



# USAHA

Protecting Animal and Public Health Since 1897

United States Animal Health Association Newsletter - Vol. 32, No. 2, August 2005

## 2005 Annual Meeting

The United States Animal Health Association's (USAHA) 109<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting and the American Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians' (AAVLD) 48<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference will be November 3-9, 2005 at the Hershey Lodge and Convention Center, Hershey, Pennsylvania.

The 2005 Annual Meeting will feature Scientific Sessions on virology, pathology, toxicology, molecular diagnostics, avian and aquatic diseases and diagnostics, bacteriology and epidemiology, scheduled meetings of USAHA's 34 species and subject-oriented, science-based committees, including the new Committee on Animal Emergency Management, AAVLD's 25 committees and subcommittee; over



20 supporting industry and professional organizations and AAVLD's poster session.

Several United States government leaders in animal and public health will be speaking to the challenges facing the animal community in safeguarding animal and public health.

A North American Healthy Wildlife Initiative is the theme of the Monday, November 7<sup>th</sup> USAHA/AAVLD Scientific Session. Featured speakers will address health concerns at the interface of wildlife, people and domestic animals.

A complete program is available on the USAHA and AAVLD web sites. The USAHA web site can be found at [www.usaha.org](http://www.usaha.org) and click on 109<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting Information.

The AAVLD website can be found at [www.aavld.org](http://www.aavld.org) and click Annual Meeting on the menu. ■

### **AAVLD Plenary Session: The person, the test and the aspirin**

In years past, the AAVLD plenary session tended to focus on a theme, such as disease entities, such as the transmissible spongiform encephalopathies, or new diseases for that year, or emerging diagnostic technologies. This year we will try something different. For once, taking a leaf from the USAHA's book, we will have speakers who address the policy implications of disease surveillance and current manpower needs.

As many of you in the veterinary public practice sector know, it is important that current congressional initiatives that are intended to address veterinary human resource issues, such as the Veterinary Medical Education and Workforce Act of 2005, will address real needs. One of these is the paucity of trained veterinary diagnosticians

### **USAHA/AAVLD Scientific Session North American Healthy Wildlife Initiative**

The joint Scientific Session will be on Monday morning November 7<sup>th</sup> from 8:00 am – 11:30 am in the Chocolate Ballroom at the Hershey Lodge and Convention Center. USAHA President-Elect Bret Marsh and AAVLD President-Elect Donal O'Toole, program Co-Chairs, have been working diligently since early this year to schedule a distinguished group of speakers to address the health concerns at the interface of wildlife, people and domestic animals.

Dr. David Hunter, a veterinarian with Turner Enterprises will discuss the wildlife/domestic animal interface and

exploring new solutions to long standing challenges.

Dr. Alex Thiermann, President of the Terrestrial Animal Health Standards Commission of the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) will address the global perspective on the healthy wildlife initiative.

Dr. Brian Evans, Chief Veterinary Officer for Canada, and Dr. Ted Leighton, Executive Director of the Canadian Cooperative Wildlife Health Centre will provide a perspective on surveillance and management of wildlife diseases in Canada.

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# President's Remarks

## Rick Willer



Our 109<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting is less than three months away. I hope you are registered and have your room reserved. We are expecting another year of record attendance.

It is ironic that I will be ending my Presidential "tour" at the same location I started on my journey through the chairs on the Executive Committee (EC). At the 105<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting in Hershey, Pennsylvania, you elected me as your Second Vice-President (due to a vacancy on the EC, I skipped the Third Vice-President year). You may recall that it was also the first USAHA meeting for Undersecretary Bill Hawks, and it was at Hershey that he announced the appointment of Bobby Acord as APHIS Administrator.

This year's joint Scientific Session on Monday morning is focused on wildlife health and its importance, not just for the sake of wildlife and the people

that enjoy hunting and wildlife viewing, but also because wildlife health, domestic animal health and human health are interconnected. USAHA President-Elect Bret Marsh and AAVLD President-Elect Donal O'Toole have a great speaker line-up. Invitations have been sent out to many people in the wildlife health and conservation arena, including the fifty directors of state game and fish agencies, to participate in the Session as well as attend the Committee on Wildlife Diseases meeting that follows in the afternoon. Our hope is that the 109<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting will be a starting point for further discussion on a wildlife disease strategy for North America. Don't miss it!

