our new website as well!
www.wcabp.com

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From the Secretary-Treasurer's Desk

Please accept my apologies for the late delivery of the fall newsletter. I take full blame for the delay.

The last several weeks have been hectic ones for all associated with keeping the Association under control. The months leading up to the Conference are always busy with finalizing the program; completing arrangements with speakers and sponsors, finalizing the hotel contract, finding entertainment and the like. Added to the mix this year has been finding and completing a contract with a new management firm and helping to arrange the move of all WCABP materials and records from Calgary to Saskatoon. In addition, the WCABP Office received a visit from the GST auditor, the results of which are still being negotiated.

I like to think that we can now see a light at the end of the tunnel which, hopefully, is not on the front of an approaching train.

The BSE disaster is still with us which validates the conference planners' decision to devote a full day's program to exploring the depths of the dilemma.

I was disturbed to learn that some of our student members who received "Seeing Practice" bursaries were turned away by practitioners when they sought to gain exposure to bovine practice.



We should keep in mind that today's graduates have a range of employment opportunities open to them. Should not cattle practitioners in Western Canada do what they can to encourage potential colleagues to consider a career in large animal practice? Your thoughts and comments would be welcome.

What are the consequences for the veterinary profession if we are unable to meet the demand from cattle producers for an adequate supply of cattle practitioners?

A recent article that appeared in a Western Canadian magazine which has wide readership among farmers and ranchers promoted the concept of downgrading the pre-requisites and the training needed to become a veterinarian in order to ensure that larger numbers would be available to meet the demand in rural areas.

On a more positive note - I look forward to seeing all of you at the Calgary meeting. The WCVM students are planning to come in force; an opportunity for all of us to meet future colleagues. My travel agent just called to say that a seat sale is now available.

Best wishes to all for a happy holiday season and health and prosperity in 2004.

Ray Butler, Acting Secretary/Treasurer 🐾

Your Association Needs You

January 15 to 17; dates for the 2004 conference are rapidly approaching. It is time to consider who will join the Board to steer the WCABP through what will likely prove to be a critical period in its development.

The WCABP office is going through major restructuring with transfer of our office administration to **K3 Consulting Inc.**, in Saskatoon; also the appointment of a new Secretary-Treasurer, scheduled to take place in January 2004.

HELP IS NEEDED - WHY NOT YOU?

The Board is made up of eight members; the President, President-elect and; Past President; three members at large plus two ex officio (non-voting) members; the Director of District XIII of the American Association of Bovine Practitioners and the Secretary-Treasurer.

Traditionally the Board holds 8 to 10 meetings per year, all but one or two by teleconference; the others during the annual Conference. Do not hesitate to contact the Secretary-Treasurer or any Board member to obtain more information on the commitment and the benefits.

Candidates are needed to fill two positions each having a three-year term; one 'member at large' and, 2004 president-elect. It is hoped that the incoming President-elect will fill the positions of President and Past President in succeeding years.

Nomination forms were recently mailed out with the conference registration packages. You do not have to be nominated by another member; just indicate on the form that you would be willing to stand for office. **Elections will be held at the AGM on Friday, January 16.** 🐾



WCABP

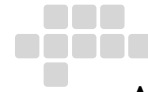
Western Canadian Association
of Bovine Practitioners

NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Friday, January 16, 2004
12:15pm

EXECUTIVE ROYAL INN
2828 - 23rd Street NE, Calgary, Alberta

Agenda to include executive reports, election of officers, and award presentations



Are You a Life Member?

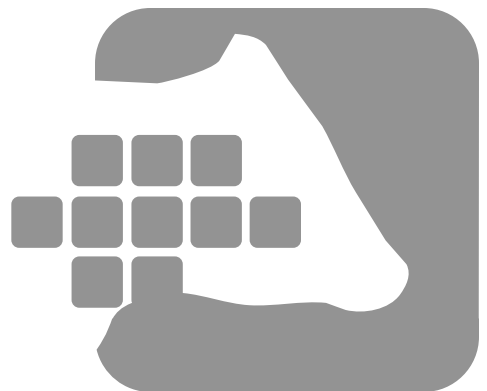
Taken from the WCABP By-Laws (2001):

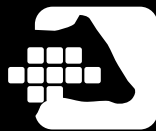
Life members shall be those persons who have reached the age of 65; have been members of the Corporation since its inception or for at least ten years and continue to be active practitioners and supporters of the corporation and who have been accorded unanimous approval by the Board of Directors. Life members shall have the privileges of an "active member" but shall not be required to pay dues.

