



WCABP

Western Canadian Association
of Bovine Practitioners

NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 8 • NO. 2
JUNE 2003

President's Message - John Campbell



As this issue comes to press, many of us are anxiously awaiting the results of the Canadian Food Inspection Agency's investigation of the recently identified case of BSE in a Canadian cow. The implications of the closure of the US border to Canadian ruminant products may have far-reaching implications on our profession. The reliance of our beef industry on export markets and the importance of disease as a trade issue

have certainly been brought to the sudden attention of many Canadians.

The BSE crisis does provide an opportunity for food animal practitioners to highlight the role we play as one of the "front-line" guardians of the safety of our food supply. Members of our Association should probably play a significant role in the months ahead as decisions are made that will affect many of us in our daily activities. We need to play a leading role in advocating the end of practices such as the shipping and slaughtering of downer cattle. The welfare implications and public health implications of this activity can only damage the industry more. We also need to emphasize the role that the local veterinarian can play in educating and training producers and our role in on-farm surveillance for infectious disease.

The need for food animal practitioners has been highlighted in a number of media stories about BSE and Dr. Brian Wildman represented the WCABP Executive in one of these media interviews. Thank you Brian!

Certainly the BSE crisis in Canada has created a great deal of anxiety in our clients and in our practices. We all hope that the CFIA will be able to complete their investigation to the satisfaction of the USDA and that trade will resume as soon as possible. However, as a profession, we also need to seize this opportunity to bring to light the significant role bovine practitioners fulfill as public health professionals. 🐾

Dr. John Campbell

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From the Secretary-Treasurer's Desk

The upcoming June 30th will mark the end of the 02/03 WCABP fiscal year, one in which we experienced some major events, most notably the resignation, last January, of Dr. Joyce Van Donkersgoed, our Secretary-Treasurer.

The Administration Review Committee, made up of Drs. John Campbell, Bob Ruckman, Craig Dorin, and myself, will shortly make recommendations to the Board on changes to the management structure of the Association.

The 2003 Conference was one of the most successful staged by the WCABP, setting records in attendance and finances. The Dr. Otto Radostits Legacy Fund, which was announced at the meeting, will prove to be a major support for future conferences.

Planning of the 2004 Conference is now in progress under the guidance of President-Elect Dr. Richard Harland. Plan now to be in Calgary January 18 to 20 for a first-rate educational meeting.

Membership numbers, including life and student members, total 285, on a par with last year. A concerted membership drive is being planned to coincide with the 2004 Conference registration.

Our thanks to Dr. Joyce Van Donkersgoed, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, and Meristem Information Resources Ltd. for their initiative and support in the production of the *Think Large* materials: brochure, videotape, and PowerPoint program. See the article on page 8 for further details.

The threat to rural practice brought on by a continuing shortage of practitioners is of major concern to WCABP. Through the Ray Butler Seeing Practice Bursaries we annually provide a grant of \$1,000 to each of three first-year WCVN students to spend 12 days visiting a bovine practice. Nomination forms for the bursaries will be distributed to the WCVN Class of '07 when they register in August. Now is the time for practitioners to think about welcoming a first-year student to work with them and experience what bovine practice is all about. Please let me know (butlerd@sasktel.net) if you would be willing to participate.

Funding for the Seeing Practice bursaries comes, in part, from the monthly articles which our members submit to the Canadian Cattlemen through the Past-President who, this year, is Dr. Bob Ruckman (ruckman@telusplanet.net). Bob would welcome your call if you would be willing to write a short article.

A second source of funding for the Seeing Practice bursaries comes from Boehringer Ingelheim, which makes a substantial contribution each year in the name of the recipient of the WCABP Veterinarian of the Year Award. The award is presented annually to the veterinarian singled out for his/her outstanding contributions to veterinary medicine in western Canada. In addition, Boehringer Ingelheim maintains a master plaque, located in the WCVN Library (at the foot of the stairs) and provides each recipient with a plaque to keep. It is not too early to start thinking about a worthy recipient to receive the award in 2004. Nomination forms will be distributed in November.

We now have our own webpage: <http://www.wcabp.com>. Log on and see what is available. Your comments would be welcome. A

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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.

major revision of the page will be undertaken once the impending management restructuring is in place.

