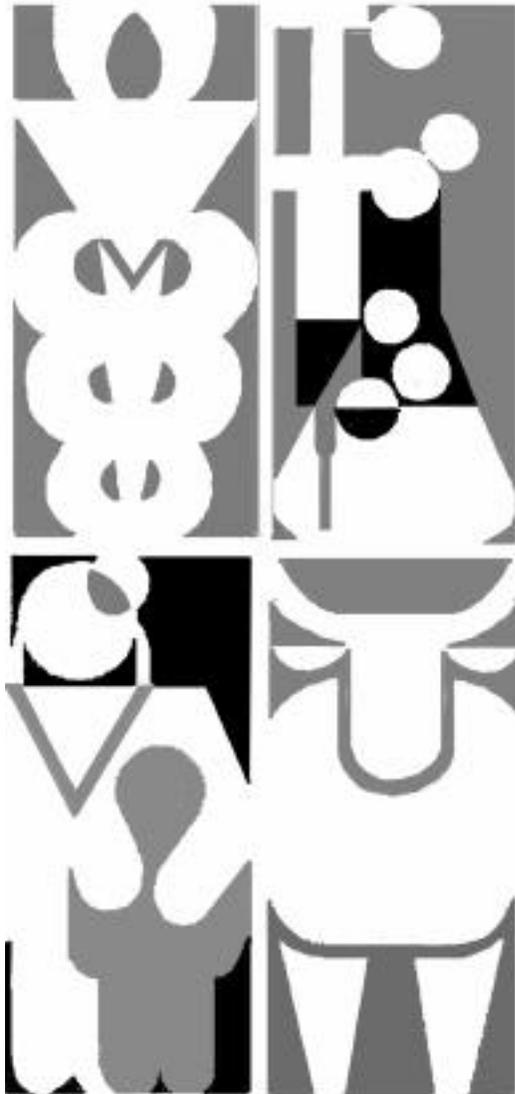


NEWSLETTER



Association of Teachers of Veterinary Public Health and Preventive Medicine

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ATVPHPM is committed to developing and fostering the academic base for veterinary public health and preventive medicine

Visit the ATVPHPM Web site at...

<http://www.cvm.uiuc.edu/atvphpm/>

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Important: Please take a moment to look at your mailing label on the envelope. The number (e.g. 98) in the lower right corner of the mailing label is the last year for which a dues payment has been recorded. Membership dues are \$20 US annually and are payable on January 1 of each year. If, for example, your dues payment year is indicated to be 97, then to become current you should remit two years dues or \$40. The ATVPHPM Constitution and By-Laws require that members two years in arrears in payment of dues shall be dropped from membership (Article VIII)

ASSOCIATION NEWS

Mark Gearhart Memorial Graduate Student Award

The ATVPHPM is pleased to announce that it is seeking applications for the 2002 Mark Gearhart Memorial Graduate Student Award. This award will be made for the best manuscript submitted by a graduate student who is completing or has just completed advanced academic or professional training in veterinary public health or preventive veterinary medicine. The award consists of a plaque and \$300, based upon review by a panel of ATVPHPM members. Applicants are required to submit four copies of a manuscript that is suitable for publication in a peer reviewed journal, and four copies of the applicants curriculum vitae. The student's graduate advisor must also submit a letter stating the role the graduate student took in the project and in preparing the manuscript. Manuscripts should be suitable for publication, and should be formatted in the style used by Preventive Veterinary Medicine. However, it is not required that manuscripts be submitted to this journal. Manuscripts that have been submitted for publication or have been published after July 1, 2001 are acceptable. Application materials should be sent to Dr. Paul Morley, Dept. of Environmental Health, Colorado State University, Fort Collins, CO, 80526, and must be received before June 1, 2002 in order to be considered. The recipient of this award will be encouraged to attend the 2002 Conference of Research Workers in Animal Diseases and present an abstract based upon this manuscript. For more information, contact Dr. Paul Morley (Ph: 970-491-7332; Fax: 970-491-2940; Email: Paul.Morley@Colostate.edu).

Name Change for ATVPHPM?

The ATVPHPM was founded many years ago. Since then, our organization has actively promoted development of teaching strategies for veterinary epidemiology, preventive medicine, and public health. It has also served an important role in North America and elsewhere in promoting the scholarly activity and advancement in our disciplines. However, in reviewing our membership roster from the past several years it is clear that almost all of our active members are educators employed at institutions of higher education. This is perhaps not surprising given the prominent place that the word "teacher" has in our organization's name.