We continue working on the details of our Presidents' Dinner and Reception. It should be interesting and fun for everyone. We have invited both Ag-

riculture Secretary Mike Johanns and Colorado Senator Wayne Allard to provide remarks. While you all know Secretary Johanns, you may not know Senator Allard. He is a veterinarian and has introduced the Veterinary Workforce Expansion Act (S.914) that seeks to enhance the nation's infrastructure to train veterinarians in public practice – those trained in bioterrorism and emergency preparedness, environmental health, food safety and food security, regulatory medicine, diagnostic laboratory medicine, and biomedical research. We are hopeful that we will be able to secure these two leaders for Sunday evening. Also on tap for Sunday evening is Paul Ott. Paul is a nationally known singing spokesman for the American agriculture producer and

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## *AAVLD President's Report*



Gary Osweiler

Since our February AAVLD meeting, the cycle of normal AAVLD activities has moved forward and some new initiatives have been advanced, including our interactions and cooperation with

USAHA.

The USAHA/AAVLD Meeting schedule and Joint Scientific Session is set. Drs. Marsh and O'Toole have organized an excellent session on wildlife diseases for the Monday Joint Scientific Session. In the AAVLD plenary session on Saturday we will have speakers who address the policy implications of disease surveillance and current manpower needs, and we encourage USAHA members to visit this session as well. Watch your newsletter for more details of topics and speakers.

The combined activities of USAHA

and AAVLD have raised some very positive results for our diagnostic activities. Another joint effort for AAVLD and USAHA is the National Animal Health Laboratory Network (NAHLN), which will enhance our ability to respond to unexpected large-scale disease outbreaks and also to begin an upgraded surveillance approach for high impact diseases. Progress continues toward greater support for NAHLN that will extend funding beyond the pilot laboratories. AAVLD has a revision and update of our AAVLD NAHLN White Paper, which should be helpful for informing agencies, commodity groups and Congress about the aims and features of NAHLN. This year, some NAHLN funding will be directed to additional state laboratories to enhance their information technology capabilities. The new expanded approach by USDA is to list NAHLN network laboratories to include all those that have contract

or service work with APHIS, but lack similar funding as the pilot labs. AAVLD appreciates USAHA's support for funding of the NAHLN through passage of USAHA's Resolutions 7, 8 and 23 in 2004 and further through active promotion of the NAHLN at the February 2005 Government Relations Committee meeting in Washington. As a result of that joint meeting of USAHA and AAVLD with government agencies and livestock stakeholders, NAHLN awareness and acceptance by other groups has moved to a higher level. Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges (AAVMC), American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) and Animal Ag Coalition all agreed they would be receptive to including NAHLN support in their legislative agendas. Our goal, with continued help from USAHA, will be to intensify and expand efforts for full funding of NAHLN in FY 2007 and beyond

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# Secretary's Remarks

## J Lee Alley



### Annual Meeting:

Hershey, Pennsylvania, November 3-9, 2005

Registration form and program information for the 2005 USAHA/AAVLD Annual Meeting November 3-9, 2005 are included in this Newsletter.

#### Meeting Registration:

Please complete and return the Annual Meeting registration form to the USAHA Richmond office by October 21, 2005. Be sure to include your registration fee payment with your credit card information or your check made payable to USAHA. Anyone sending a check from outside the United States, please make your check payable in U.S. dollars on an American Bank. You may register online by going to [www.usaha.org](http://www.usaha.org) and click Annual Meeting.

#### Hotel Reservations:

All of the sleeping rooms at the Hershey Lodge and Convention Center have been taken for Friday, November 4; Saturday, November 5; and Sunday November 6. Additional sleeping rooms are available at other hotel/motels in Hershey. These rooms are available at the Hilton Garden Inn, Holiday Inn Express, Days Inn and Springhill Suites. The Hershey Lodge and Convention Center will continue to make sleeping room reservations at the other hotel/motels, or you may call the other hotels/motels directly.

The enclosed reservation form can be completed and returned to the Hershey Lodge and Convention Center and they will place you in one of the other hotels/motels. You can also make reservations on line by going to the USAHA website and clicking on Annual Meeting or call 1-800-HERSHEY.

USAHA will be operating a shuttle between the Hershey Lodge and Convention Center and the other Hershey hotel/motels to facilitate transportation to and from the convention center.