In closing, I would like to add to the sentiments expressed by our President regarding the identification of the BSE prion in one animal out of the thirteen million cattle in Canada. I was particularly interested in comments made by VIDO's Dr. Lorne Babiuk in a recent television interview. Dr. Babiuk noted that a spontaneous mutation is not beyond the realm of possibility, noting that such an event occurs in similar diseases in the human population as frequently as one in a million.

It is this veterinarian's opinion that those cattle owners who were ordered by the Government of Canada to have their herds slaughtered, even though there was no evidence of disease, should receive full compensation based on actual financial loss. ♣

Ray Butler, Acting Secretary-Treasurer

Country of Origin Labelling - Frequently Asked Questions

The Canadian Cattlemen's Association will be circulating a regular update on the US Country of Origin Labelling issue that is currently facing exporters of beef, cattle and other agricultural commodities to the US. This is the first edition. If you do not wish to receive the COL update, please email batese@cattle.ca and request to be removed from the distribution list.

1. What is the US Country of Origin Labelling provision?

Country of Origin Labelling (COL) is a provision in the United States Farm Bill that was passed in May 2002. It requires that as of September 30, 2004, all beef, lamb, veal, pork, farmed fish, perishable agricultural commodities and peanuts sold in the US bear a label stating their country of origin to the point of retail sale. To qualify as a product of the US, meat products have to be born, raised and slaughtered in the US. Chicken and other poultry are not included. Food sold at foodservice (restaurants) is also not included. There is currently a voluntary program in place so that producers and retailers may, if they choose to do so, participate in a labelling program prior to the mandatory program coming into effect.

At present no one is participating in the voluntary program, likely because the product tracking, segregating and labelling is too costly.

2. What is the purpose of the Country of Origin Labelling provision?

COL is an artificial trade barrier. Some US producers lobbied their politicians for this program, because they believe US consumers will prefer to buy US products. COL is not a food safety measure. Before they are imported into the US, all food products must meet the same food safety standards as products produced in the US. The Food Marketing Institute, representing US retailers and wholesalers, has stated that COL will provide no useful information to US consumers.

3. What about products of mixed origin, such as ground beef?

Mixed products such as ground beef not only have to be labelled with all the countries from which the product originated, but the countries have to be listed in descending order of prominence by weight. So a pound of hamburger containing beef from several sources might be labelled, Contains product of the US; Canadian cattle raised and processed in the US; Mexican cattle raised and processed in the US.

All cuts from an animal born in Canada but shipped to the US as a feeder will have to be labelled, "Product of Canada, raised and processed in the US."

4. Why is the Canadian beef industry concerned?

The Canadian Cattlemen's Association (CCA) and our beef industry partners are not overly concerned that US consumers will reject Canadian beef. Consumers base buying decisions on many factors, including quality and price, and Canadian beef competes very well on these attributes. The beef industry's concern is that because COL will be very costly for US retailers to implement, in an attempt to lower their costs they may reject all imported products.

5. Why will it be costly for the US to implement?

Under international trade rules a country cannot impose greater requirements on imported products than it does on domestically produced products. US products will also have to be labelled with their country of origin. Products from other countries, such as Canada, will be deemed to be a product of whatever country is exporting them. US products on the other hand, will have to be tracked from their source to the retail shelf in order to prove they are actually products of the US. Records will have to be kept for a minimum of two years.

WCABP FUEL DISCOUNT

WCABP, through Associations Plus, has entered into a partnership with Petro-Canada. The main benefits of having a Petro-Canada SuperPass credit card are:

- **2.0 cents per litre off the posted pump prices** on all grades of gasoline and diesel fuel purchased at any Petro-Canada service stations in Canada. There is a **400 litre minimum volume per month** to qualify for this program. Discount will be deducted off your monthly statement.
- **You can now maximize your savings up to 5.5 cents per litre !** First, save **3.5 cents at the pump with a PetroPoints card** and then save an additional **2 cents per litre** off your monthly invoice with the SuperPass credit card.

Additional features of the SuperPass credit card include:

- **3% discount on propane.**
- **5% discount on repairs**
- **15% discount on carwashes.**

And more! Full details available at www.cattle.ca/wcabp under Members Only.

For a **credit application** form please call **Pat Frank** at **WCABP** at **1-866-269-8387**.

For program information please contact **Ken Kripki** at **Petro-Canada** at **1-800-668-0220 ext. 2172**. 🐾

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has estimated the cost of record keeping alone (not including the cost of labelling) for the voluntary COL program will be almost \$2 billion US annually if the majority of producers and retailers participate. The cost of record keeping for the mandatory program can be expected to be similar or even greater.