In recent months we have informally interviewed non-member colleagues about their reasons for not joining our association. The consensus of many was that they

did not believe they were represented by the association, principally because they were not involved formally in teaching. On the other hand, these colleagues generally felt they would consider becoming active members of an organization that supported promotion of scholarly activity and development in our disciplines, and supported regular scientific communication that assisted in their personal growth and advancement of our disciplines.

As such, our name may be discouraging growth of our association rather than encouraging our non-member colleagues from exploring our mission and activities that do in fact promote the advancement of our disciplines. It is possible that we may easily increase our active membership by 50% or more if we had a name that better allowed our colleagues to identify with our association. With a larger and more diversified membership, it is also possible that our association may have greater impact in promoting and advancing our disciplines

Therefore, we are exploring the possibility of changing the name of our association to better represent the breadth and scope of our disciplines. It is important to note that promotion and development of educational strategies for epidemiology, preventive medicine, and public health would continue to be a major emphasis of this renamed association.

Two possible new names have been suggested: (1) Veterinary Epidemiology and Preventive Medicine Association and (2) Veterinary Preventive Medicine and Public Health Association. The first suggestion would be consistent with the Canadian and European Union organizations, CAVEPM (Canadian Association of Veterinary Epidemiology and Preventive Medicine) and SVEPM (Society of Veterinary Epidemiology and Preventive Medicine), respectively.

We realize that the name is important to the members. The Association will continue to be as inclusive as possible regardless of the outcome of this discussion. Please send any comments about the name change to the ATVPHPM President, Margaret Slater, <[mslater@cvm.tamu.edu](mailto:m Slater@cvm.tamu.edu)>. A summary of the comments and suggestions will be circulated back to the membership.

How to Contact ATVPHPM

Applications for membership, accompanied by a check for \$20 payable to the ATVPHPM, should be sent to:

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Membership application forms are available online at:

<http://www.cvm.uiuc.edu/atvphpm/>

Newsletter items can be sent to:

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Current and past issues of the ATVPHPM Newsletter are also available online at:

<http://www.cvm.uiuc.edu/atvphpm/>

ATVPHPM ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES

November 12, 2001

Conference of Research Workers in Animal Diseases
Millenium Hotel, St Louis

President Ian Gardner called the meeting to order at 11:30 a.m.

The following members were present.

Tim Carpenter, Hollis Erb, Marcus Doherr, Ian Gardner, John Gordon, Laura Hardin, Jorge Hernandez, Dave Hird, Kent Hoblet, Paul Morley, John New, Mo Salman, Jan Sargeant, Paiva Rajala-Schultz, Dan Scholl, Morgan Scott, Irtaza Siddique, Randy Singer, Bill Sischo, Margaret Slater, Alex Thompson, Jim Thorne, Michael Ward, Ron Weigel and Tom Wittum,

Ian Gardner introduced the new Board members for 2001-2002: Margaret Slater (President), Jim Thorne (Secretary/Treasurer), Laura Hungerford (Member-at-Large and President Elect), Tom Wittum and Dale Moore (Members-at-Large). Mo Salman and Ron Smith will continue as Continuing Education Chair and Newsletter editor/webmaster, respectively. He thanked Past President John New, Jorge Hernandez (retiring Member-at-Large), Paul Morley (Awards chair) and Dan Scholl (Sunday workshop organizer) for their outstanding contributions to Association activities in the last year.

President Gardner reviewed ATVPHPM activities since last year's Annual Meeting and highlighted the following points:

1. The ATVPHPM is in a sound financial position with an end-of-year balance of approximately \$17,000.

2. The Board has voted to provide \$800 (4 awards of \$200) for the next 2 years for student presentations at CRWAD in the Epidemiology and Economics section and Food and Environmental Safety Sections. These awards will be offered jointly with the American College of Veterinary Preventive Medicine which will provide one award of \$200. The Mark Gearhart Award will also be offered again next year and will be more vigorously promoted.
3. ATVPHPM members continue to take the lead role in organizing these 2 sections at CRWAD meetings and as such, support of CRWAD represents a major commitment by our members.
4. The major educational activity for this year was the Graduate Education Workshop in Veterinary Epidemiology (Sunday November 11). Mo Salman, in association with several ATVPHPM members, also ran a successful epidemiology short course for Spanish-speaking veterinarians.
5. There will be Powerpoint presentation capability at future CRWAD meetings in our sections. Paul Morley has kindly agreed to help facilitate implementation of this technology. There has also been a suggestion to have a Keynote speaker (30 minute state-of-the-art presentation) in each of the sections.
6. Some By-laws changes are being considered by the Board but these changes will appear in the

Newsletter before being voted on at the 2002 Annual Meeting

A discussion followed about the possibility of a keynote address and the Sunday workshop. Three suggestions were made: Molecular epidemiology and evolutionary genetics of pathogens; quantitative analytical methods for antimicrobial resistance; and education of DVM students in epidemiology. These ideas will be developed over the next 3 or 4 months and then members will be polled as to their preference.

