

WCABP newsletter

Volume 16 No. 2 June 2009

All Veterinarians Integral to Public Health



Dr. Tasha Epp (left) teaches a combined course on zoonotic diseases and food safety for the new University of Saskatchewan Master of Public Health (MPH) program. Her current students include (from left to right) Drs. Leanne Van De Weyer and Fardin Sadeghi, graduate students in WCVM's Department of Large Animal Clinical Sciences, and Busola Adelugba, a graduate student enrolled in the university's MPH program. Photo: Western College of Veterinary Medicine.

A new Master of Public Health program, a new School of Public Health, new faculty and new courses at the University of Saskatchewan are highlighting the veterinarian's integral role in protecting the health of animals and people.

Three years ago, a handful of graduate students made up the Master of Public Health (MPH) program's first class at the University of Saskatchewan. Today, more than 100 applicants — including several veterinarians — are vying for 30 spots that open this fall. "The MPH program has been successful and it's continuing to grow," says WCVM epidemiologist Dr. John Campbell, who served as the program's first director.

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If you require additional information on our group or have interest in joining do not hesitate to contact one of our **Western Canadian committee members** – Dr's: Roy Lewis, Wayne Thiessen, Dave Holroyd, Bruce Wine, Bob Bellamy, Clarke Hill and Rex Leach – or visit our website.

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Animal Health Expert Network Established

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) and the Atlantic Veterinary College at the University of Prince Edward Island (UPEI) announced a \$1.2 million partnership to enhance animal health expertise in Canada.

“Our Government is delivering smart investments today to prepare the leaders of tomorrow,” said Federal Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and Member of Parliament Gail Shea (Egmont) on behalf of Federal Agriculture Minister Gerry Ritz. “This partnership will strengthen Canada’s animal disease prevention and control efforts, thereby reducing the social and economic consequences of animal disease outbreaks.”

The new Canadian Regulatory Veterinary Epidemiology Network (CRVE-Net) will link Canada’s five veterinary schools and contribute to the development of research and training programs at universities. It will be led by the Centre for Veterinary Epidemiological Research at the Atlantic Veterinary College, which is considered one of the leading centres for animal health epidemiological research in the world. The initiative will employ several students attending the college.

The initial phases of the project will see the establishment of a Research Chair in Regulatory Veterinary Epidemiology at the Atlantic Veterinary College at UPEI, as well as graduate positions in epidemiological surveillance, risk analysis and disease modelling. This partnership between the CFIA and the Atlantic Veterinary College will create new synergies and

help attract further investments, as well as provide excellent training opportunities for veterinarians and summer students.

“This network will further strengthen our ability to understand and respond to animal health and zoonotic disease challenges in a world of ever changing risks,” said Dr. Brian Evans, chief veterinary officer of Canada. “It will also fulfill national and international needs by drawing upon and encouraging the development of advanced veterinary expertise in specialized areas.”

“The Atlantic Veterinary College is eager to contribute expertise and leadership to the development of CRVE-Net and our shared priority of developing highly skilled professionals committed to protecting the health of all species,” said Dr. Donald L. Reynolds, dean of the Atlantic Veterinary College.

Graduates from CRVE-Net programs will help meet the national and international demand for additional animal and veterinary public health experts.

Source: Canadian Food Inspection Agency



Notice of CABV Annual General Meeting

CABV/ACVB's 2nd Annual General Meeting will be held on Thursday, September 10, 2009, at 12:30 pm, in Omaha, Nebraska (in conjunction with the AABP Conference). AGM material will be emailed to WCABP members in August.

Report on the Investigation of the 15th Case of Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) in Canada

A report on the investigation of the 15th case of Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) in Canada is now available on the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) website.

www.inspection.gc.ca/english/anima/heasan/disemala/bseesb/bccb2008/15investe.shtml

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Administrator's Report

Time has been spent on preliminary planning for the 2010 WCABP Conference to be held January 14-16, 2010, at the Executive Royal Inn in Calgary, Alberta.

The WCABP, in conjunction with Novartis Animal Health, held its annual Student Night on April 7. Trena Derald from Novartis spoke to the students about writing a résumé and preparing for an interview. The evening was well received with approximately 40 students in attendance.

A reminder that the Members Only section of the website requires a username and password. Call the WCABP office at 1-866-269-8387 to obtain this information. Please note that the information contained in the Members Only section is provided to you as a privilege of being a member of WCABP, so please ensure that the username and password are held in strict confidence and for your own use only.

If you are a non-WDDC member and would like to access the new Bull Soundness Evaluation Forms online, please call the WCABP office (1-866-269-8387) to obtain your account number.

Have a great summer!

Phyllis Mierau



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.



Agents of Change

In the last newsletter I spoke about how things are changing around us in bovine practice. This is a reality that many of us face day-to-day. This time around I would like to speak to how we can be agents of change.

I lack the experience of many of our members when it comes to most parts of our varied profession. But one thing I have learned the hard way is that change is never easy, and it often meets with strong resistance. Over the years I have tried to get my producers to change the way they do things through newsletters, information meetings and talking over the counter or on the farm. Whether it's changing a vaccination program or using implants or synchronizing heifers, getting producers to change their tried and true practices is never easy. I have often been frustrated by sending out two hundred newsletters or holding a large producer meeting and then having to explain that very same concept to a producer a week later, only to have them say, "No thanks." Why is it that other's don't easily come around to our way of thinking?

The simplest answer is that they aren't us. They lack our experiences and our knowledge. I have, however, found a method that works. In fact it is extremely simple and effective. I know many of you are assuming I am talking about firearms, but I am talking about relationships. Producers will listen to you if you are considered a trusted ally. To many of you this may sound obvious, but hear me out. A producer will need to hear the same thing at least three times before he will consider changing a current practice. This takes time,

"They always say time changes things, but you actually have to change them yourself."