This cost will be borne by US producers, food handlers and retailers (\$1 billion by US producers, \$340 million by food handlers, and \$628 million by retailers). This is the cost for all the commodities covered by the program (beef and veal, lamb, pork, farmed fish, perishable agricultural commodities and peanuts).

6. If COL is going to be so costly for US producers, food handlers and retailers, why would they want it?

Most don't want it. COL has been mainly promoted by the Ranchers Cattlemen Action Legal Fund (R-CALF), the same group that lost trade actions that it launched against the Canadian cattle industry in 1998. Other groups that officially represent US producers, processors, and retailers are opposed to mandatory COL.

Groups opposing mandatory COL include the Food Marketing Institute, representing US retailers and wholesalers, and the American Meat Institute, representing US meat processors. The US National Pork Producers Council recently voted overwhelmingly in favour of demanding a repeal of COL. The National Cattlemen's Beef Association, the official representative of US cattle producers, has stated it is in favour of keeping COL voluntary, a position that the CCA does not dispute.

7. Can COL be repealed?

It is possible for the US Senate to make changes, such as keeping COL voluntary rather than mandatory. This will take a great deal of lobbying effort. Opposition to COL is growing in the US as more and more producers, processors and retailers realize the cost and impact this measure will have on their day

to day business. CCA is working closely with our allies in the US on this issue.

8. If mandatory COL goes into effect, what will be the impact on the Canadian beef cattle industry?

An impact analysis done for the CCA estimates COL could cost Canadian cattle producers up to \$92 per head, or \$300 million annually, if US importers reject Canadian cattle and beef in an attempt to lower their record keeping, tracking and labelling costs.

9. What is Canada doing about COL?

The CCA has been working closely with Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, and the Canadian Embassy. CCA worked with these Canadian Government departments in developing Canada's official response to the COL provisions in the US Farm Bill.

CCA is following a 3-tier strategy to address the COL challenge:

1. Work with our allies in the US to change the law to remain voluntary.
2. Legally challenge the requirements through either the World Trade Organization (WTO) or North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).
3. Enhance the beef industry's Global Marketing Strategy to mitigate the impact of COL and achieve US equivalent pricing for Canadian cattle and beef. This includes building a stronger quality and food safety association with Canadian beef; supporting branded programs, case ready programs and new product development using Canadian beef; supporting import replacement initiatives to ensure domestic customer requirements are better met with Canadian product.

For additional information on Country of Origin Labelling visit the Canadian Cattlemen's Association website at www.cattle.ca.

Prepared by the Canadian Cattlemen's Association

Thank You from Dr. Otto Radostits

I want to thank the Western Canadian Association of Bovine Practitioners for the Gala Banquet in my honour on January 18, 2003 and for the bronze sculpture of *Life's Little Ups and Downs* presented to me at the meeting of the Association.

The sculpture is a beautiful work of art. The names of so many veterinarians engraved on the plaque, most of whom are former students, is very special and brings back many memories of examining cows and discussing cases.

I thought the scientific program was excellent. There were many very good papers dealing with current issues in bovine practice. I want to congratulate the Association for its efforts in promoting bovine practice through the *Think Large* program.

The Banquet was very well done. The ambience was warm and touching and the dinner was excellent. The background music was first class. The program was well organized and carried out exceptionally well. It was an extraordinary celebration to see so

many colleagues from far and wide. I have enjoyed veterinary medicine as a career and have had a fortunate life.

Thanks also for your participation in the planning of the OMR Legacy Fund. That is really very special and I am looking forward to the seminars in the future.

If I can be of assistance to the Association, please do not hesitate to ask.

Thanks very much,



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Calgary Stampede to Host Beef Industry Congress

International Stockmen's Educational Foundation Plans Sister Meeting

The International Stockmen's Educational Foundation (ISEF), in cooperation with the Canadian Cattlemen's Association and the Calgary Stampede, will host a sister meeting to the International Livestock Congress when it launches the first annual International Beef Industry Congress (IBIC) July 11 in Calgary, Alberta.

"The IBIC is a natural progression in our effort to serve as a catalyst for change in the livestock industry," said ISEF Chairman Dan Gattis. "We have been discussing such a meeting with members of the Stampede board and staff for almost a year and with its international appeal, the Stampede is the perfect venue for such an event."