Mo Salman discussed the future CE offerings in Epidemiology for USDA APHIS and indicated that there will be at least 2 new courses this coming year..

Jim Thorne discussed the following:

1. The accountant's report on ATVPHPM financial records (attached in board meeting minutes).
2. Treasurer's report (attached in board meeting minutes).
3. PayPal is available online for payment of dues.

Next year's CRWAD will be held at the Millenium Hotel on November 11 and 12, and likely the Annual Meeting will be held at lunchtime on November 11.

The meeting was turned over to incoming President Margaret Slater, who adjourned the meeting at 12.10pm.

Prepared by Dr. James Thorne
ATVPHPM Secretary/Treasurer

PRODUCTS & REVIEWS

Rice Virtual Lab in Statistics

EDUCATION: The Scoop on Stats
NetWatch
SCIENCE, Volume 292, Number 5524, Issue of 15
June 2001, page 1971
©2001 by The American Association for the
Advancement of Science.

Although Mark Twain disparaged them as the worst form of fibbing, statistics have become indispensable to scientists in almost every discipline. If you're looking for a clear, basic stats how-to, drop by this site created by David Lane, a psychologist and statistics expert at Rice University in Houston. Lane's starter kit includes his own online statistics textbook, on-site tools for crunching your own data, and plenty of links to more

stats software. It's intended not just for novices who don't know a t-test from a P value, but for anyone who wants a quick refresher.

What sets the site apart from other Web stats primers are the interactive demonstrations of key concepts, such as distributions and sampling, and the case studies drawn from published papers. Guiding you step-by-step, these clear examples investigate timely questions, ranging from what type of low-fat diet is healthier to whether smiling wins more lenient punishment for offenders. (It seems to, so keep grinning during that IRS audit.) Lane wraps up the studies with cautionary words about what we can--and can't--conclude.

www.ruf.rice.edu/~lane/rvls.html

INTERNET RESOURCES

Veterinary Public Health Portal

<http://www.veterinary-public-health.de>

The WHO Collaborating Centre for Research and Training in Veterinary Public Health (VPH) at the School of Veterinary Medicine Hannover has established a special Internet portal offering information on several aspects of veterinary public health. It has been available since the end of March 2001 in a first German version. Now an English version is also available. The information service was established to introduce in the fields of research, knowledge, training and education of veterinary public health. The intention is to build up a

wide source of information concerning all aspects of veterinary public health with emphasis on the situation in Europe and Germany. I would appreciate your comments and your suggestions for improvement concerning our web-pages.

Dr. Susanne Broll <Susanne.Broll@tiho-hannover.de>
WHO Collaborating Centre for Research and Training in
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Tierärztliche Hochschule Hannover
Buenteweg 2
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Tel:0511 953-7970 Fax:0511 953-7975

NEWS & COMMENTARY

Food Hygiene Can Go Too Far

September 27, 2001

Western Producer

Barry Wilson, Ottawa bureau

NIAGARA FALLS, Ont. – Stephen Strauss, a Globe and Mail science writer now studying and writing at the University of Guelph and the author of an upcoming book on food was cited as telling the annual meeting of the Crop Protection Institute of Canada Sept. 17 that sanitary and safety standards may be making North Americans sicker, and that there is growing evidence that today's hygiene standards are so high that children are not exposed to enough germs to create internal immune systems. The result, he says, is that the rates of asthma and allergies are soaring in food-rich developed countries. Increasing scientific evidence points to a lack of natural immunity as the cause.

Strauss, who is writing a book about the problems and implications of living in a food-rich world, was cited as saying there is growing evidence that sanitary food and attempts at a germ-free, sterilized existence are making people more susceptible to diseases that people in less developed countries can fend off, adding, "With every death from food borne illness that you get rid of, do you create one death from asthma?" noting that both kill approximately 5,000 young Americans each year. "It often is the same age group affected."

He said there is a "hygiene hypothesis" growing around increased illnesses in developed countries. Studies of children in East and West Germany before unification showed lower hygienic conditions, more germs, more pollution and more crowding in East Germany. Yet children in the more affluent West Germany were more likely to have asthma, allergies and other diseases.

From child birth through childhood and daily living, the presence of more germs and foreign matter on food and in other activities in developing countries may be necessary for a healthier population, Strauss said. "It is possible we are making our world and our food too clean," he said.