Andy Warhol

usually a lot of time. Time is a precious commodity, but the producers I know the best and talk with on a regular basis are often more than willing to try out my ideas. Many of the others aren't. I am finding that the fact that most producers won't listen is bothering me less and less. There may be only a small number of producers who are willing to change the status quo, but those are the ones we all most enjoy working with.

Many significant changes start at the grassroots level. I am convinced that changes to our industry will happen in the same way. There are many parts of the industry that don't work very well. Whether it is marketing cattle in a way that encourages disease or the lack of information flow back to the producer from the consumer, there are some significant issues. I believe veterinarians can be key components in solving these issues. In many cases, no overarching government program is needed. All that is required is a group of people willing to do things differently, and in this case, a veterinarian who is willing to help them.

The irony of this is not lost on me; I am trying to get WCABP members to change through a newsletter article. I guess change is not easy for me either. 🐾

Respectfully submitted
Trent Wennekamp

Melodie Chan Receives Alberta Veterinary Medical Association 2008 Young Veterinarian of the Year Award



Drs. Ron McFee, Melodie Chan, Bob Ruckman (Photo courtesy of Alberta Veterinary Medical Association)

Drs. Ron McFee and Bob Ruckman presented the 2008 Alberta Veterinary Medical Association Young Veterinarian of the Year Award to Melodie Chan. Melodie attained her BSc in agriculture from the University of British Columbia and graduated from the Western College of Veterinary Medicine in 2002.

For two summers she worked at Greenbelt Veterinary Services in Chilliwack and spent the summer of her third year in dairy production medicine at Cornell University. Upon graduation, Melodie did an internship at Cornell in field services with a focus on dairy production medicine.

Melodie was employed at NorSask Veterinary Group, Warman, for three years. There, her focus was on dairy production medicine and she became involved in developing training courses for dairy managers. In 2006 she and husband, Egan Brockhoff, established Veterinary Dairy Health Services Ltd., a successful dairy production medicine practice in Olds, Alberta, where Melodie continues to consult, teach and learn. Her organizational and communication skills and many other good qualities are the reason for her receiving this Award. Congratulations Melodie!

Member News

In Memoriam

Dr. Reginald "Rex" Leach, 68, of Swan River, Manitoba passed away suddenly on March 20, 2009, in Mexico. Dr. Leach was born in Cabri, Saskatchewan, and earned his DVM at the Western College of Veterinary Medicine in 1970. Rex ran a veterinary practice in Swan River (Swan Valley Veterinary Clinic) for over 30 years, and was well known and highly respected throughout the valley. The WCABP offers their condolences to the family.





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Secretary-Treasurer's Report



The final numbers are now in from our conference in January and I am pleased to report that we turned a profit of approximately \$22,000. Based upon the conference evaluations, members

were very pleased with the scientific program, but it was the wet labs that added that extra punch this year. The change in venue to the Sheraton was also a positive change for most members; however, lack of parking for 'day' registrants was of concern. We thank all those who attended the conference, and particularly our friends in the pharmaceutical industry for their continued generous support of our conference.

Association Journal and was picked-up by the mainstream national media. Again, more detailed information on this issue, along with CABV's stand, can be found elsewhere in this newsletter (page 15).

The last issue I would like to touch on is that of our declining membership, which has become somewhat of a preoccupation for our board. There has been a long-held belief that the membership is related to where the annual conference is being held. That is, Alberta practitioners tend to be members in years that the conference is held in Calgary, but let their membership lapse the following year when the conference is held in Saskatoon, only to become a member again when we return to Calgary. The following table shows that this is more myth than fact. When we analyzed

Year /Conference Location	Membership by Province				Total	Did not Renew
	BC	AB	SK	MB		
2004 - Calgary	29	139	74	31	273	
2005 - Saskatoon	33	127	74	30	264	37
2006 - Calgary	30	137	72	24	263	30
2007 - Saskatoon	30	128	79	22	259	29
2008 - Calgary	28	126	76	21	251	25

I am frequently reminded of the utility of having a national organization representing the bovine practitioners from across Canada. The Canadian Association of Bovine Veterinarians (CABV) has been very active of late in addressing issues of national and regional importance. Specifically, the Alberta government is exploring legislation that would allow lay outlets to sell modified live vaccines directly to producers; currently only veterinarians in Alberta can sell MLV vaccines. The CABV sent a letter to Dr. Hauer (Alberta's chief provincial veterinarian), which you can find published on page 15 of this newsletter. The second major issue relates to the Own Use Provision and the administration of unregistered drugs in the Canadian poultry and livestock industries. This issue was ignited by an article in the April issue of the *Canadian Medical*

the group of those who did not renew, we found no repeats. We can therefore conclude those who leave, do so for good, and not to escape paying membership in an 'off year.'

The table also tells us that we do lose a significant number of members each year, which we were aware of. Last year we contacted many of those who had not renewed and found that, in many cases, their practice was no longer involved in beef and dairy work, which we can appreciate has become an issue for all rural practices. While we still enjoy a very healthy membership, the rapid evolution of mixed animal practice does make a person wonder where we will be in 10 years with respect to membership. 🐾

Kind regards,
Murray Jelinski

Upcoming events

June 18-20, 2009 SVMA 2009 Conference and AGM

Delta Regina, Regina, SK
Email: svma@svma.sk.ca

June 18-21, 2009 Pacific Veterinary Conference

(sponsored by the California Veterinary Medical Association), Anaheim, California. Sessions for veterinarians, veterinary technicians, practice managers, and veterinary staff. Dynamic sessions led by well-known speakers. Conference includes labs and a two-day Vet Expo. Contact: Shirley Ingleston (916-649-0599); email singleston@cvma.net; www.pacvet.net.

July 7-9, 2009 International Conference on Bovine Mycoplasmosis Delta

Bessborough, Saskatoon, SK
Presentations will feature talks from the world's leading authorities on mycoplasmosis in beef and dairy cattle. The conference program has been structured to appeal to a broad cross-section of attendees, including academics, researchers, government veterinarians and food animal practitioners. For more information please visit our website at www.bovinemycoplasma.ca or contact Dr. Murray Jelinski at 306-966-7166.