The Congress is a collaborative effort of beef industry leaders from around the world. By providing a forum of discussion of relevance to Canadian cattle producers, the IBIC seeks to supply thought leaders to provide information that will help the producer, supplier and retailer have a clearer picture of the beef industry landscape.

"We are delighted to be hosting the inaugural presentation of this conference," said Calgary Stampede General Manager/COO Steve Edwards. "This international conference adds a new element of education, sharing of ideas and looking to the future, and allows the Calgary Stampede to grow relations with diverse sectors of the beef industry and ultimately offer delegates a world class forum." In addition, the IBIC will include a student program open to top seniors or graduate students of Canadian and northern region U.S. universities. Coordinated through the Canadian Cattlemen's Association, the program will provide an invaluable networking opportunity to students. Students will be selected by their respective university faculties.

"Our involvement with the ISEF and the Stampede in developing a successful program will bring greater awareness and industry information to the Canadian cattle producer," said Neil Jahnke, President of the Canadian Cattlemen's Association. "By bringing the next generation of cattle producers to this meeting, we can

encourage greater relationships both within Canada and internationally."

Speakers for the Congress, which kicks off at 1:00 pm July 11, will address a number of issues, including the economic future of the beef industry, how the beef industry itself views its future challenges and the position Canada, the United States and Mexico take in regard to Country of Origin Labeling.

Among those will be a presentation on the Global Livestock, Meat and Poultry Competition Study, presented by the Sparks Companies Inc., of Memphis, Tennessee. The study takes a comprehensive look at where the United States and Canada stands as compared to other key livestock and poultry regions, particularly in South America. Comparisons were evaluated in animal production agriculture, slaughtering, further processing, product development and product distribution.

This will be followed by International Livestock Congress Consensus Report, presented by Dr. Gary Smith, ISEF Beef Program Chair and Distinguished Professor at Colorado State University, Fort Collins, Colo. Held during the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo, the International Livestock Congress aggressively addresses issues facing the beef industry, from producer to consumer. This consensus report provides the views of world leaders in livestock agriculture, who have addressed such topics as profitability, country of original labeling, the public impression of the beef industry, as well as many others.

The afternoon session will also feature an all-star Country of Origin Labeling Discussion Panel, which will take on the controversial subject of Country of Origin Labeling (COOL) and frankly discuss how these requirements are affecting trade between Canada, the United States and Mexico, as well as other countries.

The program will conclude with the IBIC World Issues Dinner, featuring a keynote speaker sharing his perspective on world trade policy.

Registration costs for the IBIC are \$45 (CD) for the meeting and admission to the World Issues Dinner, or each can be purchased separately for \$25 (CD). To register, go to www.livestockcongress.com <<http://www.livestockcongress.com>> and click on Registration. Registration is available on-line or forms may be downloaded and faxed to 817-367-3751. For questions about the Congress, please contact ISEF Executive Director Julie Kimball at 817-367-6563 or julie@livestockcongress.com. For questions about the student program, please contact CCA Special Projects Coordinator Gina Grosenick at 403-275-8558 or grosenickg@cattle.ca.

The ISEF was formed in 1986 as an outgrowth of the International Stockmen's School founded in 1942 by the late Dr. M.E. Ensminger. Headquartered in Houston, Texas, its primary purpose is to manage the International Livestock Congress, held each year during the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo, where representatives from around the world gather to discuss relevant and critical global issues facing the beef and horse industries. 🐾

Mark your Calendars for the 23rd World Congress for Buiatrics

Quebec • July 2004

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Think Large

What eventually developed into the *Think Large* program originated in the summer of 2001, when Dr. Joyce Van Donkersgoed coordinated a major funding proposal to the Agriculture and Food Council of Alberta. Joyce sought financial support that would: a) establish a trust fund that would make the WCABP Seeing Practice Bursary Program self-sustaining and b) fund the development of continuing education (CE) materials for practitioners when they are called on to make presentations to 4H clubs and junior and high school students.

An agreement was signed on February 1, 2002, whereby the Alberta Agriculture and Food Council (AAFC), the Manitoba Rural Adaptation Council, the Canadian Adaptation and Rural Development Program Saskatchewan, and the British Columbia Investment Agriculture Foundation collectively contributed \$40,000 towards the production of materials that would encourage young people to consider a career in bovine practice. The request for funding for the *Seeing Practice Bursary* program was not supported.