Exposure to Farming in Early Life and Development of Asthma and Allergy: A Cross-Sectional Survey

October 7, 2001

Lancet 2001; 358: 1129-33

Background - A farming environment protects against development of asthma, hay fever, and atopic sensitisation in children. We aimed to establish whether increased exposure to microbial compounds has to occur early in life to affect maturation of the immune system and thereby reduces risk for development of allergic diseases.

Methods - We did a cross-sectional survey in rural areas of Austria, Germany, and Switzerland. 2618 (75%) of 3504 parents of 6-13-year-old children completed a standardised questionnaire on asthma, hay fever, and atopic eczema. Children from farming families, and a random sample of non-farmers' children, who gave consent for blood samples to be obtained for measurements of specific serum IgE antibodies to common allergens were invited to participate (n=901).

Findings - Exposure of children younger than 1 year, compared with those aged 1-5 years, to stables and consumption of farm milk was associated with lower frequencies of asthma (1% [3/218] vs 11% [15/138]), hay fever (3% [7] vs 13% [18]), and atopic sensitisation (12% [27] vs 29% [40]). Protection against development of asthma was independent from effect on atopic sensitisation. Continual long-term exposure to stables until age 5 years was associated with the lowest frequencies of asthma (0.8% [1/122]), hay fever (0.8% [1]), and atopic sensitisation (8.2% [10]).

Interpretation - Long-term and early-life exposure to stables and farm milk induces a strong protective effect against development of asthma, hay fever, and atopic sensitisation.

CDC Publishes List of Food-Borne Diseases, Incidence Rates

September 27, 2001

Meating Place

Dan Murphy

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has published an annual update to its list of infectious and communicable diseases transmitted by human handling of the food supply, along with the methods by which such diseases are transmitted. According to informed

sources, there was little new information available to warrant a change to the existing list. However, the list and disease transmission information may be found in the Federal Register Sept. 10 (Vol. 66 No. 175).

High Infection Rate in Organic Chickens

October 1, 2001

Organic Trade Services

Andy Coghlan

<http://www.organictrade.com/newsnow/Organic.html>

Reserachers at the Danish Veterinary Laboratory in Aarhus were cited as reporting in Letters in Applied Microbiology (Vol 33, p269).that they found that all 22 organic broiler flocks they investigated were infected with Campylobacter the most common cause of food poisoning in the UK, whereas only one third of 79 conventional broilerhouses were infected. Karl Pedersen, who supervised the project was quoted as saying, "The organic movement is sound, but this is unwelcome news" adding that the result is not entirely surprising, since organic birds are allowed to roam outside and are more likely to be exposed to food and water contaminated with infected faeces from wild animals. "But it turns out that the difference was far higher than we expected," he says. Peter Bradnock, chief executive of the British Poultry Council, was cited as saying he was also unsurprised by the results, adding, "We're starting to see some of the organic myths about food safety debunked." The UK Soil Association, which promotes organic farming, was unavailable for comment. The story says that conventionally-bred birds are slaughtered after around 38 days, whereas organic birds live twice as long, and so are more likely to pick up infections. And in most European countries, conventional broiler farmers grow and slaughter all their chickens at the same time, so empty broilerhouses can be thoroughly disinfected before the next batch of day-old chicks arrives.

FSIS puts E. coli Test Results on the Internet

October 15, 2001

Herd on the Hill

Edited by Jeremy Russell

FSIS, currently providing positive test results from the E. coli O157:H7 microbiological testing program for raw ground beef on an annual basis on its web site, announced plans to also post positive test results as they are reported. Calling the move an effort to "spur industry to institute pathogen reduction and HACCP-associated verification programs," FSIS will allow the public to access the data at www.fsis.usda.gov/Ophs/ecoltest/ecpositives.htm.

Bioterrorism Course to be Developed at Iowa State University

By STACI HUPP

Register Staff Writer

10/22/2001

Ames, Ia. - A class being developed at Iowa State University will teach veterinary students nationwide how to identify deadly diseases that could be used in biological warfare.

The College of Veterinary Medicine received \$250,000 from federal sources to lead the two-year project. When it's finished, the curriculum will be passed on to all 27 veterinary medicine colleges in the nation, ISU officials said.

The concept began before a February outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease in Europe. The project gained significance as anthrax reports surfaced in recent weeks and experts warned that agriculture is vulnerable to terrorism.

"One of our most important defenses is that the public knows what they're watching for," said Jim Roth, an ISU professor of veterinary immunology and virology who is working on the project.

The one-semester class will teach students to spot forms of mad cow disease, West Nile virus, tuberculosis and more than 60 other foreign and domestic animal diseases, Roth said. The list includes bioterrorism weapons that could threaten the U.S. food supply.

