

“Think Large” – WCABP presentation Speaking Notes

Slide 1. “THINK LARGE”

- For many large animal veterinarians, it’s been a life-long interest – they’ve always had a love of animals
- But, others may not know the opportunities that exist in large animal veterinary medicine
- That’s why the Western Canadian Association of Bovine Practitioners has launched the “Think Large” program
- It’s targeted at young people of all ages, but especially those from junior high school through to the early university years who are formalizing their career plans
- There is a good opportunity for the brightest and best of these students as large animal veterinarians in food production

Slide 2: OPPORTUNITY IN A CHANGING WORLD

- Food animal production is a growth industry and there are many reasons why young men and women will find large animal veterinary medicine an interesting career choice
- Large animal veterinary medicine is an opportunity to help ensure a safe food supply, be on the front-line of biosecurity issues and directly contribute to the well-being of food animals
- With an expected shortage of large animal veterinarians in the near future – now is the perfect time to explore this field as a career choice!
- Fewer people have a connection to agriculture in our changing world and as a result may not understand the career opportunities

Slide 3: WORK DIRECTLY WITH ANIMALS

- Veterinarians have the personal fulfillment of animal care
- It’s the number one reason why people choose a career as a veterinarian

Slide 4: WORK WITH ANIMALS

- Direct involvement with animals as part of the health management process
- Provide disease treatment, proper health care and animal welfare

Slide 5: DESIGN INNOVATIVE HERD HEALTH PLANS•Today’s veterinarians are working with livestock producers to prevent disease and improve productivity

Slide 6: WORK AS HEALTH ADVISORS

- Today’s large animal veterinarians have taken on a new role
- Still needed for animal health emergencies, but their role has expanded greatly into health advisors

- They help producers design and implement herd health plans that ensure the well-being and productivity of the herd as a whole

Slide 7: WORK ON THE FRONTLINES OF BIOSECURITY

- Canada’s livestock producers and bovine practitioners are the first line of defence in food animal disease control

Slide 8: NEW BIOSECURITY EMPHASIS

- Food animal disease outbreaks can completely cripple the livestock industry
- In Britain, the BSE outbreak cost the economy an estimated \$12 billion Canadian, and the tab for the foot and mouth outbreak was approximately \$18 billion
- In both cases, veterinarians were an important part of the control effort and Canadian veterinarians were given the opportunity to help their European peers
- Food animal veterinarians have an important ongoing role to play here in Canada in preventing those diseases and managing outbreaks

Slide 9: BUILD A SAFE FOOD SUPPLY

- Livestock health anchors a safe food supply

Slide 10: SAFE FOOD CONCERNS SOCIETY

- Food safety is rapidly emerging as a major concern for society
- Canada has an excellent reputation that depends on high animal health standards

Slide 11: HERD HEALTH CRITICAL

- Veterinarians have a role to play in ensuring that high animal health standards are met
- Food animal veterinarians can advise producers on how to use animal health products in the correct, most effective way
- Ensuring withdrawal times are honoured so that none of the antibiotics get into the human food chain

Slide 12: ANIMAL WELFARE

- Animal welfare is now integrally linked with food safety and quality
- Veterinarians are key players in farm animal care
- Major chains such as McDonald’s and Burger King require audited food animal care

Slide 13: WORK IN THE GREAT OUTDOORS

- Veterinarians have the option to work outdoors

Slide 14: WORK FLEXIBILITY

- Many veterinarians say the opportunity to work in the great outdoors is one of the greatest benefits of the work they do – others say it’s the flexibility of both indoor and outdoor work
- Large animal veterinarians enjoy working with people who make their living from the land

Slide 15: CHOOSE A RURAL LIFESTYLE

- No traffic jams, wide-open spaces, country living. Exactly what many people wish for.
- Often a lower cost of living

Slide 16: BE INVOLVED IN LEADING EDGE SCIENCE

- Information in veterinary medicine turns over every five years

Slide 17: LEADING EDGE OF SCIENCE

- Personal opportunity to be at the leading edge of science and to contribute to that leading edge
- Food animal medicine is a rapidly changing field
- Research is leading to better animal health and greater production efficiencies
- For example, a couple decades ago it was a real benchmark to have a cow milk 100 pounds of milk per day, now, some cows are approaching the 200 pound mark – and it’s because of research
- Keeping up to date with current research is an important part of being a large animal veterinarian

Slide 18: LIFE-LONG LEARNING

- Information in the field of veterinary medicine turns over every five years, so veterinarians have a network in place to ensure that they stay current with new research developments
- Veterinarians attend regular conferences, read scientific journals and regularly talk to their peers – locally, nationally and internationally – to ensure they are current
- Many veterinarians say that when they graduated from veterinary college, the real learning had just begun
- Veterinary practice is an opportunity for life-long learning

Slide 19: SOLID, LONG-TERM CAREER OPTIONS

- New challenges every day, every year

Slide 20: LONG-TERM OPTIONS

- Food industry offers good long-term potential

- There may be a shortage of food animal vets in the future, often a tendency to choose small animal practice
- Broad range of roles for large animal veterinarians today and in the future means good opportunities

Slide 21: BECOME A LARGE ANIMAL VETERINARIAN

- You need: 1) A genuine interest
- 2) Top marks in high school and pre-veterinary classes
- 3) A desire to make a difference in the world

Slide 22: BECOME A LARGE ANIMAL VETERINARIAN

- For more information on the training required to become a large animal vet, contact:
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University of Saskatchewan, 52 Campus Dr.,
Saskatoon, SK
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Phone: (306) 966-7454, fax: (306) 966-8747
Web site: www.usask.ca/wcvm

Slide 23: THINK LARGE

- Contact the Western Canadian Association of Bovine Practitioners
- Phone 1-866-COW-VETS (269-8387)
- Web site: www.wcabp.com
- Address: 112G – 116 Research Drive, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan S7N 3R3
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