September 10-12, 2009 American Association of Bovine Practitioners (AABP) 42nd Annual Convention Omaha, NB

For information, visit www.aabp.org.

September 17-19, 2009 Canadian Embryo Transfer Association (CETA/ACTE) & American Embryo Transfer Association (AETA) 2009 Joint Scientific Convention Hilton

Montréal Bonaventure, Montréal, QC.
For information, visit: www.ceta.ca/convention.htm or contact the CETA/ACTE office by phone at 613-258-5944 (Ext 313), fax 613-258-3719, or email at ceta@ebi.ca.



WCABP
Western Canadian Association
of Bovine Practitioners

All Veterinarians Integral to Public Health

... continued from page 1

The new U of S School of Public Health (SPH) is the MPH program's academic home. The core faculty include Campbell along with Drs. Cheryl Waldner, Hugh Townsend, Volker Gerdt, Andrew Potter, Tasha Epp and Emily Jenkins of WCVM.

Veterinary medicine and animal health are part of the university's vision for the public health graduate program and the interdisciplinary school, says Campbell. "The interaction we have between animal health and human health at the U of S is a major strength, and it differentiates us from most MPH programs."

The university's health sciences colleges worked together to establish the MPH program and the SPH. From the beginning, WCVM representatives have been key players in the process. Their efforts dovetail with the college's long-term plans that list public health education as a priority.

That emphasis is a natural fit for WCVM, since a number of faculty members already focus on epidemiology, infectious diseases and other disciplines that are directly linked to human medicine and public health.

While WCVM has contributed to the growing success of the two projects, the heightened focus on public health is also positive for the veterinary college. One benefit is new faculty: two positions have already been created, and the college soon plans to hire a third faculty member in biostatistics to work jointly in the SPH.

Dr. Tasha Epp was hired in January 2007 as an associate professor of zoonotic diseases — a joint faculty position between

WCVM and the SPH. She teaches a combined course on zoonotic diseases and food safety to MPH and veterinary graduate students.

"Since we have expertise in companion and food animal diseases, veterinarians play a large role in identifying, controlling and preventing the spread of zoonotic diseases. This course is a good spot where the students can see the direct link between veterinary medicine and public health," describes Epp.

Another new WCVM faculty member is Dr. Emily Jenkins, an assistant professor of veterinary public health and food safety as well as a joint member of the SPH. Jenkins coordinates a second-year undergraduate course called Veterinary Public Health that's part of WCVM's new core curriculum.

The course emphasizes that private practitioners have a role in public health and explores veterinary public health careers. "The most cherished comments on student course evaluations that we've done so far are things like, 'I had no idea that we played this big a role in public health.' That's great to hear," says Jenkins, who delivers the course with Dr. Sarah Parker, the Saskatchewan Agriculture Research Chair in On-Farm Food Safety.

Nearly a dozen guest lecturers have provided insight into aspects of public health for the course. For example, Dr. Brian Evans, Canada's chief veterinary officer and executive vice-president of the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, spoke about the veterinarian's role in public health and potential careers. Dr. Curt Hagele, registrar of the Saskatchewan Veterinary Medical Association, also discussed veterinarians' legal and ethical responsibilities within their communities.

"Engaging groups like the provincial veterinary medical associations and federal agencies is ideal," says Jenkins. "As end users of our student population, what they think students should know is critical to hear."

Will the increased focus on public health convince more WCVM graduates to choose a public service career? Campbell doubts there will be a dramatic change in numbers, but he hopes the emphasis on public health will foster a broader, universal awareness of the veterinarian's role in society.

"What we're trying to emphasize is that the private practitioner has an important role to play in public health — just as much as regulatory veterinarians do. All veterinarians, no matter where we work, are essential to protecting the health of animals and people." 🐾



ATTENTION PRACTITIONERS!

You recently received a letter requesting your participation in a survey designed to obtain information on mixed and food animal practice in western Canada. We are seeking input on how food animal practice has changed over the last 10 years, and your thoughts on the future of food animal practice. The survey data will then be used as discussion points for veterinary practitioner focus group meetings, which will be held across western Canada over the next 3 to 4 months.

Please complete and return the printed copy of the survey, which you should have received by mail, or access the survey at <http://www.vetsurvey.ca/cattle/>. All data will remain confidential and only aggregate data will be presented to the focus groups or in published articles. Even if you do not wish to participate in the focus groups, your input via this survey is very much appreciated.

Drs. John Campbell / Chris Clark / Murray Jelinski
WCVM

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PDS Update

Tritrichomonas foetus Testing in Bulls



Tritrichomonas foetus remains an important reproductive pathogen of cattle that reduces fertility and also causes abortions in affected females. Testing for this disease is common practice for many community pastures and individual beef producers. A negative test status for *Tritrichomonas foetus* has increasingly become a requirement for importation of bulls into a number of US states. Some confusion has arisen because of the requirements of one US state, Nebraska, which allows an animal to be classified as *T. foetus* negative on the basis of one negative PCR test, while it takes three negative culture results to classify the animals as negative. This would imply that according to the regulators, the PCR was a far superior test to culture – and in some ways it is. But like a lot of diagnostic techniques, there is more to it than that.

Work done in Nebraska itself indicates that more than one test can be required using either a standard culture or PCR to find all the positive bulls in an infected group. In a recent study, eight of fifteen positives were found on the first culture, while nine of the fifteen positives were found by the first rtPCR (real time PCR). A major conclusion of this study is that in cases where bulls are considered at high risk of *T. foetus* infection, more than one test should be performed. Thankfully for those producers exporting breeding stock, that requirement is not needed for exporting bulls.

Work at the WCVI indicates that standard culture, done correctly, has been over 90% sensitive at picking up *T. foetus* infections in known positive bulls. The pouch used for the incubation is formulated to select against non-*T. foetus* trichomonads, and is also the medium of choice to incubate samples prior to a PCR test for *T. foetus*.