Please notify the Secretary-Treasurer if you satisfy the above requirements.

Life memberships are awarded at the time of the annual meeting.

www.wcabp.com





WCABP

Western Canadian Association
of Bovine Practitioners

WCABP 2003 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

PRESIDENT

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Email: info@wcabp.com

ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2004

January 15 - 17, 2004
Calgary, Alberta

Executive Royal Inn

don't miss out!

REMINDER

By now you should have received your
2004 Membership Renewal Form.
Please forward completed form and
payment to:



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of Bovine Practitioners

WCABP

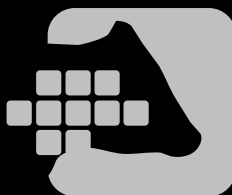
112G-116 Research Dr.
Saskatoon, SK S7N 3R3
Fax: 306.956.0607



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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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www.wcabp.com



NOVEMBER, 2003

By Cindy McCreath,
CCA Communications Manager

LIVE CATTLE EXPORTS

The proposed rule for exporting live cattle under 30 months, bone-in beef, carcasses and other products to the U.S. was published November 4 in the U.S. Federal Register. There is a 60-day comment period. Taking into account the Christmas and New Year breaks, the United States Department of Agriculture says comments will be accepted until January 5. Comments must then be assessed. Following the assessment, the date when live cattle will again be eligible for export will be determined. The proposed rule can be viewed at www.usda.gov.

The Canadian Cattlemen's Association (CCA) reacted very positively toward the announcement. *"We're getting closer to that light at the end of the tunnel,"* said CCA President Neil Jahnke. *"The USDA acknowledged today that shutting off exports from a country such as Canada that has taken all the proper precautions to prevent the spread of BSE is a global over-reaction. We need rational science-based responses. Today's announcement is a step in the right direction, and we trust that our global trading partners around the world are taking note."*

ANIMAL HEALTH POLICY HARMONIZATION

The Canadian Cattlemen's Association (CCA), supported by industry stakeholders and a number of Provincial Governments, has formally requested that the Government of Canada make a commitment to changing how the livestock diseases Bluetongue and Bovine Anaplasmosis are dealt with in Canada and implement policies more compatible with the United States. Currently both Bluetongue and Bovine Anaplasmosis are on the Reportable Disease list in Canada, which is usually reserved for highly contagious diseases and those which pose a potential risk for humans. Neither of the diseases is contagious, nor do either of these diseases pose any risk to humans. The CCA has requested that both diseases be placed on the annual notifiable list, as they are in the U.S., and which provides for the industry to take responsibility for managing the risk.

The CCA is committed to pursuing this matter to a satisfactory conclusion, which will include full consultation with other livestock industries in Canada and other relevant stakeholders.

The USDA acknowledged today that shutting off exports from a country such as Canada, that has taken all the proper precautions to prevent the spread of BSE, is a global over-reaction.



BEEF EXPORTS

The first beef exports from Canada since the diagnosis of BSE on May 20 moved into the U.S. on September 10. Since that time exports have rebounded well, with export certificates issued the last three weeks of October exceeding the certificates issued for the same time period in 2002.

In late October the U.S. added tongues, hearts, kidneys and lips from cattle under 30 months of age to its list of products eligible for import from Canada. Other products eligible for import are boneless beef and liver from cattle under 30 months and boneless veal. The proposed rule published November 4 in the U.S. Federal Register for comment will also allow importation of bone-in beef, carcasses, and live feeder and slaughter cattle under 30 months when it goes into effect.

