



USAHA

Protecting Animal and Public Health Since 1897

United States Animal Health Association Newsletter - Vol. 26, No. 4, September, 1999

Veterinary Profession Must Have Place At Public Health Policy Table

Welcome to San Diego!

by Richard Breitmeyer
State Veterinarian, California

We are delighted to welcome you to San Diego for the joint 103rd Annual Meeting of the United States Animal Health Association and the 42nd Annual Meeting of the American Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians. We hope that



Rich Breitmeyer

you will "come early and stay late" and take advantage of all that San Diego and California have to offer.

San Diego is blessed with an ideal climate, 70 miles of sandy beaches, a deep-sea harbor, a variety of fun-filled attractions, and a rich, distinctive Spanish-Mexican heritage. Play golf at a myriad of scenic courses for both beginners and experts. Or surf, dive, sail, fish, water ski, play tennis, ride horses, roller blade or jog; the list of outdoor recreational possibilities is virtually endless. There's plenty of entertainment, too. The region boasts the San Diego Zoo,

Sea World, the Wild Animal Park, and is home to several professional sports teams.

California's unique and rich mixture of people, cultures, and natural resources has inspired activities of every kind. Our snow-



Mission San Diego, 1769, was the first of twenty one Spanish missions established in California.

(Photo from "The Missions of California.")

capped mountains, crystal-clear rivers, spectacular beaches, lush greenery, and monumental redwood forests appeal to outdoor enthusiasts as well as vacationers who just want to relax. In addition, visitors have within their grasp numerous theme parks, fine restaurants, outstanding wineries,

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by John Melcher D.V.M

Editor note: Dr. Melcher is the former United States Senator from Montana

How does the public view the veterinary profession? The public sees us as the experts for animal disease and animal health. But when it comes to the veterinarian's role in public health, bioterrorism, or food safety, we cannot assume that people have a clear picture of our profession as a vital part of the health team.



John Melcher

During the thirty years I have been here in Washington, I have noted a decline in the number of veterinarians on the management team in Food Safety Inspection Service (FSIS) and also fewer veterinarians in Animal and Plant and Health Inspection Service (APHIS), and in Agricultural Research Service (ARS.) In the military we lost the star for the Chief of the Army Veterinary Corps; that is, instead of a Brigadier General, the Commander holds the rank of Colonel. And, in total, there are fewer veterinarians in the Armed Forces.

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President's Corner

THE 103rd Annual Meeting of our Association is upon us and am looking forward to seeing you all in San Diego.

At the annual meeting, the Board of Directors will recommend to the Executive Committee that a half-time, salaried Executive Secretary be hired in 2001.



Dick McCapes

In order to accomplish this, additional revenues to support the position will be required. The Board recommends raising the annual dues in 2001 and the registration fee for the 2001 annual meeting to obtain these funds.

It is proposed that Official Agency and Allied Organization dues be raised from \$300 to \$600, individual dues from \$75 to \$100 and the annual meeting registration from \$180 to \$220.

The Board will provide the Executive Committee with six-year financial projection scenarios (1998 - 2003) on which their recommendation is based.

It is estimated the dues and fees will provide approximately \$70,000 in additional revenues in 2001, an amount sufficient to defray the estimated costs associated with the salaried, half-time position.

Hiring a salaried Executive Secretary is an integral part of the Association's long-range plan. The plan calls for improvement of the annual meeting, expanding communications and in-

formation, becoming a year-around Association and establishing an increased presence in the nation's capital.

After considering various scenarios, the Board concluded the best course to follow was to fill a half-time position in 2001 and to move to a full-time position when appropriate.

Unless an emergency exists, a change in the dues requires a change in the Constitution and By-laws, which in turn requires approval by membership vote.

If the Executive Committee concurs with the Board's proposal, the proposed Constitution and By-laws change pertaining to the dues increase would be published in the Proceedings of 1999 Annual Meeting and the membership would

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Constitution Task Force Meets in K.C.

The Constitution and Bylaw Revision Task Force met in Kansas City, Missouri on August 17 and 18, 1999. The meeting was hosted by the Livestock Marketing Association in their main offices. Nancy Robinson, of the LMA, made the local arrangements.

This was the second meeting of the Task Force, co-chaired by Larry Williams and J. Lee Alley. Other members of the Task Force are Nancy Robinson, Ernie Zirkle, Mike Chaddock, Dick McCapes and Harvey Gosser, representing AAVLD.