The PDS lab at Saskatoon uses either regular or rtPCR (real time) for *T. foetus* — the rtPCR is extremely sensitive, and can pick up as low as 10–100 organisms. There is just no way I would be able to see so few organisms microscopically on a reliable basis. We do have the possibility of false positives, as can occasionally happen with culture, but the specificity of the rtPCR plus additional DNA sequencing techniques are proving to be a valuable back-up to confirm that a positive result is correct.

So which is the better test, culture or PCR? Let's leave that question alone for a minute, since it is the wrong question if you are actually looking for Trich in a herd. The right question is “how

carefully did I take and handle my samples?” Samples should be taken with proper scraping/suction technique, and should be added to the InPouch media right away. The samples should then be kept reasonably warm (at or above room temperature) until they can be incubated, which should be as soon as possible. Pouches that will be sent to a reference laboratory should be incubated prior to sending if possible, or send them as soon as practical in a container that will prevent the sample from cooling too much — certainly prevent them from freezing. An insulated container with a warm water bottle would be an improvement over nothing if the sample cannot be incubated prior to shipping.

So again, which is the better test, culture or PCR? It appears from some work done in the US, and observations at the PDS lab, that PCR can be more sensitive than culture at picking up *T. foetus* infection. Since the key with *T. foetus* in a beef herd is finding it in the first place, that fact alone makes me want to use the rtPCR quite heavily. When sending samples to your reference lab, the added sensitivity of PCR makes this method a better choice than standard culture. If your practice is set up to do standard culture, and you have experienced and careful people doing culture readings, standard culture is still a very acceptable way to go. Consider using some rtPCR tests after your own culture in selected cases where reproductive problems cause you to have a high index of suspicion for *T. foetus*.

The key with *T. foetus* is to take and handle samples properly, and take steps to enhance the survival and growth of the organism to increase our chances of detecting it. From my reading of the current literature, it appears there is still some work to be done on *T. foetus*, so everyone working with this pathogen should stay tuned for future developments! Please call me with any comments or questions at (306) 459-2511 or call Dr. Musangu Ngeleka at (306) 966-7250. Happy hunting! 🍀

submitted by **Andy Acton**

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KUDOS to Dr. Andy Acton for ensuring a “Vet Advice” article appears in the *Canadian Cattleman* magazine on behalf of WCABP!

If you would like to contribute an article please contact Andy at dsac@sasktel.net.

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WCVM Welcomes New Funding for Infrastructure Project



Minister of State Lynne Yelich (left) and WCVM's Dr. Dorothy Middleton look at a rotating stock that will be used for standing surgeries in the veterinary college's new large animal clinical services area. Photo courtesy of the Western College of Veterinary Medicine.

A \$2.77-million investment from Western Economic Diversification is helping the Western College of Veterinary Medicine to complete two key aspects of its infrastructure project that will benefit Western Canada's livestock industry.

"The Government of Canada is proud to make this significant investment in the college as it is essential for a competitive Saskatchewan and Canadian livestock industry," said Minister of State Lynne Yelich, who made the funding announcement at the WCVM on April 15. "Investments such as these will lead to new diagnostic tests that will protect Canada's livestock industry and the health and safety of Canadians, their families and communities."

The veterinary college will use the new federal funding to finish a two-storey addition in its diagnostic area. The 3,000-square-metre addition includes a consolidated histology laboratory, a new post-mortem examination room and crucial laboratory space for diagnostic research and support services.

Another important feature is a special projects laboratory where staff can handle potential high-risk cases of zoonotic disease or suspect foreign-animal disease in a completely separate and biosecure area.

Part of the federal investment will also be used to complete a series of renovations to the large animal surgery suites and clinical wards in the WCVM's veterinary teaching hospital. As well, part of the project is the development of a dedicated room for nuclear scintigraphy — one of the most powerful diagnostic tools available to large

animal practitioners. This technology will allow researchers to explore new diagnostic and therapeutic options for horses and other animals that suffer from subtle lamenesses or spinal conditions.

"The expansion of the college's diagnostics area and the renovation of our large animal clinical services will provide our staff and students with specialized, biosecure facilities where they'll have access to a full range of new technologies," said Dr. Charles Rhodes, WCVM dean.

"This investment is critical to our overall plan for the WCVM. Western Economic Diversification's support is helping us build an environment where innovations in diagnostic and clinical techniques can be developed, tested and practically applied — all at one centre. Ultimately, many of these new practices will have a positive impact on the health, productivity and the economic value of livestock herds across Western Canada."

Rhodes added that enhancing biosecurity has been a major priority throughout the planning and construction of the veterinary college's five-year, \$71-million infrastructure project.

"I think the new diagnostics addition and the large animal clinical area are prime examples of that commitment. To ensure the safety of our staff, students and the public, we've adopted some of the same security measures used by the world's most biosecure laboratories and clinical facilities into our building's design," said Rhodes. "The result will be a veterinary college that's well prepared and well



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equipped to respond to Western Canada's future needs for animal health, education, research and services."

While construction of the diagnostics addition and renovations in the large animal clinical services area are in the finishing stages, the veterinary college is still seeking about \$10 million in additional funding to complete the final project in the WCVM's overall infrastructure plan.

This project, which is on hold until further funding is secured, includes the renovation of the existing necropsy area to permit development of a laboratory complex. This new area will bring together nearly all of the diagnostic service laboratories including virology, immunology, bacteriology, toxicology, PCR and TSE laboratories. 🐾



A view of the WCVM's new diagnostics addition from the southeast side. Photo courtesy of the Western College of Veterinary Medicine.

University of Calgary Faculty of Veterinary Medicine (UCVM)

In some parts of the province, it's not uncommon to see wild elk and domestic cattle sharing the same pasture for grazing. What we can't easily see is the impact on each species' health as they wander and graze.

Over the next two years, Karin Orsel, assistant professor, Epidemiology of Infectious Diseases at UCVM, and other UCVM faculty will join an ongoing elk project, the Southwest Alberta Montane Elk Study (www.montaneelk.com), to determine the impact elk and domestic cattle have on each other.