INTERNATIONAL EXPORT MARKETS

Returning from an international trade mission, Canada Beef Export Federation (CBEF) President Ted Haney expressed optimism that some Asian markets will soon re-open to Canadian beef. He expects the Macau market to open first with Taiwan, Hong Kong and China following. CBEF represented the Canadian beef industry in talks that included representatives of several Asian governments, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Health Canada and the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade. Canada is in discussions with China to assist that country in developing BSE control and response programs. Haney believes China will re-open its borders in recognition of Canada's assistance. CBEF has invited a Taiwan expert panel on BSE to Canada in late November to better understand how federal and provincial regulations work together to decrease the risk of BSE.

NEW RESTAURANT OFFERINGS HELPING MOVE MORE BEEF

Canada's foodservice industry is helping Canadian beef producers by providing new dishes featuring cuts of beef not normally offered in restaurants. Developing meal options from alternative cuts of beef takes the pressure off cuts traditionally used by restaurants such as prime rib, strip loin and sirloin.

Examples of new products now available are:

- **A&W** - steak burger made with 100% ground chuck
- **Monanta's** - new short rib item
- **Kelsey's** - eye of round as an appetizer and entrée
- **Country Style Donuts** - new Philly steak sandwich
- **ABC Restaurants** - 100% Canadian sirloins on breakfast menu

"We Proudly Serve Canadian Beef" is a new merchandising kit developed by the Beef Information Centre foodservice team. The Beef Information Centre is a division of the Canadian Cattlemen's Association.

CANADIANS GETTING INTO A BEEF STEW

While the U.S. and Mexico have partially opened their borders to Canadian beef, there's still an overly abundant supply of the less tender cuts. These cuts are some of the most economical and are ideal for a slow-simmered stew. *"Everyone can pitch in and help out a bit to consume these cuts,"* says Joyce Parslow, Beef Information Centre (BIC) home economist. *"These cuts are perfect this time of year. You can buy a roast and cube it yourself or pick up a package of pre-cut stewing beef cubes."*

Stews taste even better when leftovers are re-heated. They can also be divided into meal-sized portions and frozen. Throw together a stew and do something good for yourself, your family and Canadian beef farmers. For recipe ideas visit the BIC website at www.beefinfo.org. The BIC is a division of the Canadian Cattlemen's Association.

DAILY UPDATES

Daily updates on the current BSE situation and other issues of importance are available at www.info-cca.ca. For those without Internet access they can also be heard by calling 1-866-INFO-CCA toll free (1-866-463-6222). This service is brought to you by the Canadian Cattlemen's Association and DuPont Canada®. 🐄

The Stage Is Set For A Repeat Performance Of A First Rate Annual Conference in 2004

Following on the great success of the 2003 meeting, Calgary's Executive Royal Inn will again be our host hotel in 2004. The 2004 conference is scheduled to take place from **Thursday to Saturday, January 15 to 17. Plan to be there!**

Two concurrent pre-conference seminars (dairy and beef) are planned for the Thursday, followed the next day by topics of current interest including the ever popular Industry Presentations and the 2004 Annual General Meeting.

Friday evening will be in the form of an informal buffet and entertainment - no speeches. This will provide the ideal setting for conference goers to meet and mingle with their friends and colleagues and become acquainted with students from the WCVM as well as conference speakers.

Thanks to a corporate sponsor the evening will be very easy on the wallet while enjoying a full buffet of delectable offerings - no need to have dinner before you come!

The Saturday program will be an in-depth

analysis of many aspects of the BSE disaster featuring a slate of speakers representing diversified viewpoints on what the Canadian beef industry has experienced to planning for the future in a "BSE world". Speakers include two colleagues from the U.K. and **Dr. Brian Evans**, Canada's 'veterinarian at the centre' of the BSE control program.

ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2004

January 15 - 17, 2004
Calgary, Alberta

Executive Royal Inn

don't miss out!

The Executive Royal Inn has again offered an attractive room rate of \$84.00 (plus taxes)

per night, single or double occupancy. **Book early** to ensure you have accommodation. Fax: 403-291-2019 or toll-free at 1 877-769-2562 or email northcalgary@royalinn.com

Please register early, if for no other reason than to assist conference planners with the task of estimating the conference materials that will be needed. In the event your plans change and you have to cancel your registration, you will be given a full refund.

A complete program package has been mailed to all members. Visit www.wcabp.com (the WCABP website) for up-to-date information and to register "on line".