The Task Force was formed in January of this year and was charged to undertake a two-year review the Association's Constitution, Bylaws and Administrative Policies and to recommend appropriate changes consistent with USAHA's mission and its



Livestock Marketing Association headquarters, Kansas City



Left: J. Lee Alley, Larry Williams, Nancy Robinson, Ernie Zirkle, Harvey Gosser. Taking photograph, Dick McCapes

future.

A major objective of this study is to make certain these documents are updated to facilitate the changes in the Association envisioned by the USAHA long-range plan, including its mission, man-

agement, annual program and communications.

The task force was also asked to consider if and how revision of the Constitution and Bylaws can mitigate concerns brought to the Executive Committee by the District-at-Large in 1998 pertaining to discussion of U. S. international trade issues and policies.

The task force will make specific recommendations to the Board of Directors, the Executive Committee and to the membership in 2000. Any changes approved by the Executive Committee will be published in the proceedings of the 2000 annual meeting and be voted on by the membership in 2001.

The Association is incorporated as a non-profit corporation in the state of Delaware.

President-Elect Outlines Goals for 2000

by Ernie Zirkle
President-Elect

As we face the new millennium in USAHA it is natural for one to reflect on where we've been and to project the direction. Since I am the one with the honor of serving as president during the next year it is imperative that I outline some of my goals for USAHA during the coming year.



Ernest W. Zirkle

USAHA embarked on a path under the presidency of Larry Williams which, after a survey of the entire membership, dictated that we revise the format of the annual meeting. Suggestions included shortening the program by one or two days and arranging the schedule so that committee meetings, scientific

papers and special programs were not conflicting and the time spent would be more productive for everyone. The entire Executive Committee and Board of Directors supported the concept that resulted. We will continue to follow that mandate.

President Dick McCapes appointed a Committee to review the Constitution and Bylaws of USAHA and propose changes for the Executive Committee to act upon. The committee has had two meetings thus far and is on schedule to have a final draft to disseminate to the membership before the meeting in Birmingham for possible action. The committee members are working with an attorney addressing many tough issues such as;

- International membership; It is critical that we encourage our foreign counterparts and

trading partners, especially from the Americas, to attend our meetings and participate in committee programs for their input and education; but they will not vote on our issues.

- Less cumbersome ways to effect change; In these times of rapid change we cannot wait two years to change outdated bylaws.

- Response Time; If we are to maintain our mission of being a forum for communication and coordination among State and Federal governments, a clearing house for new information and methods, developing solutions to animal health related issues based on science and developing a consensus for changing laws, regulations, policies and programs, we must be

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John Shook Announces Retirement

Dr. John Shook, of Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania, announced his retirement as USAHA Secretary and Treasurer, effective the end of this year.



John Shook

John was appointed Secretary of the Association by the Executive Committee in 1979 and has held the position for the past 20 years. He was first elected Treasurer in 1976.

With Dr. Shook's retirement, the Secretary and Treasurer positions will be filled this year at the San Diego meeting.

The Secretary is appointed by the Executive Committee and serves as the primary administrative officer for the

Association. The Treasurer is an elected position and serves as the primary financial officer.

The duties of both positions may be found in the "Proceedings of the 102nd Annual Meeting of the USAHA," pages 745 and 746.

The Association's long range plan, approved by the Executive Committee in 1997, recommends hiring a half or full time salaried Executive Secretary/Director. This person will most likely be brought on board in 2001.

The person appointed Secretary in 1999 and 2000 will serve in a transitional capacity until the new position is filled.

Suggestions of candidates for Secretary can be forwarded to any member

Secretary and Treasurer positions will be filled at the San Diego Annual Meeting

www.usaha.org
webpage update

by Larry Mark,
USAHA Webmaster, e-mail address:
webmaster@usaha.org

By extrapolation, sometime during the day or evening on August 19, 1999, our USAHA web site experienced the 10,000th "hit" since we started counting on November 30, 1997.



Larry Mark

That's 10,000 folks (admittedly some got counted more than once) in less than two years! I hope the information on our web site will be even more popular and useful in the years to come.

As always, I welcome your suggestions for improving our USAHA web pages.

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Animal Health Realities and International Trade

by Robert F. Kahrs, D.V.M., Ph.D

International Trade is the Key to Profitable Animal Agriculture

Exports offer the sole opportunity for expansion of US animal agriculture (USAA). Sustained increases in demand for US meat, milk, poultry, eggs, and livestock genetics can come only via foreign markets. Today's domestic prices arise from global supply and demand based on economic stability of trading partners; currency values; weather conditions; feed supplies; livestock numbers; and food safety and animal health concerns.