"Ultimately, if we understand how these two species impact each other's health status, we will be able to recommend different management strategies: for instance, when cows are turned out, areas to avoid, risky times of year, and others," says Orsel.




Several important production limiting diseases of cattle, such as Bovine Viral Diarrhea, Infectious Bovine Rhinotracheitis, Neospora caninum and Johne's disease, are also found in elk.

Throughout the year, samples from both species will be collected, including during high-stress times like rutting season. Also, possible contact between elk and beef cattle will be determined using GPS collars placed on more than a hundred elk.

"This is an excellent opportunity to collaborate with researchers in an ongoing wildlife project," adds Orsel. "Working in a multidisciplinary team will benefit the results of this project."

UCVM's Departments of Production Animal Health and Ecosystem and Public Health will collaborate with the University of Calgary's Faculty of Environmental Design to supervise the two-year project.

The five-year Montane Elk study involves graduate students from the University of Alberta, University of Calgary and Oregon State University, and is funded by Shell Canada Limited, Alberta Sustainable Resource Development, Parks Canada, Alberta Conservation Association, Southern Alberta Sustainable Community Initiative and NSERC. 🐾



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Call for Abstracts

WCABP / Intervet / Schering-Plough Animal Health Student Case Report / Research Presentation Competition

19th Annual WCABP Conference
January 14-16, 2010
Calgary, AB

Case Presentations / Research Presentations / Practice Tips

19th Annual WCABP Conference
January 14-16, 2010
Calgary, AB

Case presentations have been a valued part of past WCABP conferences. The conference organizers would like to extend an invitation to interested WCABP members to submit an interesting, unusual or challenging cases in bovine practice, which will hopefully spark discussion or debate. Presentations could also describe a useful practice tip or research study.

Abstracts should be less than 250 words. Case reports should describe the presenting complaint, case workup, laboratory results and discussion. Practice tips should illustrate the tip and its practical applications. Research presentations should include basic background, methods and materials, results and discussion.

Abstracts will be accepted for consideration until October 1, 2009. Two case reports will be selected by the board from the submissions received. Presentations should be 20 minutes in length and presented in PowerPoint format (5 minutes allotted for questions). Those members who are chosen to present will receive complimentary registration to the 2010 Annual Conference.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Dr. Sylvia Checkley (conference chair) through info@wcabp.com.

Who is eligible?

All WCVM and UCVM veterinary undergraduates (from any year in their program), as well as 2009 graduates (presenting work carried out while a student).

What is involved?

Abstracts are submitted to the WCABP Board of Directors and four are chosen for oral presentation at the annual conference.

Abstracts should be limited to 250 words. Case reports should include the presenting complaint, case workup, laboratory results and discussion. Research presentations should incorporate basic background, methods and materials, results, and discussion.

If your abstract is chosen, you will receive complimentary registration to the 2010 conference. You will be required to prepare a 15-minute PowerPoint presentation (5 minutes allotted for questions).

Oral presentations will be judged on scientific merit as well as presentation skills. Relevance to bovine practice is a must. The winning presentation will receive a laptop computer (or cash prize equivalent of \$1,200).

The conference is January 14-16, 2010. Students will present on Friday, January 15.

Where is it?

The 2010 conference will be held at the Executive Royal Inn, Calgary, Alberta.

When is the deadline?

Abstracts should be submitted by October 1, 2009, to info@wcabp.com. You will be informed by November 1, 2009, if your presentation has been selected.

Why should I enter?

This is a student competition to encourage development of scientific inquiry methods and communication abilities. We also value student involvement in WCABP and enjoy opportunities for networking with students.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Dr. Sylvia Checkley (conference chair) through info@wcabp.com.

www.wcabp.com

TO KEEP TABS ON YOUR ASSOCIATION
& YOUR INDUSTRY

- Updates on 2010 Conference
- Proceedings from the 2009 Conference
- Numerous links to sites of interest
- Latest industry information
- Vet Advice columns (contributed by WCABP members, and published in the Canadian Cattlemen)

Research Continues on the Ontario and Western Canadian Johne's Disease Control and Prevention Project

submitted by **Ulrike Sorge**

Ontario Veterinary College
University of Guelph

The Johne's Disease (JD) project was initiated in 2005 through collaboration of industry (CanWest DHI, Dairy Farmers of Ontario (DFO) and additional provincial milk marketing agencies) and government (OMAFRA plus provincial veterinary contacts in Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia), with funding from the federal government CanAdapt program. Progress in the search for the most efficient, risk-based approach to on-farm prevention of the spread of Johne's Disease in Canadian dairy herds continues.

A total of 640 herds were originally enrolled in the project by their herd veterinarian. Together the producers and veterinarians reviewed the results of a Johne's milk ELISA test done on all lactating cows and completed a Johne's risk assessment and pre-visit survey. Approximately a year after each herd's original enrollment, 499 herds were contacted for participation in a follow-up test and assessment. In total, 240 dairy producers agreed to participate (Ontario 182, Manitoba 14, Saskatchewan 10, Alberta 17 and British Columbia 17). About 30 to 50% of originally enrolled producers per province opted in. The proportion of test-positive herds participating, approximately 40%, was consistent across provinces (a positive herd was defined as having at least one cow with either a positive or suspect milk ELISA test).

In 2008, a telephone survey was conducted asking the producers about the practicality of the recommendations made, their general perception of the importance of JD and their opinions regarding this JD prevention strategy. Most commonly (74%), producers reported that they joined the project because they wanted to be proactive and to keep JD low in their herd. Some (42%) reported that they had

experienced a negative economic impact of JD on their farm, while 50% were concerned for the image of the dairy industry and possible consumer reaction to any link between JD and Crohn's disease. Although most producers did not comply with the management changes suggested by their veterinarians, they still thought the recommendations were reasonable. The main reason given for non-compliance was "we culled the test-positive cow" or "I didn't see the need to change." Despite this lack of activity, the producers generally liked the approach and found that, if they implemented some of the management recommendations, they observed a reduction in calf diseases as an additional benefit.