The WCABP agreed to contribute \$10,000 in cash, in addition to donating "in kind" resources, such as planning and design, management and supervision, preparation of reports, office expenses, application fees, preparation of news releases and other publicity etc., sufficient to complete the project. The cash component was realized from the auction sale that was held at the 2002 Conference held in Saskatoon. The auctioned items were donated by pharmaceutical companies and others.

The following May, the WCABP contracted with Terry Hockaday, President of Meristem Information Resources Ltd., of Calgary to produce all of the materials and prepare promotional items such as a logo, news releases and feature articles.

We have recently received full payment of the grants and final copies of the materials that were produced. These include:

- 5,000 copies of a full-color brochure highlighting some of the attractive features of a career in bovine practice
- A 23-slide PowerPoint presentation that expands on the theme presented in the brochure. The presentation can be downloaded from the WCABP website (<http://www.wcabp.com>) by clicking on the bottom bar (THINK LARGE) on the left side of the home page
- A 12¹/₂ minute video presentation (VHS), also titled *Think Large*. In addition to the standard VHS tapes, we will receive a master digital video disk (DVD) suitable for transcription as a compressed disk (CD) and several continuous play (looped) tapes for use in exhibits. These materials will be made available through the WCABP office.

Meristem also prepared a news release on the *Think Large* project that was sent to agricultural editors across Canada.

Complimentary copies of the brochure and videotape have been sent to all of the provincial veterinary associations in Canada and the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association, inviting them to participate in a bulk purchase reprint of the brochures. In this way we hope to make copies of the brochure available at minimal cost.

The time has come to address the major challenge; to ensure that we "get the most bang for the buck" from all the materials that have been produced and the effort that has been expended by a large number of people. How this can be accomplished will be discussed at upcoming Board meetings.

WCABP members who are called on to make presentations at career days and extension meetings should keep in mind that these materials are available. 🐾

Ray Butler

CCA Report

National Survey

Randomly selected beef cattle producers will soon be receiving an invitation in the mail that could save them thousands of dollars per year. The invitation is to participate in the first ever survey of production limiting diseases in beef cattle herds. Production limiting diseases can exist at low levels and go unrecognized in a herd while causing economic losses through lowered rates of reproduction and unthrifty cattle. The diseases to be surveyed are Neosporosis, Leukosis, Johnes Disease, and BVD. The survey is a joint industry-government project. A study done on dairy cattle indicated the presence of one or more of these diseases in a fifty-cow herd could cost the owner over \$2,000 annually in lost production. Producers who receive an invitation and decide to participate will be given their herd's test results. Individual herd results will remain confidential. Results from all the herds tested across the country will be compiled to help researchers understand the prevalence of these diseases in Canada. Knowing the prevalence is the first step in determining and promoting management practices for prevention. 🐾

Atlantic Bovine Practitioners Association News

The Atlantic Bovine Practitioners Association held its annual Winter Conference in Moncton, New Brunswick this past January. The ABPA was grateful to have Dr. Sheila McGuirk, from the University of Wisconsin, lead an informative and detailed presentation on heifer management. Dr. Greg Keefe, Dr. John Van Leeuwen, and Dr. Shawn McKenna from the Atlantic Veterinary College presented a comprehensive overview of Johnes Disease testing and prevention. We were pleased to have our AABP District Representative, Dr. R. Lothrop, in attendance as well.

The 2004 ABPA Winter Conference will focus on cattle nutrition. Further conference information will be made available at a later date. ABPA would love to meet you in the Maritimes! 🐾

Report on Health Canada AMR Meeting

Veterinary Drugs Directorate. Health Canada. Consultation with Stakeholders. May 22-23, 2003. Gatineau, Quebec.

Development of Risk Management Strategy on Antimicrobial Resistance Associated with Animal Uses of Antimicrobial Agents

The Veterinary Drugs Directorate (VDD) of Health Canada met with stakeholders to continue to discuss the Report of the Advisory Committee on Uses of Antimicrobials In Food Animals in Canada: Impact on Resistance and Human Health prepared for the Directorate, and submitted June 2002.