Ernest W. Zirkle

Currently USAA has competitive advantages due to efficiencies of integrated livestock and poultry systems; geographic and climatic conditions favorable for feed production; scientific and technical expertise; and a capitalism-inspired work ethic.

Animal Health is the Key to International Trade in Animal Products

Some competitive advantages of USAA are offset by animal health (AH) measures legally imposed on US commodities by importing countries with strong central regulatory systems.

If USAA is to remain competitive, it must meet commitments to international trade agreements; conform to international standards; respect legitimate import requirements of trading partners; and fulfill other expectations of the international AH community.

Countries controlling vast markets feel AH should be regulated only by veterinarians who are full-

time employees of national governments. They feel private laboratories, accredited veterinarians, and voluntary disease control programs lack the impartiality and independence essential for sound regulatory oversight and are suspicious of inconsistent monitoring, surveillance and reporting (MS&R) systems and haphazard animal identification.

Meeting international expectations requires compliance with provisions of the World Trade Organization (WTO) Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Agreement; conformity with disease reporting, testing, and trade standards of the Office International Des Epizooties (OIE); and meeting certain AH, MS&R, animal identification, and health certification requirements.

USDA Animal Health Leadership is Key to Export Enhancement

Democratically fulfilling these expectations requires a Federally coordinated alliance of producers; accredited veterinarians; processors; transporters; brokers; industry organizations; the academic and diagnostic communities; and State regulatory officials. Input from these parties is essential to assure participation of all states, territories, possessions and industries needing Federal endorsement of export certificates. All these cooperators must participate in credible MS&R and animal identification systems so export certifications honestly reflect US animal disease situations.

Most international organizations and trading countries deal only with representatives of national governments. Thus, the USDA, which is subject to democratic checks and balances, must

Voluntary SE Program Proposed by Task Force

New Committee on Salmonella Enteritidis in Eggs formed

by Dick McCapes

The USAHA SE Task Force, co-chaired by Gary Waters and Bob Eckroade, completed its charge on March 22, 1999 with the submission of a "Proposed Voluntary National Standardized SE Reduction Program for Eggs" to the office of the President.

Subsequent to the completion of the task force's work, a new USAHA standing Committee on Salmonella Enteritidis in Eggs was formed in accordance with a resolution passed by the membership at the 1998 annual meeting.

The resolution, brought forward by the SE Task Force, read, "... the USAHA recommends the appointment of a standing committee on Salmonella enteritidis in eggs by the USAHA president to be used as a mechanism through which ongoing dialogue and discussions can be held on a national program which reduces risk to public health from SE in eggs."

Many members of the task force will serve on the new committee and its membership includes representation of state and federal agencies, industry and academia. Jones Bryan will serve as chair and XXXX as vice chair.

As its first item of business, the new committee was asked to initiate discussion on the task force's proposed voluntary program and to advise USAHA of its progress through committee reports, recommendations and resolutions. The committee will meet Saturday, October 9, in San Diego.

Case Report: Brucellosis in U. S.

by J. Lee Alley, Chair & C. Barton, Vice-Chair
Committee on Brucellosis.

Brucellosis in cattle herds did not go away entirely on Dec. 31, 1998. Even though the prevalence was very close to zero affected herds on that date, additional herds have been detected during 1999. At the end of June 1999, there were eight affected cattle herds in the country, with seven being in Texas, and one in Florida. There were three new affected herds detected during the month, bringing the total to 18 for the year.

The one Florida herd is a large dairy of approximately 4,000 cows, and is the first brucellosis affected dairy herd de-



J. Lee Alley

tected in several years in the United States. The specific source of infection has not been identified. However, it is thought that brucellosis was introduced through purchased replacements. The epidemiology of the outbreak is incomplete, and there are multiple tracebacks from the outbreak.



Claude Barton

It was expected that additional affected herds would be disclosed after Dec 31, 1998. The results for the first half of 1999 emphasizes the need for continued intensive surveillance if the entire county is to achieve true Class Free status anytime soon. The fact that slaughterhouse testing is rapidly becoming the primary surveillance mode for

brucellosis surveillance points up the need for quickly correcting the known deficiencies in slaughter surveillance. Otherwise, the eradication effort to be truly brucellosis free could become quite long and drawn out.

The plan to eliminate brucellosis from the Triple U Buffalo Ranch bison herd in South Dakota is progressing on schedule. The removal of all affected groups that were scheduled for depopulation has been completed. We commend Dr. Sam Holland, Dr. Valerie Ragan and the owners of the herd for their efforts in developing a very practical plan to eliminate this long-standing brucellosis problem. This is a giant step not only for the State of South Dakota, but for the national brucellosis eradication program as well.