Veterinary students will take the class online. CD-ROMs will replace textbooks, Roth said. Students will learn how the diseases spread and their impact on animal herds, food production, human health and the U.S. and Canadian economies. They also will know what to do if they come across an infected animal.

"The goal is to get everyone trained," said Phyllis Peters, a spokeswoman for the veterinary medicine college. "If a cow comes up with disease, a person is not going to take it to us. They're going to take it to the local veterinarian." Training in foreign animal disease is not standard across most veterinary colleges, Roth said.

Bioterrorism expert Peter Chalk warned last week that U.S. agriculture is extremely vulnerable to terrorism in the livestock industry. Governments are unprepared to deal with contagious animal diseases, Chalk, an analyst with the Rand Corp. in Washington, D.C., said at the World Food Prize symposium.

Agroterrorism is a threat to the U.S. economy, said Norman Cheville, dean of ISU's College of Veterinary Medicine. Professionals, farmers, truck drivers and

others involved in the food chain must know whom to contact if they come across animal disease so that scientists can respond with vaccines, Cheville said.

"These are practices that are in place now," Cheville said. "What we have to do is make sure there aren't any gaps in that system."

New NCT on Mycobacterial Diseases of Livestock and Wildlife

(Editor's comment: although the deadline for initial responses to this request will have passed by the time you receive your ATVPHPM Newsletter, the new initiative is of interest)

Dear Experiment Station Directors,

NCT-188, Diagnosis and Control of Mycobacterial Diseases of Livestock and Wildlife, was recently approved and I've been appointed as the Administrative Advisor. This NCT has grown out of interest and widespread concern about two primary disease syndromes:

1) Johne's disease (paratuberculosis) in cattle is extremely wide spread in dairy cattle and becoming more prevalent in beef cattle. The disease occurs to a lesser extent in sheep and some other livestock and wildlife species. In addition to the animal health and production economics aspects of this disease, there is growing concern about the potential that the etiological agent, *Mycobacterium avium* paratuberculosis, may also be the causative agent for the human disease known as Crohn's disease. This link has not been proven but there is a growing food safety concern associated with this disease - if nothing else, a link to Crohn's disease needs to be disproven.

2) Tuberculosis in livestock is a long-standing issue and the presence of tuberculosis in wildlife is a new concern. *Mycobacterium bovis* infection was diagnosed in wild deer in upper Michigan in 1994 and several TB-infected dairy herds have subsequently been attributed to transmission from deer. Control programs for this disease in wildlife do not exist. Potential spread to other states or regions is a concern.

There are a number of other *Mycobacterium* species, that are of interest as well.

This email is a call for participation in this NCT, the objective of which will be to determine whether a NC or a NCR committee should be formed. Upon identification of participants for NCT-188, a meeting will be scheduled. Please pass this information to anyone that you feel would be interested.

If there are scientists at your station who are interested in joining this project, please fill in the attached (slightly modified) Appendix E-1. Return of this form via e-mail is certainly easiest, but hard copies

via postal mail can be sent to my address (below). The committee is anxious to get started. I would like to get your responses by November 15, 2001 if possible. Please contact me with any questions.

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HHS Accelerates Bioterrorism Research

New Programs Expedite Ideas from Concerned Scientists

HHS Secretary Tommy G. Thompson today announced seven new initiatives to accelerate bioterrorism research and help strengthen the nation's ability to deal with the public health threat posed by bioterrorism. The research programs at the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) are designed to take advantage of the recent outpouring of ideas from concerned academic and industrial scientists on ways to understand and combat potential agents of bioterrorism. NIAID is the lead institute for research on bioterrorism at the National Institutes of Health (NIH). "Lethal bioterrorism has become a stark reality, and our ability to detect and counter this danger depends on having reliable, up-to-date knowledge," Secretary Thompson said. "Under these new initiatives, the submission, review, and funding of this flood of scientific proposals will be expedited so that important research in this area can advance as quickly as possible." "At NIAID, our offices have been deluged with calls from scientists who want to help," NIAID Director Anthony S. Fauci, M.D., said. "At scientific meetings and conferences, I am often approached by researchers with promising ideas and a desire to contribute to the fight against bioterrorism. These new programs will allow us to channel that energy and new thinking toward enhancing our already significant bioterrorism research program." The following initiatives will fund research investigating high-priority, "Category A" biological diseases as defined by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) - anthrax, botulism, plague, smallpox, tularemia, and viral hemorrhagic fevers. Many of these programs will encourage government partnerships with business and academia. Many of them expand or build upon existing NIAID bioterrorism or infectious disease research programs. Proposals and applications from scientists may be submitted immediately. For more detailed information, visit NIAID's new Webpage, New Bioterrorism-Related Research Funding Opportunities, at <http://www.niaid.nih.gov/dmid/bioterrorism/>.