The Western Canadian Association of Bovine Practitioners (WCABP) submitted a response to the Advisory Committee Report on October 21, 2002. The WCABP strongly supports a science based approach to managing resistance and believes that there are 3 key areas identified in the Report that need to be acted on:

- 1) The need for the beef and dairy industries to implement Hazard Analysis of Critical Control Points (HACCP) based Canadian On-Farm Food Safety Programs (COFFSP) which address antimicrobial resistance issues by subscribing to prudent-use principles.
- 2) The need for the food animal and pharmaceutical industries, in partnership with bovine veterinarians, government and other groups, to collect scientific data to determine the risk of antimicrobial resistance in humans from use of antimicrobials in cattle production so that this information can be used in risk analyses for informed policy decisions on risk management strategies.
- 3) Harmonize veterinary drug regulatory approaches and standards with those other countries, especially the United States.

Stakeholder Input. The Veterinary Drugs Directorate received comments from a broad cross-section of its stakeholders. In addition to input from individuals as well as federal and provincial partners, comments were provided by several stakeholders including the following.

Alberta Cattle Feeders Association
Animal Nutrition Association of Canada
Canadian Animal Health Institute
Canadian Public Health Association
Canadian Veterinary Medical Association
Canadian On-Farm Food Safety Working Group
Canadian Pork Council
Canadian Cattlemen's Association
Canadian Sheep Federation
Maple Leaf Foods Inc.
Pharmacia Animal Health (Pfizer)
Western Canadian Association of Bovine Practitioners

Objectives of Consultation Meeting May 22-23:

- Achieving a common understanding of antimicrobial resistance issues associated with uses of antimicrobials in animals
- Defining and setting clear objectives relating to antimicrobial risk management

- Identifying areas of consensus or lack of consensus concerning the recommendations of the Advisory Committee
- Developing modalities for implementation of the Advisory Committee recommendations and identifying stakeholder groups that will be involved in implementation of specific recommendations
- Providing the opportunity for stakeholders to consider the effect of implementing each of the recommendations on their groups/ organizations
- Developing further mechanisms for stakeholders to provide input into the decision-making process.

Areas of Consensus

Despite the complexity of the AMR issue, there are several areas of agreement among stakeholders. It is incontestable that there are significant science gaps regarding AMR but there is a clear understanding of the fundamental issues around AMR. Regulatory agencies and stakeholders agree with the need to minimize the risk associated with the development of AMR. Within the purview of a risk management strategy, stakeholders understand the rationale for many of the recommendations of the Advisory Committee. Specifically, there is consensus on the following issues:

- The need for integrated approaches to addressing the AMR issue.
- Using a science-based approach to managing AMR risks with a consideration of the human and animal health impacts of antimicrobial use.
- Increasing collaboration between federal and provincial agencies to coordinate the development of federal and provincial policies on AMR and to exert greater controls over antimicrobial use in food-producing animals
- Encouraging food animal industries to consider AMR in developing food safety programs.
- Urgent need for a permanent, integrated national surveillance system for AMR and antimicrobial use monitoring to support risk analysis and policy development.
- The need for coordinated AMR research as well as development of educational programs aimed at promoting prudent use of antimicrobials.

Discussion Items

The following items were discussed.

Regulation and Distribution of Antimicrobial Drugs

1. Prescription Status Issues: Health Canada's proposed option is that all veterinary antimicrobials for disease treatment and control should be available by prescription only based on Recommendation No. 12 of the Advisory Committee (Make all antimicrobials used for disease treatment and control available by prescription only. There was considerable discussion about this recommendation. Many delegates both veterinarians and non-veterinarians expressed concern about adequate availability of farm animal veterinarians to provide a prescription for every animal which requires an antimicrobial for a clinical illness. Also it is not practical to expect livestock producers to purchase antimicrobials from the pharmacists when the veterinarian is on the farm and provides both veterinary medical and surgical therapy and prescribes and dispenses the necessary antimicrobials. It was also pointed out that the Advisory Report was unclear if one of the intentions of Recommendation No. 12 is to shift the sales of antimicrobials to pharmacists.

The issue of veterinary prescriptions and profit were discussed. The Advisory Report (page 49) under the heading "Veterinary prescriptions and profit" said: "Most, but not all, veterinarians in food animal practice obtain a portion of their income from the sale of antimicrobial drugs. As the diagnostician, the prescriber of treatment, and the owner of a drug inventory, veterinarians are in a position of conflict of interest with respect to prescription-only drugs. If those antimicrobial drugs that are currently available for OTC sale are limited to sale by prescription only, then veterinarians will be placed even further in a position of conflict of interest".