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OIE & WHO Equine Influenza Experts Meet In Miami

by Ernie Zirkle

The Fourth International Meeting of OIE and WHO Experts on the Control of Equine Influenza was held in Miami, Florida August 3 - 5, 1999.

Since this was the first meeting in four years there were regional reports on outbreaks and domestic policies from all countries attending.

Following that there were reports on antigenic analysis based on serological tests using ferret, horse and hamster sera and monoclonal antibodies. Also genetic analysis based on nucleotide and a sequence of the HA and other genes were reported.

Other reports and discussion

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AAVLD News Digest

by Doris Miller, President
AAVLD

Foreign Animal Diseases, Bioterrorism, Food Safety, Antibiotic-resistant Drugs and laboratory accreditation for international trade have all been and will continue to be very hot topics of discussion this year.



Doris Miller

Both AAVLD and USAHA newsletters have brought you up-to-the minute information concerning results of meetings, publications, regulations, and conferences which have addressed these issues this year.

The involvement of

AAVLD and USAHA members in these issues is critical. This point was illustrated clearly to me several times during the year while interacting with personnel from the FBI, the CDC, emergency management associations and other diagnostic laboratories. Until this past year, veterinarians and veterinary diagnostic laboratories have not been included in most discussions on bioterrorism. However, through the efforts of many people, particularly members of AAVLD and USAHA, the threat and consequence of an intentional introduction of an FAD or other act of bioterrorism on animals has now been recognized by the FBI and emergency management teams.

As President of AAVLD I was

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Shook Retirement

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of the Board of Directors. For Treasurer, please contact Jones Bryan, Chair of the Nominations Committee.

USAHA Board of Directors

- Dick McCapes
(530) 756-4284;
rmccapes@compuserve.com
- Ernie Zirkle
(609) 292 3965
aghzirk@ag.state.nj.us
- Bob Hillman
(208) 332-8540
bhillman@agri.state.id.us
- Mike Chaddock
(517) 373-1077
chaddockm@state.mi.us
- Mack Lea
(225) 925 3980
maxwel_1@ldaf.state.la.us
- Jones Bryan
(803) 788-2260
jbryn@clemson.edu
- John Shook
(717) 766-6886

Brucellosis in the U. S.

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The State of Kansas completed requirements and was granted Brucellosis Class Free status on July 1, 1999. The cooperating regulatory agencies, the veterinary profession, and the cattlemen of Kansas deserve much credit for their many years of dedicated effort put forth to reach this goal. Congratulations!

The State of Louisiana is expected to make application in the near future for Brucellosis Class Free status.

The Committee on Brucellosis will be meeting in San Diego on Sunday and Monday, October 10 and 11, 1999. Primary agenda topics for the October 10 and 11

meeting includes use of RB51 vaccine in bison, status report of the National Brucellosis eradication program, actions being taken by APHIS to assure the creditability of the National Brucellosis Slaughter surveillance, report on the activities of the Greater Yellowstone Inter-agency Brucellosis Committee, the brucellosis FPA test for milk, and the general discussions to identify program efforts to assure the eradication of brucellosis as rapidly as possible.

Hope to see you in San Diego.

There is no royal road to anything. One thing at a time, and all things in succession. That which grows slowly endures.

Josiah Gilbert Holland

Senator Melcher

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We know the dangers of inadequate research. We fret about the lack of preparation for disease threats from abroad. We recognize the need for facilities at Ames and Plum Island to handle disease outbreaks caused by imported disease or bio-terrorism and strongly support the funding to update them. That will cost nearly half a billion dollars over the next five years. But without this improvement and expansion, the country is at risk.

It is wishful thinking to believe that cuts in APHIS can be made up by drawing on state veterinary personnel which in many states have already been eroded. It is unrealistic to assume food safety can be improved without spending more. FARAD is a good example: everyone is for it, but USDA nonchalantly provides only minimal funding, even though its domestic and international use is expanding.

The picture is not all bad. FSIS has embarked on improving food safety, is offering new veterinarians a better deal and is seeking more training for their peo-

ple. If the current Defense Authorization bill is passed, the Pentagon will have to pay veterinarians who are specialty board certified as they do with other professions. That took lobbying by the AVMA.

Beyond the public perception that veterinarians are kind to animals, where do they place us relative to meeting problems that affect all of us? We have to demonstrate collectively that as a profession, we fill an important gap not just in animal health but also in public health.