#### Refunds:

The refund policy for those who pre register but are unable to attend the

meeting is to withhold \$25.00 to cover processing and handling cost. Your request for a refund must be made in writing within seven (7) days after the end on the meeting (November 9, 2005). If the request for a refund is not received in the Richmond office prior to the meeting an additional \$30.00 will be deducted for the cost of the President's Dinner because of the guaranteed dinner count.

#### Agenda:

A tentative meeting agenda is enclosed with this Newsletter. Please be sure to review the agenda because several changes have been made in meeting times since last year. Updated agendas can be found by going to [www.usaha.org](http://www.usaha.org) and click Annual Meeting or [www.aavld.org](http://www.aavld.org) and click Annual Meeting.

#### Prayer Breakfast:

The fourth annual prayer service will be Sunday morning, November 6 from 6:30 am – 8:00 am in Cocoa 4.

#### Tours:

Monday, November 7<sup>th</sup> to the world of Lancaster's Amish Country. Travel through the countryside, adding interesting insights on the Amish and agriculture in Lancaster County, see enclosure.

Please be sure to pre-register for the tour by completing the enclosed registration form and forwarding it to the USAHA Richmond office by October 3<sup>rd</sup> 2005.

We Look Forward To Seeing You In Hershey!! ■

#### New State Veterinarians

- Delaware - Dr. Edwin Odor
- Illinois - Dr. Mark Ernst
- Massachusetts - Dr. Lorraine O'Connor
- Nebraska - Dr. Dennis A. Hughes
- New Hampshire - Dr. Stephen Crawford
- Virginia - Dr. Richard L. Wilkes

## PRESIDENT'S DINNER ENTERTAINMENT

Musician Paul Ott has reached over one million students from kindergarten to the college level through-out the United States spreading his message of "God, Family and Country."



To thousands of wildlife conservationists in all fifty states, the name Paul Ott means a single voice singing out a message to conserve a place for wild things and wild places for future generations to enjoy as we have before them.

To industry his name means a sensible philosophy of conservation, not preservation. He believes in the economic growth of our country.

To the multi-billion dollar tourist industry, he is the "Voice of the South." Paul Ott is currently hosting his own call-in show, "Listening to the Eagle." The show is also being aired on television weekly. Both shows are growing each week across the South.

Paul Ott's ability to adapt his music and his message to the audience is an outstanding trait, and one which creates a demand for repeat performances. With his guitar, voice and music, Paul Ott adds grace to any occasion. ■

### Exotic Bluetongue Virus in Louisiana Deer

Dr. John Fischer

Hemorrhagic disease (HD) in white-tailed deer is caused by orbiviruses in the epizootic hemorrhagic disease virus (EHDV) and bluetongue virus (BTV) serogroups. These include EHDV serotypes 1 (New Jersey) and 2 (Alberta) and BTV serotypes 10, 11, 13, and 17. However, a different orbivirus, BTV-1, recently was isolated from a sick white-tailed deer from St. Mary Parish, Louisiana, although it is unclear whether the animal actually had HD. The virus was isolated from a six-month-old buck that reportedly was disoriented, emaciated, and had a swol-

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# Argentina Risk Assessment: 2005

Donald E. Hoenig, VMD, Maine State Veterinarian

On May 28, 2005, I traveled to Buenos Aires with a team from the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) Center for Import and Export led by Dr. Anne Goodman to conduct quantitative and qualitative risk assessments of the Argentine Department of Agriculture's (SENASA) efforts to eradicate FMD and to maintain the country's free status with vaccination. Argentina has recently begun exporting beef to the European Union once again and is extremely anxious to reestablish beef exports to the US. The findings of the APHIS team will be used to determine when this trade may

be allowed to resume in accordance with US law.

We arrived in Buenos Aires on Sunday morning and were met by staff from SENASA who brought us to our hotel downtown. Our team, consisting of Drs. Anne Goodman, Silvia Kreindel, John Shaw and Cesar Orocz as well as David Oryang and Francisco Pavano, met later that evening to get acquainted and develop our strategy for the next day when we were scheduled to meet with SENASA management. After our joint meeting with SENASA officials on Monday morning, over the next five days we had ambitious and hectic, but

productive, itineraries. We visited with SENASA officials in the city of Rosario to discuss their experiences during the 2001 outbreak and followed that up with a tour of a local beef operation in Rosario. We flew 1000 km. north to the Province of Formosa where we visited a busy port of entry at the Paraguayan border near Asuncion.