2004 PRE-CONFERENCE SEMINARS

Two full-day concurrent pre-conference seminars are planned for **Thursday, January 15:**

A) RESPIRATORY DISEASE IN BEEF CATTLE

Dr. Ted Clark of WCVM will provide comment on presentations given by three colleagues:

continues on page 9...

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Bursary Winners Announced

Large animal practitioners and livestock owners in many rural communities have expressed concern for a number of years that new veterinary graduates are not being attracted in the numbers needed to adequately serve the agricultural sector. Some veterinarians, wishing to retire from practice, have been unable to find a replacement and have left their community without veterinary service.

In an effort to address the problem, the WCABP established the Ray Butler 'Seeing Practice' Bursary program in 2001 to "encourage first year students at the Western College of Veterinary Medicine to pursue careers in bovine practice".

The WCABP committed to funding three bursaries of \$1,000 per year for 2002, 2003 and 2004. The long-term objective is to provide bursaries in perpetuity.

This year's bursary winners are: Thera Fox of Wapella, Saskatchewan; Melissa Hittinger of Morinville, Alberta and; Justin Noble of Estevan, Saskatchewan.

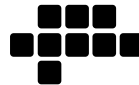


L to R - Justin Noble, Thera Fox, Melissa Hittinger

Each will receive a bursary of \$1,000 to support a visit with a large animal practitioner.

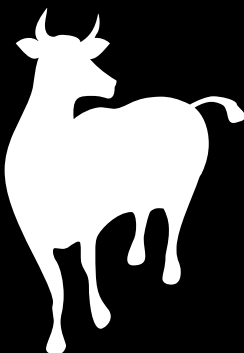
The bursary winners have agreed to spend a minimum of 12 days accompanying a large animal practitioner to gain a better appreciation of the benefits and shortcomings of rural practice.

Two previous award winners were unable to find practitioners who would be willing to allow them to visit their practices. In order for the program to work effectively, veterinarians should think back to the time when they were in the same position and go out of their way to accommodate these young people. 🐾



CONFERENCE 2004

There still are a few sponsorship opportunities available, please contact Dr. Ray Butler at 306.651.3383 or email butlerd@sasktel.net, if you are interested in becoming a part of the WCABP Conference 2004.



Help Wanted:

ASSOCIATE FIELD SERVICE VETERINARIAN

Feedlot Health Management Services, a eight-veterinarian beef cattle consulting practice located in Okotoks, Alberta, has an immediate position opening for a motivated, professional, and organized veterinarian with excellent communication and interpersonal skills.

The Associate Field Service Veterinarian will provide both task-oriented and consultative veterinary services to feedlot and cow/calf clients of the organization.

Previous experience as a bovine practitioner and dealing with commercial feedlot and cow/calf clients is considered an asset.

The standard hours of work are 8:00 - 5:00 PM; Monday to Friday. In addition, participation in the weekend and statutory holiday's veterinarian rotation schedule is required. This position is a full-time position starting as soon as possible.

Fax resume to (403) 995-7703. 🐾



Who Will Be the 2003 Veterinarian of the Year?

Nominations are invited for the 2003 WCABP Veterinarian of the Year.

In addition to the wall plaque presented to the winner each year, Boehringer-Ingelheim annually makes a donation of \$500 to the Ray Butler Bursary Fund, in the name of the Veterinarian of the Year and maintains a master plaque, which is housed in the WCVM Library.

Nominations are now invited and should be in the hands of the Secretary-Treasurer no later than **December 23, 2003**.

Nomination forms are available from the WCABP Office (info@wcabp.com; 1-866-269-8387) or the Secretary-Treasurer (butlerd@sasktel.net; 306-651-3383).

The award was first presented in 1995 to Dr. Albert Barth of the Western College of Veterinary Medicine. Succeeding winners were: Dr. Rod Sydenham; Dr. Ray Butler; Dr. Richard Vanderwal; Dr. Otto Radostits; Dr. David Hamilton; Dr. Wayne Sereda; Dr. Dwayne Elashuk (posthumous) and; Dr. Ted Clark. 🐾

VETERINARY POSITION AVAILABLE

Full-time position available immediately in mixed practice in Northern Alberta. The practice is at least 50% small animal with large animal portion primarily cow/calf and some equine. Growth occurring in small animal portion of practice. This is a beautiful area of the country and ideally suited for someone with a good personality, strong work ethic and desire to become an essential member of a growing community. The successful applicant would be working with an experienced veterinarian and two trained animal-health technologists and there is strong community support for the practice.