The brucellosis in the Greater Yellowstone Area is a case in point. This brings to our attention how important it is that we work with other organizations to explain what we know from our experience and expertise. In each step to eradicate brucellosis in Yellowstone bison and elk we collectively have to assert sound science which can be practically applied. We are the experts on brucellosis eradication, but few of us are wildlife experts. Listening to and learning from wildlife managers will help us fashion an eradication program that will work in a wildlife context. We must do it well.

Who are "We"? In Michigan, State Veterinarian Mike Chaddock and his staff are leading the joint effort to eradicate tuberculosis in deer. USAHA President McCapes wrote to the White House, the federal agencies and Congress urging more action on brucellosis in Yellowstone bison. Dr. Sheryl Proctor of San Antonio alertly diagnosed screw worm in a Basset Hound and brought APHIS into action. "We" is the entire veterinary community working together for animal health and the public good.

It should not be necessary to state the obvious, but I do emphasize that we have to help shape and direct public policy in our field. Since our field is large and diverse, we have to respond of-

Senator Melcher

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ten. We are capable of doing that, and it is our responsibility to do so.

When I practiced in Montana, I expected the State Veterinarian and his office to respond quickly and efficiently on Montana public policy matters affecting veterinary medicine. Here in Washington there is no single U.S. Federal Veterinarian with like authority and responsibility.

It is a big country and authority and responsibility are split among a variety of agencies. That means we, as a profession through the AVMA, have to speak out to fill a lot of the gaps and prod the various facets of federal government to recognize that veterinarians must have a place at the public health policy table.

Welcome to California

from page 1

distinctive resorts and hotels, world-renowned museums and galleries, and the unparalleled entertainment industry. A wealth of exceptional attractions and natural wonders are waiting for you to enjoy.

The fertile soils and temperate climate of California create an ideal environment for agriculture. The Golden State's abundant natural resources have been carefully harnessed and nurtured throughout history so that California is proud to claim one of the most sophisticated food and fiber production and distribution systems in the world.

Today, California agriculture is a \$26.8 billion industry that produces more than 350 different

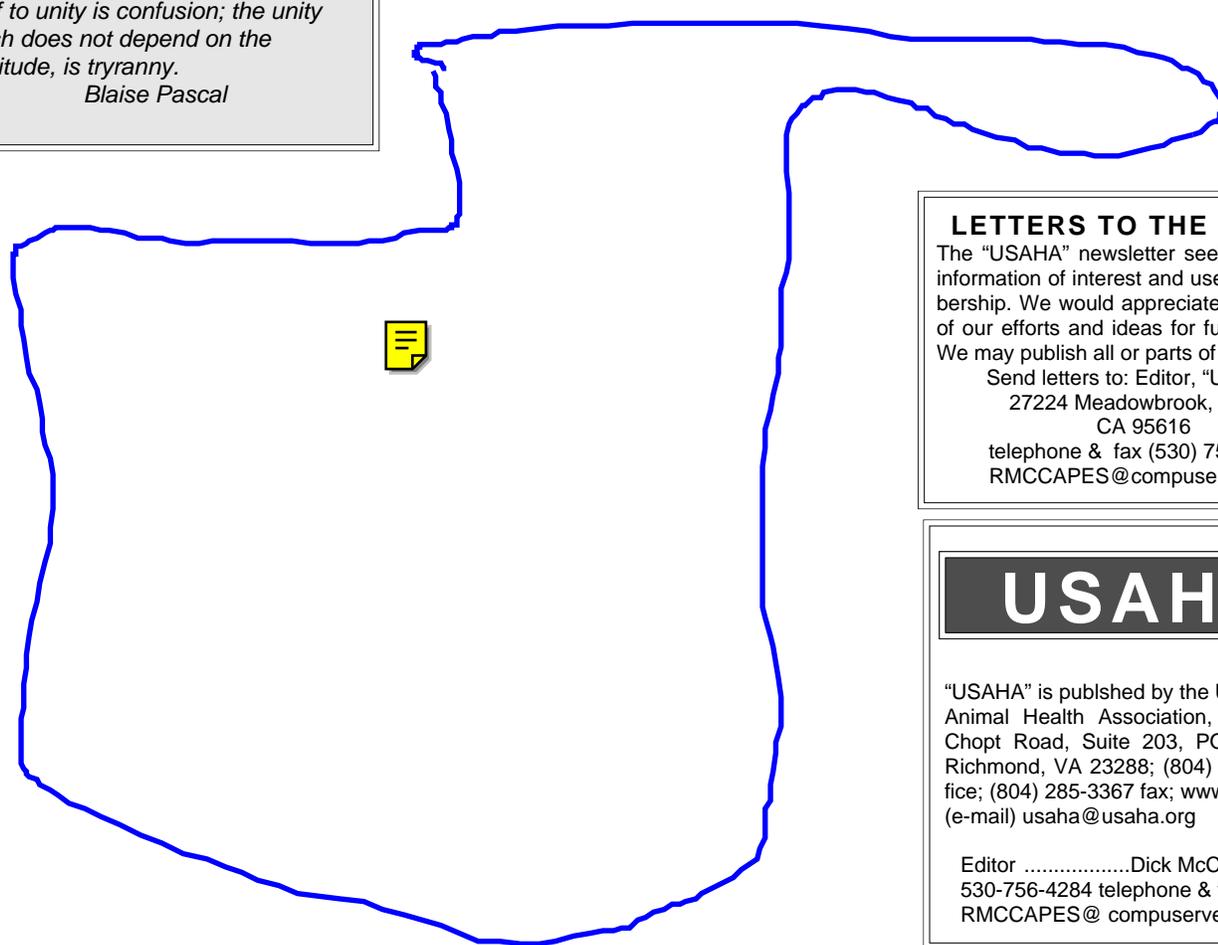
crop and livestock commodities and generates more than \$70 billion in related economic activity.