On Wednesday evening, we traveled 100 km. south by bus to the Brandsden SENASA office where we witnessed a demonstration of the electronic animal transport document system (called the DTA). That afternoon we visited a

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## Workshop to Explore Brucellosis Vaccines and Diagnostics For Greater Yellowstone Area Wildlife

LARAMIE, WY—Finding new solutions to an old problem is the goal of a summer workshop focusing on brucellosis in bison and elk in the Greater Yellowstone Area (GYA). The August meeting at the University of Wyoming will bring together more than 50 top researchers from around the globe to identify alternatives to the vaccines currently available.

In the decades since 1917, when brucellosis was first detected in Yellowstone National Park bison, the disease has been virtually eradicated from the United States. The wild bison and elk in the GYA, however, stand as the last major reservoir for *Brucella abortus* in the Nation.

"Traditional techniques that successfully eradicated the disease in livestock are not as easy to apply in free-ranging wildlife," said Bret D. Marsh, DVM, who serves as chair of the United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) special committee established in 2004 to plan and host the workshop. The United States Departments of Agriculture and Interior are providing the funding for the workshop.

He points to three focal points for the meeting:

1. Development and testing of safe and

effective vaccines for bison and elk;

2. Development of new ways to administer the vaccines; and
3. Improving live-animal diagnostic methods.

By bringing together key individuals from federal, state, academic and private sectors, USAHA hopes to lay the foundation for an overall strategy to eliminate brucellosis from the Greater Yellowstone Area while maintaining wild and free-ranging wildlife populations.

The University of Wyoming's Ruckelshaus Institute will moderate the Workshop. All sessions, to be held August 16-18, 2005 will be open to the public, with opportunity for public comment. A formal meeting for public comment will be held from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. on August 18 as part of the workshop. Brucellosis is a bacterial disease that causes abortions and related reproductive problems in many species of mammals, including cattle, sheep, goats, dogs, swine, bison, elk and occasionally horses. While no longer a major human health issue in the United States, in much of the world, brucellosis presents a very important public health concern (known as undulant fe-

ver).

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) is a 109 year-old science-based, national organization of state and federal governments, animal industry groups, universities, wildlife health experts, and other national organizations that address issues of animal health and disease control, food safety, public health, homeland security and animal welfare. USAHA serves as a forum for communication and coordination and a clearinghouse for new information and methods that may be incorporated into laws, regulations, policy and programs. USAHA acts to develop solutions to animal health-related issues based on science, new information and methods, public policy, risk/benefit analysis, and the ability to develop consensus with the goal to reach science-based consensus resolution to animal related issues/problems.

The Ruckelshaus Institute was created at the University of Wyoming in 1994 to advance effective decision-making on environmental and natural resource issues through research, policy analysis, education and outreach. ■

## Scientific Session

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Dr. Peter L. Nara, President, Chairman and CEO, Biological Mimetics, Inc. will address perspectives on advancing the field of vaccinology at the wild, domestic, laboratory animal and human interface and not missing the opportunities.

John Cooper, Secretary of the South Dakota Fish, Game and Parks Department and President of the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies will discuss the healthy wildlife initiative perspectives from a state wildlife agency.

A sportsman's view on the need for a healthy wildlife initiative will be reviewed by Raymond Lee, President and CEO, Foundation for North American Wild Sheep.

Dr. Bret Marsh, Chair of USAHA's Special Committee on Brucellosis in the Greater Yellowstone Area will be reporting on the committee's initiatives for enhancing brucellosis vaccines, vaccine delivery and surveillance diagnostics in bison and elk in the Greater Yellowstone Area. ■

## Food Safety Symposium

The American Association of Food Hygiene Veterinarians and the American College of Veterinary Preventative Medicine are sponsors of the 2005 Food Safety Symposium from 8:00 am till 12:00 pm on Sunday November 6, 2005 at the Hershey Lodge and Convention Center.

The theme of this year's Symposium is the *Assessment of Risk in the Food Supply*. Program participants will include representatives from the Food and Drug Administration, Food Safety and Inspection Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, University of Texas and the California Department of Health Services. ■

### CONTACT INFO

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## AAVLD Plenary Session

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coming into the discipline, particularly in the fields of pathology, toxicology and investigative microbiology. This is creating a major headache for the AAVLD accredited laboratories, both within and outside the National Animal Health Laboratory Network. Building new facilities and validating high volume tests is an easy, if expensive, proposition. More critical is the shortage of trained, motivated people who can operate them. They are our most precious resource. The lead time to convert a veterinary graduate into a competent public practice worker is 4 - 8 years.