It can be argued that the conflict of interest is a perceived one. There are innumerable examples in all walks of life of so-called conflicts of interest. Anytime anyone in the service sector provides a service, along with the sale of a related item, the provider can be perceived as having a conflict of interest. The customer or client must trust the provider or seek one that can be trusted. Veterinarians are expected to practice according to the Veterinarian's Oath and, in the case of prescribing antimicrobials, it is expected that they will prescribe and dispense only as necessary for the well-being of the animal with due regard to the circumstances of the client and human health considerations, namely, drug residues and the potential for antimicrobial resistance. In my view, the premise that veterinarians who prescribe and dispense antimicrobials for any animal are in a conflict of interest is disparaging and discouraging.

It is also interesting to note the emphasis being placed on veterinary prescriptions as if that in and by itself will control antimicrobial resistance in animal pathogens. There is worldwide agreement, and has been for many years, that one of the major reasons for antimicrobial resistance in human pathogens is overprescription by human physicians. Therefore, the mere act of prescribing will not control antimicrobial resistance in veterinary or human medicine. The emphasis must be on the prudent use of antimicrobials.

It is noteworthy that in the UK, an inquiry by the Competition Commission, "Veterinary Medicines. A report on the supply within the United Kingdom of prescription-only veterinary medicines" was presented to Parliament on April 2003. The report found that there are three complex monopoly situations with regard to prescription only medicines; veterinary surgeons, manufacturers, and wholesalers. The recommendations of the inquiry are intended to eliminate 'anticompetitive' practices in the supply of prescription-only veterinary medicines. Among the major recommendations made by the Commission are the following:

- A change in the law to allow veterinary surgeons to dispense a veterinary prescription, irrespective of whether the animal concerned is under their care;
- A requirement for manufacturers and wholesalers to supply pharmacies and veterinary surgeons on the same terms for the same volumes of products; and
- A requirement for veterinary surgeons to offer clients a prescription and, for a period of three years, to provide at no additional charge beyond that of the consultation.

The Secretary of Trade and Industry in the UK has accepted the report's recommendations and indicated that she wants to see them put into effect.

Veterinary Medicines. A Report on the Supply Within the United Kingdom of Prescription-Only Medicines' can be downloaded from the Competition Commission's website at www.competition-commission.org.uk.

The Summary and Conclusions should be read and considered by veterinary practitioners.

Both the Health Canada Advisory Report and the UK Competition Commission Report appear to be saying that the Veterinary Client Patient Relationship is unimportant.

2. Importation of Antimicrobials: Health Canada proposes to develop approaches and means to control the importation, sale and use of antimicrobials to close the "own use" loophole. Importation of active pharmaceuticals (APIs) would be strictly under a Health Canada permit.

3. Extra-Label Drug Use (ELDU) Policy: On October 9, 2002, Health Canada's Veterinary Drugs Directorate (VDD) awarded the contract to conduct an important national-based survey to assess Drug Use in Animals in Canada to Thomsen Corporation of Ottawa. Substantiated and evidence-based data is essential to quality decision-making aimed at maintaining and promoting public health, food safety and animal health.

This survey will capture data on both label and extra-label drug use data in animals in Canada. Extra-label drug use (ELDU), sometimes referred to as "off label use", is defined as the use of a drug product in a manner that is not consistent with what is indicated on the label, package insert of any drug product approved by Health Canada.

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Ray Butler Seeing Practice Bursaries

Encouraging First Year Veterinary Students to Pursue Careers in Bovine Practice

A decreasing number of veterinary graduates are opting for a career in food animal practice. If this trend continues, it will have serious consequences on the agricultural sector and our profession. The Ray Butler Seeing Practice Bursary has been established in hope of encouraging these students to consider a career in bovine practice.

The \$1000 bursaries are awarded each November to three first-year veterinary students. The purpose is to support a visit of not less than twelve days in a bovine (dairy and/or beef) practice. This visit must be completed prior to second year registration.

WCABP is asking for your financial support to enable us to provide these Bursaries to deserving students. Please make your donation online at www.wcabp.com under **VET STUDENTS**.