At the time of the writing of this article, 68 herds have completed the follow-up herd test for JD, done 2.3 to 3.5 years after the first test. Although, so far, only a small number of herds have been retested, there are some interesting trends developing. Most of the herds classified as positive on the first herd test, have a lower proportion of the herd with positive tests on the second test, and the overall number of high-titer cows (OD > 1.0) has dropped (decreased from 0.47% to 0.15%). Culling appears to have assisted in reducing the prevalence of positive tests as 84% of herds that culled their JD test-positive cows reduced their prevalence, while only 56% of herds that did not cull had a lower prevalence at the second test. However, the reduction in the within-herd rate of test positives on the second round may turn out to be only a short-lived advantage, because the rate of positive tests in first lactation animals in the second round was almost identical (1.4%) to that in the first round (1.6%).

So far, overall, fewer cows have positive tests on the second round compared to

the first (1.7% versus 2.5%). Unfortunately, 13 of 40 herds that were negative on their first herd test have at least one test-positive cow on the second testing. These results again confirm that a single herd test is insufficient for establishing the JD status of a herd.

The utilization of individual box stalls for calving is surfacing as a good management practice to reduce prevalence of JD. Herds where calving occurred in individual pens had a lower prevalence on second testing (1.6% test positives within herd) compared to group-calving herds (2.2%). Herds where cows calved alone also had a larger decrease in their herd's apparent prevalence between tests (a decrease of 1.3% versus an increase of 0.9% respectively, $p < 0.04$).

Thanks to additional funding from DFO, the entire contingent of study herds enlisted for the follow-up project will now be able to complete the second round of testing at no charge. Testing will continue to occur over the next six months and further analysis will be conducted. Completion and enlargement of the data set will allow more in-depth examination of Johne's Disease epidemiology in Ontario and Western Canadian herds and a closer examination of the impact of our herd management practices on its spread and persistence.

Thank you to all the veterinarians and producers out there who continue to work with us on this project. Your efforts are providing an important contribution to our knowledge as we work to develop the best way forward for the Ontario and Western Canadian dairy industry. 🐾

Source: *Ceptor Animal Health News*, OMAFRA Veterinary Science and Policy Unit

Electronic Breeding Soundness Evaluation Forms

WCABP and the Western Drug Distribution Center (WDDC) have an agreement for distributing an electronic version of our Breeding Soundness Evaluation Forms (BSE). These forms are available in a standalone application or integrated into CattleVantage. We will continue to provide our paper forms but veterinarians will now have the option of using an electronic version of the form.

The interface of the form is shown to the right; you will see that it mirrors the data collection fields found on the original forms, with some exceptions. Some advantages of the electronic forms are the ability to reprint lost or damaged forms and the capacity to edit and add information to the form until the first printing.

WDDC and non-WDDC members can access the forms via the WDDC website. You will be able to order as many forms as you like, and a follow-up invoice will be sent. The forms have a built-in counter system and you will be alerted to when your stock of forms is running low. Forms can be reordered at any point as long as internet access is available. There is no price differential between the cost of the electronic form and the paper version.

Another unique feature of this program is that veterinarians can upload their results

to a central database, which we believe will have value as a research tool.

To download the standalone application, go to the WDDC website www.wddc.com. Login using your clinic username and password (if you are not a WDDC member call 1-877-746-9332 to obtain an

account number). On the left-hand menu select "Member Programs" then "VET SOFTWARE." Choose "WCABP Form" and follow the download instructions to save to your clinic's computer or laptop. Once installed, there is a full help manual instructing you on the use of the electronic forms. 🐾

Video Cameras Implemented in Cargill Slaughter Plants

Cargill has started to implement a third-party video auditing program in its slaughter plants. Cargill Beef officials stated they plans to incorporate a system of video cameras in the slaughtering areas of its US beef processing facilities as part of an animal welfare system that includes 24-hour remote video auditing of its animal handling practices. The program is expected to better its animal welfare protection systems. The company expects to have the program in place at all of its US beef slaughter plants by the end of 2009.

Monitor performance in animal handling

According to reports, developed and managed by Arrowsight in collaboration with Dr. Temple Grandin, one of the industry's

foremost experts on animal welfare, the program has been created to assist plant operators teach and monitor performance in animal handling.

"Cargill has adopted some of the most rigorous animal care guidelines in the industry. This additional investment gives us the objective input we need to effectively train our people and improve our processes," said Cargill Beef President John Keating.

"Cargill has been a strong industry leader in the area of animal handling for many years," said Grandin. The program "follows the American Meat Institute's animal welfare audit system, compiles the data and sends it to the plants for their use to continually help improve their animal welfare programs."

Arrowsight as partner

Adam Aronson, Arrowsight Inc. chief executive officer, said, "We are pleased that Cargill has chosen Arrowsight as its partner to ensure that plant personnel are being conscientious in their protection of animals under their care and control."

Cargill has also created a humane animal-handling training and certification program for employees; this is in its efforts to broaden its commitment to drive industry leadership in evaluating, developing and continuously improving animal welfare protection programs.

"We believe that through our efforts we can raise the performance bar for our industry," added Keating. 🐾

Source: Meat International.com

CABV/ACVB Activities

CABV/ACVB sent the following letter to Dr. Gerald Hauer (Alberta's chief provincial veterinarian) on April 23, 2009, regarding amendments to the PAM Regulations:

Dear Dr. Hauer:

Re: Amendments to the Production Animal Medicine (PAM) Regulations

Thank you for providing the CABV/ACVB with the opportunity to comment on Alberta's proposed changes to its Production Animal Medicine regulations. Of particular concern is the proposed amendment to "allow outlets to sell modified live virus (MLV) vaccines for infectious bovine rhinotracheitis (IBR), bovine virus diarrhoea (BVD), parainfluenza-3 (PI-3), and bovine respiratory syncytial virus (BRSV)."