Three presentations during the AAVLD Plenary Session on Saturday morning, November 5 will address this topic. Dr. Lance Perryman, dean of the college of veterinary medicine at Colorado State University, will give an overview of where these needs fit in the context of the annual crop of 2,400 new veterinary graduates. He will be followed by Dr. Michele Manos, who describes herself as a migrant from the human public health world. She will address how the pipeline is filled in the human public health arena, and what the veterinary profession can do along similar lines. Dr. Scott Fitzgerald, a respected veterinary pathologist, will talk about the pros and cons of partnering with private corporations to provide training slots for diagnosticians. His home institution at Michigan State University has considerable experience of working with corporate partners to fund post-DVM trainee positions.

To round out the session, three presentations focus on the question: we've tested the animal for a high impact disease and she's positive — now what? Dr. Hans Houe from the The Royal Veterinary and Agricultural University in Denmark will describe how Scandinavian countries currently test for BVD in order to achieve national eradication in the absence of a vaccination program. For a countervailing American perspective, Dr. Hana Van Campen from Colorado State University will describe the first state-sponsored BVD eradication program in the US. Lastly, Dr. Mark Hall will talk about the past and future for BSE testing in the United States. He will put in context the two positive cases of BSE that have been identified

in the United States to date. Dr. Hall is the pathologist responsible for USDA's national BSE surveillance program. He has bottles of aspirin to prove it.

All told there are 121 presentations in the AAVLD Scientific Sessions. The draft program is available on both the USAHA and AAVLD web sites. On the USAHA site click on Meetings and go to Meeting Agenda. On the AAVLD site click on Annual Meeting and click on Events Schedule. ■

## Bluetongue in LA Deer

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len head as well as perianal fecal staining. The deer was euthanized, and personnel with the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LA DWF) submitted samples to the Southeastern Cooperative Wildlife Disease Study's (SCWDS) diagnostic laboratory for virus isolation and chronic wasting disease (CWD) testing. Diagnostic tests performed at SCWDS resulted in isolation of an orbivirus that was identified as BTV-1 by the USDA-APHIS-Veterinary Services-National Veterinary Services Laboratories (NVSL). Other test results were negative.

Bluetongue virus-1 is found in many parts of the world, including Central America and the Caribbean, but prior to this incident the serotype never had been isolated from an animal in the United States. The origin of this virus is unknown, but preliminary data suggest it is not related to the South African BTV-1 vaccine strain or to well-characterized BTV-1 strains from Australia, India, or China. Genetic testing of the isolate eventually may show an epidemiological link to other BTV-1 viruses and allow insight regarding its origin. Future testing is necessary to elucidate the exact implications of this virus in white-tailed deer populations; however, diagnostic testing must be conducted under strict biosafety conditions (Animal BSL 3), because BTV-1 is classified as a select agent and is considered a foreign animal disease agent.

Mild HD activity was observed in

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## USAHA President's Remarks

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wildlife conservationists. He will spend some time with us and promises that we'll all leave our dinner inspired and feeling good about ourselves.

I hope everyone took the opportunity to provide comments on the National Animal Identification System (NAIS) Strategic Plan and Program Standards. There is still a great deal of debate on a number of items in the NAIS including the management of the individual animal and animal event data. While USAHA does not want to delay implementation of any of the components of the NAIS, our comments on the NAIS documents included a request to bring the debate back to the Committee on Livestock Identification with the desired outcome of reaching consensus on these issues. Also being planned for Hershey is a meeting of the state NAIS coordinators. USDA/APHIS/VS Associate Deputy Administrator Dr. Jere Dick has assigned Dr. John Weimers from his staff to develop this meeting. The meeting will provide an opportunity for state people that are working on premises registration and other implementation projects to share their experiences – including what is working and what is not. Although not possible this year, it is hoped that next year, state NAIS coordinators can meet in conjunction with federal animal identification coordinators

Don't miss the many other important meetings scheduled throughout the week – a number of AAVLD Scientific Sessions as well as meetings of the USAHA and AAVLD Committees, allied industry organizations, USAHA districts, National Assembly of State Animal Health Officials, Bi-National Tuberculosis and Brucellosis Committee, Bi-National Tick Committee, National Association of State Meat and Food Inspection Directors and the Food Safety Symposium, to name just a few! Looks like you might want to pack your roller blades, or better yet, bring your team to the meeting.