Congratulations to these winners of the Ray Butler Seeing Practice Bursary:

2001: Justin McLash, Jessica Miller

2002: Megan Atwood, Tracy Epp, Holly Kostuik

Any clinics interested in hosting a first-year veterinary student for the bursary, should contact the WCABP office for details. 🐾

Pfizer Furthers Commitment to Animal Health Industry with Pharmacia Purchase

Pfizer Enhances Animal Health Product Line, Solutions & Service

On April 16, 2003 Pfizer closed the agreement to purchase Pharmacia Animal Health, sending a clear message to the Canadian Animal Health industry that the company is committed to being a leading innovator in the industry. The purchase has now received all necessary approvals in Canada.

"The addition of Pharmacia will greatly enhance and complement Pfizer's current portfolio, providing the industry with even better product solutions and service," says Don Sauder, Division Director Pfizer Canada Animal Health Group, of the purchase.

Pfizer also expects to strengthen their current research and development pipeline. "Our combined resources will allow us to have a strong Canadian team with the knowledge and expertise to help our customers succeed," says Sauder.

Now that the necessary Canadian approvals have been received, Pfizer and Pharmacia can move forward with plans to integrate sales, marketing and research. Pfizer Canada expects full integration of all products and services by the summer of 2003.

"Our vision as the new Pfizer is to remain a leading innovator in the Animal Health industry, dedicated to delivering excellence in product solutions and service," says Sauder.

Both globally and in Canada, Pfizer will be the largest provider of animal health products based on sales in core markets.

The broadened Pfizer Animal Health portfolio will provide the Canadian animal health industry with a diverse range of complementary, innovative products, including animal health solutions for swine, dairy and beef industries as well as the companion animal sector. 🐾

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From Report on Health Canada AMR Meeting

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The objectives are:

1. to gather up-to-date and comprehensive information and understanding of the nature and scope of veterinary drug use in Canada and the drugs that are most commonly prescribed by veterinarians or used by producers and feed mill operators in an ELDU manner; and
2. to identify the trends, practices and interventions that might be used eventually to mitigate risks and evaluate benefits associated with veterinary drug use in Canada.

The safety of Canada's food supply is of vital importance to Health Canada and to Canadians. VDD acknowledges that livestock producers and veterinarians play a pivotal role in ensuring that safety and their participation in this survey is key to its success. The practice of ELDU is recognized as an important tool in the maintenance of animal health when used prudently. The confidentiality of individual and personal information provided by survey participants will be protected.

VDD has established a Steering Committee. Consisting of sixteen members, the Committee has broad representation from animal industries (dairy, meat, poultry), the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency and academia. The role of this Committee is to provide expert advice and guidance to assist Thomsen Corporation and VDD in various aspects of this project including the collection of meaningful information on the nature, scope and extent of veterinary drug use in Canada including ELDU, and examining its implications on public and animal health.

Four broad categories will be surveyed: food-producing animal veterinary practitioners, farmers and animal producers, feedmill operators and non-food-producing animal veterinary practitioners.

The results of this survey will be used to benchmark veterinary drug usage practices, especially for food-producing animals (such as cattle, poultry, swine, sheep). This will assist VDD to better define the context, contributing factors and implications on public health, food safety and animal health. The outcomes of this survey will be also used as a tool for policy development in this area.

4. Harmonization Issues: Health Canada is committed to harmonization with other international regulatory agencies, wherever appropriate and feasible to address a wide range of issues regarding AMR. Steps have been taken to action this commitment.

Management of Antimicrobial Resistance Risks

1. Risk Analysis of Veterinary Antimicrobials: Risk analysis of new and existing antimicrobials will be conducted according to the guidelines of the Office International des Epizooties (OIE), the World Organisation for Animal Health.

2. Antimicrobial Growth Promotants (AGPs): The risk analysis strategy will include the issue of efficacy to determine the fate of antimicrobials being used as growth promotants. The initial focus of risk analysis will be on penicillin, tetracycline, tylosin, virginiamycin, and bacitracin.

Surveillance and Antimicrobial Use Monitoring

Health Canada is committed to this initiative and will provide ongoing support for the Canadian Integrated Program for Antimicrobial Resistance Surveillance.

Prudent Use of Antimicrobials, Research, and Education

Health Canada proposes to establish a joint Committee with stakeholders to develop a communication strategy, tools, and messages aimed at promoting prudent and judicious use of antimicrobials, as well as addressing the need for developing educational programs centering on AMR. 🐾

Final Report

A final detailed report of the meeting will be available by June-July 2003.

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