CONTACT:

Dr. Wendy Quist
Frontier Vet
Box 670
Fort Vermilion, AB T0H 1N0
Tel: (780) 927-4500
Fax: (780) 927-4503 🐾

Welcome Aboard!

Effective November 1, 2003, WCABP engaged K3 Kensingling Inc. to provide advisory and management services. K3 Kensingling Inc. will also oversee the production of the Association's quarterly newsletter, maintain the Association's website (www.wcabp.com) and assist Dr. Butler in the organization of the 2004 Conference.

Your new WCABP team from K3 Kensingling Inc. come with the experience, skills and, most important, the best interests of our Association at heart which holds the promise of a long and mutually beneficial relationship.

The members of the K3 Kensingling Inc. team are:

Phyllis Mierau & Cheryl Pasulyko - This work-sharing duo is responsible for all day-to-day activities and will be your main WCABP contact. **Phyllis** may be familiar to many of you as she has previously spent a combined twenty-five years in the industry, with BIOSTAR Inc. (1993-2000) and the Vaccine Infectious Disease Organization (VIDO) (1976-1993). **Cheryl** has had a long association with the principal of K3 Kensingling Inc. and since 1996 she and **Phyllis** have shared the Executive Assistant to the President and C.E.O. of first BIOSTAR Inc. and most recently ALviva Biopharmaceuticals Inc. You will find **Phyllis** in the office the first part of the week and **Cheryl** the later part. Please feel free to contact either of them by telephone at 1-866-269-8387 or by email at phyllis.cheryl@K3kensingling.ca

Deborah Beddome - **Deborah** has been associated with K3 Kensingling Inc. for the past five years and is responsible for all aspects of WCABP's accounting as well as the maintenance of the Association's membership database. Contact **Deborah** by phone at 1-866-269-8387 or by email at dbeddome@K3kensingling.ca

Ken Barteski - The principal of K3 Kensingling Inc. **Ken** is a chartered accountant with over twenty-seven years of experience in both public practice and industry. **Ken** possesses a sound business background as well as experience in the field of marketing and promotions. In addition to directing the quarterly newsletter and website, **Ken** is an excellent resource for **Phyllis, Cheryl** and **Deborah** as well as the WCABP. You can email **Ken** at ken@K3kensingling.ca

If you are in Saskatoon, please feel free to stop by for a visit, or to contact any of your new WCABP team as follows:

ADDRESS:
112G - 116 Research Drive
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan
S7N 3R3



TELEPHONE: 1-866-269-8387
FAX: 1-306-956-0607

E-MAIL:

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- dbeddome@K3kensingling.ca
- ken@K3kensingling.ca
- info@wcabp.com



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of Bovine Practitioners

www.wcabp.com

Phyllis



Cheryl



Deborah



Ken



Mark your Calendars for the

23rd World Congress for Buiatrics

Quebec - July 2004

DANIELLE CLAING

Secrétaire du
23e Congrès mondial de Buiatrie

dclaing@wbc2004.ca

Telephone:
450-773-8521 ext 8476
514-345-8521

Fax:
450-778-8120



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Friday, January 16, 2004
12:15pm

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2828 - 23rd Street NE, Calgary, Alberta

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of Bovine Practitioners

WCABP

112G-116 Research Dr.
Saskatoon, SK S7N 3R3
Fax: 306.956.0607



The WCABP newsletter can also be found on the WCABP website at www.wcabp.com

Dr. Eugene Janzen to be Honoured

Plan to attend the testimonial dinner, which will be held on the evening of Saturday, January 17, 2004 to recognize the accomplishments of Eugene Janzen after serving for 25 years as a clinician in the Department of Large Animal Clinical Sciences at the Western College of Veterinary Medicine.



Rick Miller.

Eugene left Canada in 1975 to study under Dr. Doug Blood at the University of Melbourne (Australia), where he was awarded the M.V.S. Degree in 1977.