Beside attendance by the CVO's, or their representatives, from Canada, Mexico, New Zealand and Australia, we anticipate having a number of representatives from other foreign countries and organizations attend this year.

Dr. Peter Fernandez, who is now serving as the regional director of Europe, Africa and the Middle East for USDA, APHIS, International Services, has shown extraordinary leadership in seeking the participation of the chief veterinary officials from the OIE countries in the Region of the Americas. Not only is Dr. Luis Barcos, the Director of the Region of the Americas, attending, but we are expecting several of the CVO's to attend as well. Dr. Fernandez is also bringing Dr. Lorenzo Terzi, European Commission Health and Consumer Protection Directorate, and Mr. Xavier Mennig, Agricultural Specialist for USDA, APHIS, International Services, Region IV. We thank Dr. Fernandez for his continuing support in facilitating international participation at USAHA.

On a final note, I am working with a reporter from National Public Radio (NPR) and hope to interest him in attending our Annual Meeting. NPR reporter John Nielsen recently did a story focused on the lack of veterinarians and how that is hampering national efforts to counter emerging disease threats. He interviewed two of our Committee chairs – Dr. Corrie Brown from the Committee on Foreign and Emerging Diseases and Dr. Bob Cook from the Committee on Captive Wildlife and Alternative Livestock. I thought the story, albeit fairly short, was a good one and I suggested that we could help Nielsen do an even bigger story (or stories) by experiencing firsthand, the plethora of animal health related issues we address that interconnect with the veterinarian shortage story. Stay tuned!

### ARS Science Hall of Fame

Dr. Ed Knipling, Administrator ARS announced the induction of Dr. Charles Beard into the ARS Science Hall of Fame.

Dr. Beard was Director, Southeast Poultry Research Laboratory, Athens, Georgia until his retirement in 1986. ARS recognizes Dr. Beard for his outstanding contributions in poultry health research, his professional and organizational leadership and in developing biocontainment concepts and systems for animal agriculture. ■

## AAVLD President's Report

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In May of this year, AAVLD and USAHA worked together in the formation of a new committee, the Joint Committee on Animal Emergency Management, with committee members appointed from each organization. The AAVLD component of this arose from the previously existing Emergency Management Workgroup, which delivered an excellent report at the 2004 meeting. This committee is well staffed with experienced members of both organizations and should bring a well-coordinated and effective group to bear on the detection of and response to animal diseases that threaten US agriculture.

The last five years have brought unprecedented challenges to animal agriculture in the form of emerging or reoccurring animal diseases that could impact food safety and economic viability. We are fortunate that those preceding us in both USAHA and AAVLD had the foresight to combine our efforts to meet these increased needs. We need to continue and improve upon those ideals. As we learn each year to better utilize and combine our respective strengths, the cooperation can only benefit our common goal – a healthy and productive livestock based food supply for American and the world. ■

### Argentina Risk

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purebred Angus cow/calf operation where we met with the producer and his practicing veterinarian who further explained the systematic FMD vaccination strategy by which all 57 million Argentine cattle are vaccinated twice per year. Early Friday morning, we toured the Mercado de Liniers, a sprawling, slaughter-only cattle auction on the outskirts of Buenos Aires. This market operates Monday through Thursday and processes 20% of all the slaughter cattle in the country of Argentina. Dealers observe the cattle from series catwalks over the more than 2000 cow pens or on horseback. Auctioneers conduct a series of five auctions concurrently and on the morning of our visit, 11,485 cattle were sold from 7:30 am — 9:00 am. The market averages 48,000 animals per week with 400 trucks moving in and out each day. All

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# News Releases

## **UNITED STATES ANIMAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION ESTABLISHES LINKAGE WITH NATIONAL FOUNDATION FOR INFECTIOUS DISEASES**

*Richmond, Virginia*

In an effort to build yet another bridge between the worlds of human health and animal health, United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) leadership attended the recent Eighth Annual Conference on Vaccine Research sponsored by the National Foundation for Infectious Diseases (NFID) in Baltimore, Maryland.

USAHA President Rick Willer, President-elect Bret Marsh and member Glenn Plumb attended this year's vaccine research conference as well as the scientific program planning committee meeting, and presented a well received poster depicting the brucellosis issue in the Greater Yellowstone Area (GYA) and describing how USAHA is addressing the brucellosis vaccine research issue for bison and elk.