USDA HACCP Salmonella Performance Standard Ruled Invalid

December 11, 2001

NAMP Newsfax Vol. 60, No. 11

<www.namp.com/news/nfnews.html>

A three-judge federal appeals panel ruled unanimously today that USDA's Salmonella performance standard conflicts with the statutory language in the Federal Meat Inspection Act (FMIA) and therefore is invalid. The Salmonella performance standard is part of the 1996 HACCP/Pathogen Reduction rule. Supreme Beef Processors had challenged the validity of the FSIS ground beef performance standard in 1999, with a lower court affirming Supreme's claim that the standard was illegal. USDA appealed the district court ruling. After Supreme Beef filed for bankruptcy, USDA failed in an attempt to get the case dismissed as moot, and a three-judge panel heard oral arguments on the appeal October 1 this year. NAMP Executive Vice President Marty Holmes applauded the court's ruling, saying, "We are pleased with the court's verdict on the Salmonella performance standard - NAMP was confident that the court would agree that the standard cannot be considered a scientifically sound way of measuring the sanitation of a plant." He further commented that industry seemed to universally agree that USDA should withdraw the standard immediately. The Fifth Circuit judges ruled that USDA cannot use FMIA language that allows the agency to take enforcement actions against plants or products "prepared, packed, or held under insanitary conditions" to regulate the characteristics of raw materials that exist before the meat product is prepared, packed or held. This ruling effectively recognized the argument of many processors since the HACCP rule's implementation that they are unfairly subject to enforcement action because of the raw products they utilize, especially when those products are not adulterated. The appellate court also recognized that, because the performance standard measures Salmonella in final product, it cannot "serve as a proxy for cross contamination because there is no determination of the incoming Salmonella baseline." In so ruling the court of appeals rejected USDA's argument that the Salmonella standard should be upheld because it serves as a measure of whether pathogens that are adulterants, such as E. coli O157:H7, are also present in products. The NACMCF subcommittee on performance standards recently requested that data relating compliance with the Salmonella performance standard to the presence or absence of E. coli O157:H7 be made available. USDA's options for appeal are limited: The agency could ask the same three judge panel that heard the case and issued a unanimous opinion to rehear the case; USDA could ask for a rehearing before all the judges of the Fifth Circuit; or USDA could file petition the Supreme Court to hear the case.

Processors Can't be Shut Down for Repeated Salmonella Violations

December 12, 2001

Washington Post/AP/Reuters/Wall Street Journal

<<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A28917-2001Dec11.html>>

The U.S. Agriculture Department will, according to these stories, no longer close down meat processing plants that repeatedly fail to control potentially harmful salmonella bacteria, following a decision last week by a federal appeals court that the government did not have that authority to move against the plants. USDA spokeswoman, Alisa Harrison was cited as saying the court made clear that the department would have to use other means to ensure that unsafe meat is not sold to the public, adding, "We have no more ability to shut a plant down," and that the department can still ensure the safety of meat through its testing procedures and the power to recall contaminated products. The stories say that the decision by the Fifth Circuit of the U.S. Court of Appeals affirmed a decision by U.S. District Judge A. Joe Fish in Texas, who ruled in 2000 that the USDA acted improperly when it closed the Supreme Beef Processors Inc. plant because it failed a salmonella test three different times. Supreme Beef, which is now in bankruptcy, was a major supplier of ground beef for school lunch programs. But the case took on a much wider significance with the appeals court decision because the judges also agreed to allow the National Meat Association to intervene in the case. The group has challenged USDA's authority to close plants that fail salmonella tests, saying that the action unfairly penalizes companies that are not providing unsafe meat. They also say that salmonella is not dangerous if meat is cooked properly. National Meat Association spokesman Jeremy Russell was quoted as saying, "What happened to Supreme Beef could happen to any grinder, which is why we felt we had to step in. They were trying to enforce a standard on plants that had nothing to do with the sanitation of those plants. The salmonella was coming in from the slaughterhouses, and there is nothing a grinder could do to remove it." But the stories say USDA credits the tests and tough enforcement procedures, which began in 1996, for a steady decline in salmonella levels in recent years. The industry says the drop occurred because of plant improvements, not the testing. Caroline Smith Dewaal, a food safety advocate with the Center for Science in the Public Interest, was quoted as calling the court decision "a huge step backward in the safety of ground beef products. The USDA can close down a plant for having too many cockroaches, but cannot if there is too much salmonella in the meat the plant is producing. This clearly shows that we need a new, modern meat inspection statute." The Senate recently rejected legislation designed to ensure the USDA could close plants that violated salmonella limits. The USDA inspection process relies