We appreciate that MLV vaccines have been available for years; that they pose no human health concerns; and that in most cases they are properly labeled. However, as veterinarians, we recognize that the inappropriate use of MLV vaccines can harm the animal. Inappropriate vaccination of dams with MLV BVD and IBR vaccines can pose a significant risk to the developing fetus, either by direct fetal damage by the vaccine components or insufficient protection of the developing fetus from field infections. Furthermore, we do not believe that proper labeling will prevent the inappropriate use of these vaccines.

Unquestionably, there are many cattlemen who have a close working relationship with their veterinarians and over the years have become very knowledgeable about vaccines. However, there is also a population of producers who do not fully understand how vaccines confer protection against a specific set of infectious agents. We believe that it would be irresponsible to market MLV vaccines through the OTC outlets based on the premise that producers only need to follow the instructions on the label; a comprehensive herd-health program cannot be written on the label of a vaccine bottle.

The veterinary community has been educating producers for decades on their need to develop preventative health

strategies. The dispensing of vaccines by veterinarians to their clients creates one of the essential interfaces required for the veterinarian to tailor the vaccine protocol to the health requirements of the producer's herd.

Our concerns regarding this amendment are based on the principle of what is best in the long-run for the producers and the animals. None of us want to investigate an 'abortion storm' because a producer ignored the warnings on a bottle. If we are serious about advancing the health of the Canadian cattle herd, particularly in Alberta, then the regulations should promote a greater interaction with veterinarians, professionals who have extensive training in the areas of preventative medicine.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Tye Perrett
President, CABV/ACVB

Below is a copy of the letter which the Canadian Association of Bovine Veterinarians (CABV) sent to Veterinary Drugs Directorate on August 5, 2008, regarding their stand on the Own Use Provision.

Dear Dr. Alexander:

RE: Final Report of the Task Force on Own-Use Importation of Veterinary Drugs

The Canadian Association of Bovine Veterinarians (CABV/ACVB) represents approximately 650 food animal oriented veterinary practitioners from across Canada. We welcome any regulatory changes that would provide increased quality, safety, and efficacy of veterinary pharmaceuticals.

The recommendations provided in the Final Report are not substantially different from those proposed in the Draft Report of April 2008; the CABV commented on that report via the Canadian Veterinary

Medical Association (CVMA). Our previous position has not changed; however, we would like to reiterate the following:

- In the long-term, it is in the best interests of the Canadian livestock industry that food safety takes precedence over the provision of less expensive pharmaceuticals.
- The VDD must have the final authority on deciding which products will be eligible for importation.
- Producers are unlikely to engage in the pilot project if they can still access pharmaceuticals under the OUP.
- The RIPP must include a provision to allow licensed Canadian veterinarians to import pharmaceuticals for resale. The interests of the Canadian public are best served whenever veterinarians are involved in the dispensing of veterinary pharmaceuticals to producers.
- Replacing the OUP with the RIPP is a positive step, but regulatory reform is absolutely critical if the long-term objective is to protect the Canadian food supply, while increasing the competitiveness of our livestock producers.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Tye Perrett
President, CABV/ACVB

There was an article relating to "Own Use Provision" posted on the Canadian Medical Association website and published in the April edition of the *Canadian Medical Association Journal* (www.cmaj.ca/cgi/rapidpdf/cmaj.090525).

You may also want to read the article which appeared in the *Globe and Mail* on April 11, 2009, entitled "Antibiotic use in livestock questioned." (www.theglobeandmail.com/servlet/story/LAC.20090411.ANTI11ART2048/EmailTPStory).



CVMA Species-Specific Antimicrobial Prudent Use Guidelines for Dairy Cattle, Beef Cattle, Poultry and Swine

The Canadian Veterinary Medical Association (CVMA), with funding from Advancing Canadian Agriculture and Agri-food (ACAAF) have developed species-specific antimicrobial prudent use guidelines for beef cattle, dairy cattle, poultry and swine. For each species, there is a set of principles of antimicrobial prudent use, along with a treatment table of antimicrobial therapy for the most common bacterial diseases that Canadian veterinary practitioners encounter in these species.

These guidelines were developed in consultation with Canadian animal health stakeholders, including national and provincial veterinary species associations, veterinary colleges, provincial veterinary associations and commodity associations.

The Prudent Use Guidelines are meant to provide veterinarians with a tool to help in

the antimicrobial selection decision-making process. The scope of the guidelines is for antimicrobials involved in the *treatment* of common bacterial diseases, not for the antimicrobials that may be prescribed by veterinarians for growth promotion or metaphylaxis. The antimicrobials listed include both labeled products and, where applicable, extra-label products. An evidence-based approach was taken to validate the recommendation of extra-label antimicrobials.

Rather than rank the treatment table antimicrobials in a 'usage preference order,' the guidelines use an approach that acknowledges the growing concern in both human medicine and veterinary medicine about antimicrobial resistance. The antimicrobials are divided into categories based on the Veterinary Drug

Directorate's "Categorization of Antimicrobial Drugs based on Importance in Human Medicine."

The information contained in these Prudent Use Guidelines is limited to the scientific evidence and antimicrobial drugs approved at the time of publication. The CVMA recognizes that with the availability of new research and antimicrobial drug approvals, these guidelines will need to be periodically reviewed and updated to maintain them as a living document.

The guidelines will be distributed to all large and mixed animal practices in Canada, as well as to veterinary students and large animal faculty. The guidelines are now available to CVMA members as PDFs on the CVMA website (www.canadianveterinarians.net). 🐾

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At Novartis Animal Health Canada Inc our mission is *Passionately saving, prolonging and improving animal lives*. Our organization is committed to bringing innovative products to the market and providing best in class support to the veterinary profession. We are seeking to fill a full time **Professional Services Veterinarian** position for our farm animal business.