Given that more than two-thirds of the newly emerging and re-emerging diseases in people are zoonotic, the organizing committee of the conference, which is dedicated to comparative vaccinology and medicine, welcomed USAHA's participation and agreed to collaborate on a special seminar de-

voted to vaccine issues related to zoonotic diseases at the Ninth Annual Conference on Vaccine Research in May 2006. USAHA President Rick Willer has appointed Glenn Plumb to be USAHA's liaison on the scientific program planning committee for the Ninth Annual Conference. The conference organizing committee also committed to establishing a long-term relationship with USAHA.

"Linkages established during the Eighth Annual Conference will support USAHA's plans to hold a working symposium in August 2005 to develop a brucellosis vaccine research road map," Willer said, referring to USAHA's initiative to find new vaccine solutions to the brucellosis problem in elk and bison in the GYA.

The solution to the GYA brucellosis issue remains elusive, in part, because current vaccines for livestock do not work well in those wild species. "While vaccines are not the only solution to the brucellosis problem in the GYA, they are certainly an important part of the tools to accomplish the goal of elimination of *Brucella abortus* from

the last remaining focus of the disease in the U.S.," Willer commented.

Brucellosis is a bacterial disease that causes abortions and related reproductive problems in many species of mammals, including cattle, sheep, goats, swine, bison, elk, dogs and occasionally horses. While no longer a major human health issue in the United States, in much of the world, brucellosis in people (known as undulant fever) presents a very important public health concern.

USAHA, the nation's animal health forum for 109 years, is a science based, national organization of official state and federal animal health agencies, national allied industry organizations, universities, wildlife disease experts and other national organizations that acts to develop resolution to issues related to animal health and disease control, food safety, public health, homeland security and animal welfare based on science, new information and methods, public policy, risk/benefit analysis and the ability to develop consensus for changing laws, regulations, policies and programs. ■

## **NEW USAHA/AAVLD COMMITTEE TO ADDRESS ANIMAL HEALTH EMERGENCY ISSUES**

*Richmond, Virginia*

A new committee to handle preparedness for emergencies involving agricultural animals has been established by the United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) and the American Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians (AAVLD).

According to USAHA President Dr. Rick Willer, the new standing committee — entitled the USAHA/AAVLD Committee on Animal Emergency Management — will replace the National Animal Health Emergency Management System Steering Committee. The new USAHA/AAVLD committee will address preparation for emergencies involving agricultural animals including how this nation can best prepare to respond to incursions of foreign animal diseases — whether introduced accidentally or intentionally as acts of bioterrorism.

Dr. Keith Roher, Colorado Assistant

State Veterinarian, and Dr. Pat Blanchard, Tulare Branch Chief of the California Animal Health and Food Safety Laboratory System, will co-chair the new Committee on Animal Emergency Management.

The initial face-to-face meeting of the committee will be during the 2005 USAHA/AAVLD annual meeting November 3-9, 2005, in Hershey, Pennsylvania. Additional information about the annual meeting can be found on the two association's web sites ([www.usaha.org](http://www.usaha.org) and [www.aavld.org](http://www.aavld.org)).

USAHA is a national non-profit organization working with state and federal animal health officials, veterinarians, livestock producers, national livestock and poultry organizations, wildlife disease experts, and research scientists to prevent and control animal diseases in the United States. ■

## ***Bluetongue in LA Deer***

(Continued from page 5)

Louisiana in 2003 and 2004, and long-term serologic testing from healthy hunter-killed deer in Louisiana has routinely demonstrated EHD and BTV antibodies. It is unknown if BTV-1 is established in Louisiana, and efforts are underway by USDA-APHIS-Veterinary Services to answer this question. This work, which primarily involves serologic testing of cattle, will be supplemented this autumn with additional testing of white-tailed deer serums through the cooperative efforts of NVSL, SCWDS, and LA DWF. Additionally, sick or dead domestic sheep should be tested for exposure because they are highly susceptible to BTV.

The isolation of BTV-1 for the first time in the United States underscores the importance of cooperation between wildlife management agencies and health laboratories and the utility of dis-

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# World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) Meets for the 73<sup>rd</sup> Time

Bret D. Marsh, DVM, President-Elect, USAHA

The world's leaders in animal health converged on Paris, France for the 73<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) in late May 2005. Officially recognized by the World Trade Organization (WTO) as the standard setting body for animal health, the OIE's 2005 General Session hosted over 600 participants, representing 140 countries or territories and over 30 regional and international organizations. The delegation from the United States included Drs. Peter Fernandez (APHIS, VS), John Clifford (APHIS, VS), Alex Thiermann (APHIS, International Services), Michael David (APHIS, VS), Bill James (FSIS), Willie Reed (Immediate Past President of AAFLD), Lyle Vogel (AVMA), Bret D. Marsh (President-Elect, USAHA), and Mr. Glenn Slack (NIAA). Dr. Fernandez serves as the official U. S. Delegate to the OIE, and he also serves as President of the Regional Commission of the Americas. Dr. Thiermann serves as President of the Terrestrial Animal Health Standards Commission.