on a system called Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points. The system requires processing companies to identify points in their production systems at which raw meat and poultry are vulnerable to pathogens such as salmonella, and to take steps to prevent contamination. The department has used the salmonella testing as a marker to test whether a plant is run in a generally hygienic manner, and it was considered a major improvement on the old "sniff and poke" approach to meat inspections. While salmonella can itself cause illness -- the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says salmonella from all sources causes 2 million to 4 million illnesses and 500 deaths annually -- tainted meat is not a major cause of its spread. Harrison of the USDA was further cited as saying that the court decision will not change how the department tests for meat safety, and that the public health will still be protected. But while the department has rarely used its power to shut down plants, she said that the ruling does take away some needed enforcement authority to deal with plants with repeated problems. In its ruling, which was decided on Dec. 6 but made public yesterday, the court accepted the arguments from Supreme Beef and the meat industry that the salmonella standard does not determine whether the processing plant is clean. The decision was quoted as saying, "The performance standard is invalid because it regulates the procurement of raw materials. The difficulty in this case arises, in part, because salmonella, present in a substantial proportion of meat and poultry products, is not an adulterant per se, meaning its presence does not require the USDA to refuse to stamp such meat 'inspected and passed.' This is because normal cooking practices for meat and poultry destroy the Salmonella organism, and therefore the presence of Salmonella in meat products does not render them 'injurious to health.'" Rosemary Mucklow, executive director of the National Meat Association, was quoted as saying that the ruling "will serve food safety by focusing USDA on regulatory activities that are relevant to sanitation, as the law requires."

Report Urges Increased Investment in America's Animal Health Protection System

WASHINGTON, D.C., November 21, 2001 ~ The National Association of State Departments of Agriculture Research Foundation today released the recommendations from an eight month review of the nation's system for safeguarding livestock and poultry producers from the introduction of foreign animal diseases.

The report, compiled by a panel representing state animal health officials, university and private animal health specialists, and livestock producer groups, noted the success of USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) in preventing, controlling,

and eradicating animal diseases, but urged increased federal funding to upgrade laboratory and diagnostic facilities and the staff of APHIS's Veterinary Services, in order to meet the "rising and vital challenges of animal health issues in the U.S." The report also stressed the need to create an Emergency Operations Center, a National Surveillance System and a National Response Plan.

"A dramatic national and international acceleration in trade of animals and animal products, together with exponential increases in worldwide travel, mail parcels and emerging animal diseases have converged to significantly raise the stakes for animal disease control," the report stated. "This review finds [APHIS] performance adequate in handling most assigned roles, and even heroic in some historical efforts to eradicate diseases that have infected U.S. livestock, but resources are fast becoming overwhelmed. This review calls for improvements in areas including, but not limited to, staffing, equipment, surveillance, detection, applied research, communications, and border security. Many of the committee's recommendations will require increased federal funding," the report stated.

The stakeholder panel, composed of 42 members, was organized into four committees which examined key areas including domestic detection and surveillance, exclusion, international information, and response. The review team which oversaw the work of the four committees and produced the final report, was chaired by Gus R. Douglass, Commissioner of the West Virginia Department of Agriculture. "The recent foot-and-mouth disease outbreak in Europe was a wake-up call for us," Douglass said. "The best minds in the U.S. have come together in this report to protect the future viability of animal agriculture. These recommendations now await acceptance and action by the Secretary and by the Congress. As we are in a security mode, a major part of this report is security related."

NASDA Executive Vice President, Richard W. Kirchhoff, noted that USDA has already increased funding for APHIS, adding nearly \$40 million to the current budget and another \$174 million next year for infrastructure improvements. "Agriculture Secretary Veneman has acted swiftly to increase resources to APHIS. We hope that Congress will make it a priority to ensure we have an effective safeguarding program that is fully funded. The new farm bill provides an excellent opportunity to do just that."

Preparation of the report was coordinated by the NASDA Research Foundation under a cooperative agreement with the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service. NASDA is the national association representing the state commissioners, secretaries, and directors of agriculture throughout the United States. Copies of the

report can be downloaded from NASDA,s website at <http://www.nasda.org>.

Individual .pdf files or the full report can also be downloaded as follows:

1. Point your browser to:
<http://www.nasda.org/ASGRwebsite/> At this site you will see a directory listing of all of the components of the report.
2. You can save any piece of the report from here but, for the entire report, put your mouse cursor on the file

"FullBook.pdf" and click the Right mouse button. You should get a popup menu that includes the choice "Save target as...". Put your mouse cursor on that menu choice and click the Left mouse button. This will popup (after a few seconds) a "Save As" dialog box that will let you choose where on your hard drive you want to put the file.