This year is especially significant in that it also represents the 100 year anniversary of the State Veterinarian in California. The Office of the State Veterinarian was created by legislation in 1899 "to protect the health of all domestic animals of the state from all contagious and infectious diseases, so far as practical." The office was empowered to establish and enforce quarantines and the annual salary of the State Veterinarian was not to exceed \$2000. I wonder how much that is in 1999 dollars; should I ask for a raise or keep my mouth shut?

We look forward to seeing you in San Diego!



The multitude which does not reduce itself to unity is confusion; the unity which does not depend on the multitude, is tyranny.
Blaise Pascal



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR
The "USAHA" newsletter seeks to provide information of interest and use to the membership. We would appreciate your critique of our efforts and ideas for future editions. We may publish all or parts of your letter.
Send letters to: Editor, "USAHA"
27224 Meadowbrook, Davis,
CA 95616
telephone & fax (530) 756-4284
RMCCAPES@compuserve.com

USAHA
"USAHA" is published by the United States Animal Health Association, 8100 Three Chopt Road, Suite 203, PO Box K227, Richmond, VA 23288; (804) 285-3210 office; (804) 285-3367 fax; www.usaha.org; (e-mail) usaha@usaha.org
EditorDick McCapes
530-756-4284 telephone & fax
RMCCAPES@compuserve.com

Goals for 2000

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able to release position statements other than during the annual meeting.

My experiences in Paris at the OIE meeting this past May inspired me to want to get the message and importance of OIE to international trade out to every member. Not only should we be aware of the importance, but we must put our organization in a mode that allows USAHA to have input into the process at the appropriate time to have maximum impact on decisions that directly effect our livestock industries.

This is imperative not only for the economic ramifications but also to protect our livestock and poultry from new and exotic disease. USAHA can also help USDA, VS facilitate alignment of the countries of the Americas to work to have a block of votes on issues that are vital to the countries of our hemisphere.

In the atmosphere of "one country one vote" USA must collaborate on issues such as BSE, classical swine fever, transferable antimicrobial resistance, etc., or approaches to resolve international trade issues will be slanted toward the vested interests of the EU. There will be more details on this at the special OIE presentation on Tuesday, October 12.

After a careful look at our membership list this summer, I have decided we must have a permanent Membership Committee. The charge to this committee will be to propose ways to get more people involved with USAHA. They must look at and propose criteria for new membership, areas where we should have more growth in membership and ways to retain members once they become involved.

We presently have few true livestock owners. The allied organizations represent the livestock industries well, but we are missing a valuable resource if we

do not also have more members of the respective species groups presenting their perspectives.

It has been a very educational experience serving on the Board for the past four years. Dick McCapes has set an extremely high standard for dedication and involvement that will be difficult to match. I look forward to the challenge and ask that anyone with suggestions or ideas for improving any facet of USAHA please contact me.

Animal Health Realities

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be the lead agency and spokesman for this cooperative US trade enterprise

Support for expanding USDA involvement in international trade is stifled by unawareness and indifference of some individuals in the USAA and AH communities who don't directly export animals or germplasm, don't fully appreciate that US commodity prices are now determined in a global marketplace, and aren't directly involved with the complexities of international commerce in which 95% of potential buyers live outside the United States.

WTO Expectations

The WTO SPS Agreement requires import measures be scientifically sound; transparent; non-discriminatory; equitably applied; in harmony with international standards; risk assessment based; applicable on a regional basis; and (where equal conditions prevail) no less favorable than domestic requirements.