The week was packed with informative presentations from the four OIE Commissions (Aquatic animals, Scientific, Laboratories, and Terrestrial Animal Health Code) and three Working Groups (Food Safety and Production, Animal Welfare, and Wildlife Diseases). The International Committee (IC), which is the body of official delegates, considered several proposals in their deliberations, and they voted to take some very specific actions. Particularly noteworthy are:

1. Dr. Bernard Vallet was re-elected Director General (DG) of the OIE. He will serve as the DG for the next five years.
2. The Working Group (WG) on Animal Welfare developed guidelines that were approved by the IC. These guidelines address land and sea transport, slaughter of animals for human consumption and humane euthanasia of animals for disease control. Over the next year, this WG may develop welfare guidelines for companion animals, wildlife/zoo animals, laboratory animals, and housing/production of terrestrial animals.
3. The OIE is dropping the term "re-

gionalization" because it has caused confusion among some member countries. The term "zoning" will now be used to refer to either national or international geographic areas.

4. The Code Chapter on BSE was amended to reflect changes to the naming of the BSE risk categories. The three categories for classification of countries regarding their BSE status are "negligible risk," "controlled risk," and "undetermined risk."
5. De-boned skeletal muscle from cattle 30 months of age or less, blood and blood products, and skin/hides have now been added to the list of "safe products" that can be traded without regard to the BSE status of the country. The OIE will evaluate the need for the age restriction on de-boned skeletal muscle.
6. The IC adopted significant changes to the Chapter on Avian Influenza (AI) including a definition of "poultry", specific reporting requirement for strains of AI, and the use of compartmentalization for managing the disease.

For several years USAHA has been invited by USDA to attend the OIE meetings, and we are grateful for the opportunity to become engaged in this important process. The rapidly changing global market requires USAHA to become increasingly more knowledgeable about the international community and its impact on our ability to trade animals and animal products. Without an awareness and understanding of international issues, we cannot have effective animal health and food safety programs within our country. One of the keys to our future success as an organization is capitalizing on the opportunities internationally. ■

## Bluetongue in LA Deer

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ease testing in wildlife. Without the support of wildlife management agencies in disease investigations and sample submission, this virus likely would not have been detected. (Prepared by Rick Gerhold and David Stallknecht, SCWDS) ■

## Argentina Risk

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trucks are thoroughly cleaned in an impressive truck washing facility before they leave the facility.

Later Friday morning we met with a group of producer representatives who told us there is 100% support for continuing the national FMD vaccination program. There is widespread belief that the country discontinued vaccinating prematurely in 1999 prior to the FMD outbreak and they don't want to make that mistake again. These folks told us that the cost of vaccination, which is paid for by producers, is negligible compared with loss of export markets that occurred and continues to occur as a result of the 2001 outbreak. Farmers consider the cost of the vaccine to be a sound investment.

On Friday afternoon we wound up our whirlwind tour by a meeting with high-level SENASA officials. Dr. Anne Goodman thanked them for the gracious hospitality that was extended to our delegation and went on to briefly review our findings, focusing on strengths, which were numerous. She concluded with a synopsis of the future time line and reiterated that the review and approval process for reopening US markets to Argentine beef is time-consuming, cumbersome, and open to public scrutiny through the administrative procedures act. She also noted that more information might be required in order to finalize the quantitative risk assessment.

In conclusion, I believe there are three reasons why the United States has been free of FMD since 1929: isolation, luck and safeguards. Isolation ended in the 50's with the advent of reasonably priced, fast airline travel. Luck is uncontrollable and will eventually run out. Safeguarding activities, therefore, continue to be our best hope for protection. Having the opportunity to take part in this risk assessment gave me a new perspective on an aspect of safeguarding with which I had little or no familiarity. In many respects, Argentina and many other countries for that matter, are light years ahead of the United States in emergency disease preparation and response. We can and should learn much from their experience. ■