On returning to Canada he joined the WCVM as an Assistant Professor in, what was then, the Department of Clinical Studies. During his academic career, Eugene was the author or co-author of over 80 scientific publications and was in high demand as an invited lecturer, a speaker at academic conferences and innumerable veterinary meetings, predominantly in North America but also in Europe and Australia. In addition, he has served as a consultant to many veterinary pharmaceutical companies.

Awards received during his years at the WCVM include: S.V.M.A. Veterinarian of the Year (2001); CVMA Schering-Plough Large Animal Practitioner Award (1998); Canadian Society of Animal Science Canadian Animal Industries Award in Extension and Public Service (1994) and; the Stan M. Olson Memorial Award for Teaching Excellence.

Eugene is recognized for his practical approach and sincere interest in finding solu-

Eugene recently joined Feedlot Health Management Services Ltd. in Okotoks, Alberta, one of North America's largest veterinary groups with specific interests in cattle production.

Eugene was born and raised on a dairy farm near Rosthern, Saskatchewan where he took his early schooling.

He attended the University of Saskatchewan and earned the Bachelor of Arts in 1967 before enrolling at the WCVM, receiving the DVM degree in 1972.

On graduation he moved to Alberta where he joined the Vegreville Veterinary Clinic, working with the late Dr. Ab Bildfell and Dr.



tions to problems that are referred to him by a host of veterinary practitioners across Western Canada.

Plan to join the WCABP on Saturday evening, January 17 for a gala banquet with Eugene's friends, family, colleagues and past and present students in recognizing his contributions to our profession and welcoming him back to his career in private practice. The organizing committee acknowledges the Feedlot Health Management Services, Novartis Animal Health and Schering Plough Animal Health for their generous support of this banquet.

Tickets may be purchased from the WCABP Office or through the WCABP website (www.wcabp.com.)

The Stage Is Set *continued from page 6...*

Dr. Chris Clark: An Overview of Bovine Respiratory Disease; Highlighting Respiratory Disease in Calves

Dr. Eugene Janzen: Atypical Interstitial Pneumonia; Ramifications, Differential Diagnosis, Management, Prevention

Dr. John Campbell: Mycoplasma and Related Pneumonias

Dr. Philip Griebel, of the Vaccine and Infectious Disease Organization (VIDO), no stranger to WCABP conferences and always a popular speaker, will follow with a presentation entitled; New Developments in Vaccine Technology.

The beef session will wrap up with a 45-minute Alberta Bear Pit Session that will involve all speakers and the audience.

B) DAIRY PRE-CONFERENCE SEMINARS

Dr. Ewen Ferguson of Campbellford, Ontario, will join with our own **Dr. Gord Atkins** of Calgary in presenting a full day of useful and constructive information for today's dairy practitioners. Each of these speakers has earned international status for their in-depth knowledge of dairy production.

Topics to be covered include: Focus on the Transition Cow - Management and Nutrition; Free Stall Design; Monitoring Transition Cow Problems Using Dairy Comp 305 (Ferguson) and; Understanding Normal Feet and Leg Conformation and Its Relationship to Locomotion; The Relationship of Environment, Nutrition and Conformation with Locomotion and Herd Life (Atkins).

Think Large!

Just a reminder that the WCABP has an array of audiovisual materials to aid anyone faced with the task of speaking on a career in bovine practice.

These consist of:

- a colorful brochure listing some of the attractions of life as a rural practitioner;
- a 13-minute videotape and;
- a Power Point presentation.

The brochures are available (the first 25 are free of charge to WCABP members) from the WCABP Office at a minimal charge to cover printing and postage.

The videotapes can be purchased or borrowed from the WCABP Office.

The Power Point presentation can be downloaded, free-of-charge, from the WCABP website (www.wcabp.com).

Contact the WCABP Office (info@wcabp.com; 1-866-269-8387) or the Secretary-Treasurer (butlerd@sasktel.net; 306-651-3383) for further information.

Think Large!

Latest indicator of feed efficiency could spur new generation of efficient cattle



Date posted: November 13, 2003

A revolutionary, new way to measure feed efficiency in cattle could save Alberta beef producers millions in feed costs annually and keep the Canadian cattle industry at the forefront of beef genetics.