If these principles are fulfilled without discrimination, nations may impose whatever sanitary requirements they deem necessary to protect their livestock, poultry, wildlife, and human populations from disease.

OIE Expectations

The OIE develops consensus-based disease-specific standards for safe international movement

of animals, animal products, and germplasm from disease-free and disease-affected countries or regions. Despite occasional efforts to politicize them, OIE standards are usually based on sound science.

Countries may apply import measures more stringent than OIE standards. However, import measures founded on OIE standards are exempt from requirements to conduct risk analyses and notify the WTO of regulation changes and won't be challenged beyond preliminary stages in the WTO dispute resolution process.

Expectations of Trading Partners Are Based on Science, Politics, and Culture

Trading partners expect countries, including the United States, to comply with WTO and OIE import-export policies..

The WTO SPS Agreement requires import measures based on sound science. However, science is constantly changing, is subject to variable interpretations, and can be distorted by economic objectives, political expediencies, and cultural influences.

Animal health authorities and other decision-making officials throughout the world must operate in politically realistic domains that recognize commitments to international trade agreements and consider thoughtful public concerns raised by environmental, animal welfare, and consumer groups.

Contrary to science which is rapidly advancing and political convictions that can be ephemeral, cultural traits are slow to change. Ethnic and religious traditions and national pride profoundly impact import policies, are easily institutionalized within regulatory agencies, and adapt slowly to scientific advances, political or social pressures.

A New Strategy is Needed

Review of the complex reali-

Animal Health Realities

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ties of the impact of animal health on the international trade needed for survival of USAA indicates a major strategy shift is required.

Some of these concepts will be discussed at the meeting of the Joint AAVLD/USAHA Animal Health Information Systems Committee in San Diego on Saturday morning October 9, 1999.

It is truth very certain that, when it is not in our power to determine what is true, we ought to follow what is most probable.

Rene Descartes

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asked to attend a two-day strategic planning workshop for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Bioterrorism Preparedness and Response Program (BPRP) on August 3 and 4, 1999.

This meeting was similar in scope to the meeting, "Mobilizing the Veterinary Profession to Recognize and Appropriately Respond to Exotic Animal Disease Threats" which was held in Ames, Iowa in February.

The CDC meeting in Atlanta was clearly primarily for human rather than animal health preparedness, but thanks to the help of other participants who were either veterinarians or interested in animal health and the FBI, the important role of involving veterinarians, diagnostic laboratories, USAHA, state veterinarians, USDA-ARS, AVMA and other animal health organizations was emphasized repeatedly.

We must continue, in every state, to communicate, cooperate, and network with others in the human health professions to prepare for and plan for potential acts of bioterrorism or intentional acts of

sabotage on our animal industries. In this way, we can only improve our present system of disease monitoring and control.

As Dr. Lonnie King has said, "It is our professional responsibility to be prepared and understand our roles and obligations." I wholeheartedly agree! Along this line I would like to congratulate Dr. A. K. (Conrad) Eugster for being appointed by the Secretary of Agriculture, Dan Glickman, to serve on the Foreign Animal and Poultry Disease Advisory Committee. He is an excellent choice to represent the views of the veterinary diagnostic laboratory community and animal health in animal disease control.

The upcoming joint AAVLD/USAHA meeting in San Diego is a must attend meeting for members. Pre-convention workshops provide information on Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies, Johne's Disease, Diagnosis, Serology Quality Assurance and Mycology. Antimicrobial-Resistance and Use, Food Safety, and the Office Internationale des Epizootics (OIE) will all be the focus of special workshops or sessions.

The officers of both AAVLD and USAHA have been continuing to work together this year to bring you one of the best meetings yet.

See you in San Diego!!

OIE & WHO Equine Influenza Experts Meet

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centered around;

- Vaccine strain selection
- Sera used in antigenic analysis
- Challenge studies
- Vaccine characteristics and performance
- Regulatory issues from European and American perspectives

- New approaches to vaccination

- New diagnostic approaches and availability

Several points of interest can be summarized from the papers presented. (A) Influenza A/equine-2 virus continues to cause major disease outbreaks worldwide. (B) There is clear evidence of vaccine breakdown as these outbreaks occur regularly in vaccinated horses. (C) Vaccine efficacy studies demonstrated that many vaccines have no value for equine influenza disease prevention probably due to inadequate potency and outdated virus strains. (D) It appears that maternal antibody may be significant for up to nine months, indicating that our current foal vaccination protocols may be flawed.