The successful applicant will provide technical service support to veterinarians and livestock producers in Canada as well as to the Novartis sales and marketing team. Other key responsibilities of the role include visiting and liaising with the Canadian Veterinary Schools, developing and conducting technical presentations to a variety of audiences, conducting and monitoring marketing trials, providing technical product training to Novartis associates, participating in scientific literature reviews and supporting the pharmacovigilance department in adverse event investigation.

Qualifications include a DVM degree with clinical and/or research and/or industry experience and strong knowledge of the beef cattle business as well as knowledge of the swine and dairy cattle businesses. Also required are excellent demonstrated written and oral communication skills, strong interpersonal and teamwork skills, organizational, time and management skills, strong problem solving capability, ability to manage multiple projects, computer proficiency and willingness to travel within Canada.

The position will be based in Western Canada, preferably Alberta or Saskatchewan. You will be working primarily in Western Canada but will be required to travel nationally and internationally periodically. Novartis Animal Health offers a competitive salary and benefits. Salary compensation is based on experience.

Interested Applicants are asked to apply on BrassRing at:
<http://www.novartis.com/careers/index.shtml>
Requisition # 52848BR



Conference 2010

Mark Your Calendar!

**Thursday, January 14 to
Saturday, January 16, 2010**

**Executive Royal Inn
Calgary, AB**

Dates for the 2010 Conference have been set—Thursday, Friday and Saturday, January 14, 15 and 16. Recognizing that one of the secrets to success of a conference is to contact speakers early, Dr. Sylvia Checkley and her team of conference planners are off and running to put together a first rate program designed specifically for western Canadian cattle practitioners. Watch the website (www.wcabp.com) and September issue of the *WCABP newsletter* for further details.

The 2010 meeting will be held at the Executive Royal Inn, our traditional site for Calgary meetings. The Inn has once again come through with economical room rates (\$99 per night, single or double) to complement the excellent meeting facilities and delectable meals and refreshment breaks such as we have enjoyed in the past.

This is the first call for case reports and student presentations, each of which has proven to be a popular feature of our recent meetings. The “Call for Abstracts” on page 12 of this newsletter will provide further details.

All indications are for a first rate educational program in 2010. Thanks Sylvia and the 2010 conference team.

Ray Butler



WCABP
Western Canadian Association
of Bovine Practitioners

Welcome New WCABP Members!

The WCABP would like to acknowledge and welcome the following new members to the Association:

Stephen D. Acres

Saskatoon Colostrum Co. Ltd
Saskatoon, SK

Carol Jakel

Bayer Animal Health
Etobicoke, ON

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If you have not already renewed your membership, please do so today. Payment should be forwarded to:

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WCABP

Western Canadian Association of Bovine Practitioners



WCABP

Western Canadian Association of Bovine Practitioners

The following **THINK LARGE** materials are available from the WCABP Office:

- Brochures that highlight some of the attractive features of a career in bovine practice. Twenty-five copies are available to each member free of charge. Additional copies will be invoiced to you at our cost (approximately 43 cents/copy).
- A 23-slide Power Point presentation that expands on the theme presented in the brochure. The presentation can be downloaded from the WCABP website www.wcabp.com
- A 12½-minute video presentation (VHS), also titled "Think Large." In addition to the standard VHS tapes, we have DVDs and CDs (suitable for use in exhibits), which may be borrowed for your use.

Bull Evaluation and Barth Manuals

Now is the time to check your inventory of WCABP forms and manuals. Please email/fax/ or call the WCABP office to place your order for the following:

- Bull Breeding Soundness Evaluation or Barth Manuals @ \$20 per manual
- Bull Breeding Soundness Evaluation Forms @ \$10 for books of 25 and \$20 for books of 50

A small shipping charge will be added to all orders to cover shipping and handling.

Bull Breeding Soundness Evaluation Forms are also available at Western Drug Distribution Center and Mid-West Veterinary Drug Distribution Center.

Electronic Breeding Soundness Evaluation Forms are available through WDDC (www.wddc.com). Login using your clinic username and password. (If you are not a WDDC member call 1-877-746-9332 to obtain an account number.) On the left-hand menu select "Member Programs" then "VET SOFTWARE." Choose "WCABP Form" and follow the download instructions to save to your clinic's computer or laptop.

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Nominations for the Boehringer Ingelheim WCABP Veterinarian of the Year

We urge all members to read the following nomination procedures and selection criteria. It is not too early to start thinking about deserving recipients for the 2010 award.

Criteria to consider for nominees

The veterinarian must be a member in good standing with their respective association, or if retired, to have been a member in good standing at the time of retirement. The Boehringer Ingelheim WCABP Veterinarian of the Year Award nominee should be a WCABP member; however, the board may choose to recognize a non-WCABP veterinarian who has made a significant contribution to bovine practice in Western Canada. Deadlines for all nominations will be December 1 of each year.

By this award, the WCABP is attempting to honour, or recognize, a veterinarian who embodies some, but not necessarily all, of the following criteria:

- 1) History of service and dedication to veterinary practice and the cattle industry.
- 2) History of service to the veterinary profession, specifically to the WCABP and other Western Canadian provincial veterinary associations.
- 3) Reputation for clinical competency or for being a pioneer or leader in bovine medicine, surgery or herd health.
- 4) If the nominee is a non-member, this person must have a national or international reputation related to bovine medicine, surgery and herd health, and their accomplishments must have had a positive influence on bovine practice in Western Canada.

Nomination Procedure

A call for nominations will be included in the two newsletters leading up to the deadline for nominations. A notification for a call for nominations will be posted on the website for at least 90 days leading up to the deadline for nominations. The Secretary-Treasurer may elect to send an email to all members requesting nominations.

Each nomination must include a brief biography and a rationale for why you believe this person is deserving of the award. The letter of nomination will be printed in the first newsletter following the granting of the award. The Secretary-Treasurer will collect all the nominations and present them to the board for review and selection. The Secretary-Treasurer will then make contact, at least two weeks in advance of the meeting, advising the recipient of the place and time of the award. 🐾

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