3. Choose which directory on your machine to save the file in, leave the "Save as type" set to Adobe Acrobat Document, then just left click on Save and you're done.

MEETINGS, WORKSHOPS & COURSES

See the ATVPHPM Web site at <http://www.cvm.uiuc.edu/atvphpm/> for the most current listings.

SASVEPM 2002 Congress

July 25-26, 2002

Onderstepoort Grasdak, South Africa

The time is coming for the second Southern African Society for Veterinary Epidemiology and Preventive Medicine's (SASVEPM) ANNUAL CONFERENCE!!

The theme for the conference is: SURVEILLANCE a very exciting theme and one that is of interest to everyone!!!

The cost will include CE Courses, teas, lunches, and a dinner on the night of the 25th, as well as a copy of the proceedings. To add even more value for your money, the Society is bringing out Dr Klaas Frankena from Wageningen Agricultural University, The Netherlands, to lead the CE component of the congress. Dr Frankena is a world authority in surveillance and has published in numerous articles and books. The congress provides a tremendous opportunity to learn from someone so knowledgeable.

Conference Program:

As this year's conference was such a success, we have decided to keep the program structure very similar. It will have a practical-hands-on CE component that everyone liked this year as well as a paper presentation component. The AGM will also take place during the congress so that members can have their inputs into the society.

How much: Society members pay only R 300 and non-members R 600 (\$ US 60). An extra R 100 will be charged for registration after 21 June.

CALL FOR PAPERS AND POSTERS: Anybody who is interested in presenting a paper or a poster at the conference is invited to submit a proposal to the SASVEPM committee at the email/contact address/fax number below. We urge you to take this opportunity to show the SASVEPM what you have been doing in terms of surveillance, as well as any other relevant topics that you would like to present!

The deadline for submission of presentations is April 2002.

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Introduction to Infectious Disease Modelling and its Applications

July 15-26, 2002

**London School of Hygiene & Tropical
Medicine**

Summary:

Mathematical modelling is increasingly being applied to interpret and predict the dynamics and control of infectious diseases. Applications include predicting the impact of vaccination strategies against infections such as measles, rubella and polio and determining optimal control strategies against HIV and onchocerciasis.

This two week intensive course is intended to introduce professionals working on infectious diseases to this exciting and expanding area. The emphasis will be on

developing a conceptual understanding of the basic methods and on their practical application, rather than the manipulation of mathematical equations.

Who should attend:

The course is designed for individuals interested in expanding their knowledge of the techniques for analysing and interpreting epidemiological data on infectious diseases and for predicting the impact of control programmes, including medical and health professionals, policy makers, veterinary scientists, medical statisticians and infectious disease researchers.

Specialist mathematical training is not a prerequisite. However, individuals with degrees in mathematical disciplines working on some aspect of infectious disease dynamics and/ or control, who wish to learn about the potential of infectious disease modelling will also benefit.

For copies of the leaflet and application form, please contact:

Registry
London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine
50 Bedford Square
London,
WC1B 3DP
UK
email: shortcourses@lshtm.ac.uk

Further details about the course content can be downloaded from the web page:
<http://www.lshtm.ac.uk/itd/units/ideu/ModellingShortCourse.htm>

or
visit <http://www.lshtm.ac.uk>

or contact one of the course organizers:
Emilia Vynnycky or Richard White
e-mail: emilia.vynnycky@lshtm.ac.uk or
richard.white@lshtm.ac.uk

SUGGESTED READING

Field Manual of Wildlife Diseases

The USGS National Wildlife Health Center's Field Manual of Wildlife Diseases is now available on the WWW. The address is:

http://www.nwhc.usgs.gov/pub_metadata/field_manual/field_manual.html

It can be downloaded as one file or by individual chapters, all in Adobe PFF format.

Dr. Robert G. McLean, Director
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6006 Schroeder Rd.
Madison, WI 53711
(608) 270-2401
(608) 270-2415 fax
bob_mclean@usgs.gov

USAHA Foreign Animal Diseases Gray Book Available Online

Thanks to an educational grant from Bayer and a lot of work by Dr. Corrie Brown at Univ Georgia, the USAHA Foreign Animal Diseases Gray Book is now available in electronic format. You can access it on-line at http://www.vet.uga.edu/vpp/gray_book/index.htm. In addition, several thousand copies of the book on CD-ROM will be available shortly. Contact Dr. Brown at corbrown@vet.uga.edu for information on acquiring the CD-ROM (I believe it will be free of charge).

The electronic version not only has a hyperlinked table of contents but also has a built in keyword search mechanism. Congratulations to Dr. Brown, Bayer and the USAHA for making this valuable resource available in this user-friendly format.

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