Dr. Tom Chambers, the representative of "The Americas" on this committee will be presenting a more complete summary of the equine influenza world situation at the Infectious Diseases of Horses Committee meeting Sunday afternoon October 10.

**USAHA/AAVLD Meeting
October 7- 14, 1999
Town & Country Hotel
San Diego, California**

USAHA EMAIL ADDRESS CHANGE

As of August 10, 1999 the USAHA email address will be:
usaha@usaha.org

If you would like to send Beverley or Linda an email, it will be:
beverley@usaha.org
or
linda@usaha.org

Thank you for your patience and cooperation in this matter and we look forward to seeing everyone in San Diego.

President's Corner

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vote on the change at the 2000 annual meeting in Birmingham.

The Board's proposal will also be discussed with the membership during the Business Section of the General Session. Please plan to attend this discussion.

USAHA's long-range plan has a distinguished pedigree. First conceived under the leadership of President J. Lee Alley in 1992, it was completed and guided through Executive Committee approval by President Larry Williams in October, 1997.

Execution of the plan was pursued by President Jones Bryan during 1998, including implementation of the the new annual meeting schedule and format and the construction and maintenance of USAHA's webpage by webmaster Larry Mark.

Behind the scenes, our Association's two staff members, Linda Ragland and Beverley Bahen, are skillfully shepharding the myriad of details necessary to effect the changes.

Larry Williams and J. Lee Alley continue their service to the Association as co-chairs of the critically important Constitution and Bylaw Revision Task Force. Next year, this group's two-year study will bring forth recommendations, including changes required to facilitate the long-range plan.

There is much yet to done and, as incoming President Ernie Zirkle forcefully states in his article, he and the Board are committed to full implementation of the plan in the coming years.

VOLUNTEERS. If asked to give a brief description of the major factor contributing to the remarkable success that USAHA, I would answer with one word ... volunteers.

The was brought home to me while assisting Neal Black in the

review of the proceedings of 99 prior annual meetings of our Association (1897-1995) in preparation the 100th Annual Meeting Celebration and the publication of Neal's great book, "Animal Health, A Century of Progress," in 1996.

All of this progress, which Neal so thoroughly commemorated, was brought about by volunteers working together in a dynamic and inspiring forum with a powerful and compelling mission ... the USAHA.

No question about it, the USAHA of 1897-1999 is a splendid idea. And though just an idea, it has flourished for 102 years.

As we strive to improve our Association, it is of utmost importance to keep this unique, founding idea ... a dynamic forum with a compelling mission ... uppermost in our minds and intact. For, it is this splendid idea which has inspired thousands of individuals, over a span of a century, to volunteer. Our future, like our past, is dependent on a broad cadre of ardent and dedicated volunteers.

The hiring of a salaried executive is important to the future of the Association. Of critical importance to the search process is the understanding that successful management of an essentially all-volunteer, non-profit organization is quite different from managing a for-profit company or a public agency.

There is no more important task facing USAHA today than the selection of right candidate for the new Executive Secretary position ... most likely in 2001.

JOHN SHOOK'S retirement at the end of this year as Secretary and Treasurer of the USAHA marks the completion of a remarkable tenure of service to our Association.

The next issue of the newsletter will remember John's contributions over the years. He will address the Joint USAHA/

AAVLD Session on Sunday evening, October 10th, at the San Diego meeting. I urge everyone to attend.

On a personal note, John Shook has been a valued mentor to me on the workings and mission of the USAHA ... as well as a friend ... for many years. I have learned much from John on the role USAHA plays in our nation.

Rotary International has a motto, "Service Above Self." John Shook is the epitome of this ideal.

HAD the opportunity to attend part of the June 29, 1999, "World Trade Organization Listening Session" held in Sacramento, California, which was sponsored by the USDA and the Office of the US Trade Representative.

This was one of several sessions in preparation for the upcoming WTO trade negotiations in Seattle this November.

California commodity groups discussed trade issues with the "listeners" from USDA and OTR. A common theme expressed while I was in attendance was the practice in EU countries of reducing tariffs on certain agricultural products, but turning right around and increasing subsidies on the same products.

Philosophically and ideologically, I am a freetrader and believe that voluntary transactions between a buyer and seller work to the mutual benefit of both parties.

I came away from this session feeling the WTO is fostering the creation of a huge, new layer of bureaucracy between buyer and seller which, in turn, is selectively clouding transactional communication and opportunities between targeted sellers and buyers.

No benefit will come from this type of interference and gaming.

"Perfect freedom is as necessary to the health and vigor of commerce, as it is to the health and vigor of citizenship"
Patrick Henry