Net feed intake, the difference between an animal's actual feed intake and its expected feed requirements for maintenance and growth, is the next big thing in the endless drive to select the best genetics for beef production, says Dr. John Basarab, a research scientist and beef management specialist with Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development. The concept of net feed intake was expanded in the 1990s by Australian beef researchers, and now a research project led by Basarab and funded by the Canada Alberta Beef Industry Development Fund (CABIDF) backs the Australian findings.

"We now feel that we have an excellent method to measure the feed efficiency of cattle, and that feed costs can be significantly reduced by selecting low net feed intake cattle over high net feed intake cattle," says Basarab. "Low net feed intake cattle also produce less manure and methane than high net feed intake cattle, producing a positive environmental spin-off."

Here's an example of how net feed intake works: A British-cross steer with a 453.6 kg bodyweight gaining 1.76 kg per day on a finishing diet has an expected feed intake of 14.5 kg per day, according to the National Research Council's Nutrient Requirements for Beef Cattle. However, if the actual feed intake for the steer were 10.2 kg per day, 4.3 kg less than expected, the net feed intake would be - 4.3 kg per day.

"Like a golf score, a negative value is better and indicates an efficient animal," he says. "In the past, it was thought if cattle were selected for improved average daily gain, feed efficiency would follow. But what seems to have happened is that we selected for a faster-growing, larger animal with increased appetite, but no better in terms of feed efficiency."

In a two-year serial slaughter study conducted by Basarab's team, 148 steers from five genetic strains were monitored for individual animal feed intake over a finishing period ranging from 71 to 183 days.

The variation in feed intake among different animals can be large and costly.

"We now feel that we have an excellent method to measure the feed efficiency of cattle, and that feed costs can be significantly reduced by selecting low net feed intake cattle over high net feed intake cattle," says Basarab. "Low net feed intake cattle also produce less manure and methane than high net feed intake cattle, producing a positive environmental spin-off."

Steers grew at 1.52 kg/day and had an actual feed intake of 12.3 kg/day while consuming a finishing diet. Even in a small pen of 75 head, individuals varied in net feed intake from efficient (-1.95 kg/day) to inefficient (+1.82 kg/day). This means that the efficient animal consumed 3.77 kg per day less than the inefficient animal for the same level of weight gain.

The study found that this variation in net feed intake represented a difference of more than \$45 in feed costs (with feed costs pegged at \$0.101/kg. as fed) during

a 120-day test period, which represents about \$109 million a year in feed savings for feedlot operators alone. "The benefit to cow-calf producers and seedstock operators is estimated to be at least as high," says Basarab.

The Alberta study revealed for the first time that animals with different net feed intakes were similar in carcass characteristics, empty body weight, relative proportions of most organs and tissues in empty body weight, he says. "This is important because people were worried low net feed intake cattle might have less fat and marbling, reducing meat quality," he says. "But that is not the case."

The major difference Basarab found among net feed intake groups was in heat production, with low net feed intake steers having an 11.2 percent lower heat production value than medium net feed intake steers and 17 percent lower than high net feed intake steers. "This confirms previous studies indicating that high net feed intake cattle have higher maintenance energy costs than low net feed intake cattle," he says.

Currently, Basarab is working with private and public partners to hone a testing system that singles out feed-efficient breeding bulls, in order to begin passing the valuable trait to Alberta's future cattle herd. "The Australians are ahead on getting low net feed intake genetics into their herd, so this is also a matter of staying competitive," he says.

CABIDF is a joint \$16.4 million fund of Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada and has supported more than 50 projects in five categories. The fund is administered by the Alberta Beef Producers.

Reprint credits:

- Canada Alberta Beef Industry Development Fund (CABIDF). CABIDF research reports www.albertabeef.org/CABIDF/03reindex.html
- reprinted from Meristem Land of Science www.meristem.com/beef

Conference 2004

There still are a few sponsorship opportunities available, please contact Dr. Ray Butler at 306.651.3383 or email butlerd@sasktel.net, if you are interested in becoming a part of the WCABP Conference 2004.

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


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