



# USAHA

Protecting Animal and Public Health Since 1897

United States Animal Health Association Newsletter - Vol. 26, No. 3, August, 1999

## Zirkle Reports on OIE Meeting



Participants at 75th General Session of the OIE, May, 1999 - Paris, France

## President-Elect Represents USAHA in Paris

by Ernie Zirkle, President-Elect

As President-Elect of USAHA, I was selected to attend the 75th General Session of the Office International Des Epizooties (OIE) in Paris, France May 19-25, 1999. This experience has given me information which I plan to use during my tenure in office to the benefit of USAHA and USDA alike. I will give a brief history of OIE, explain how the organization works and then give some plans for future USAHA involvement.



Ernest W. Zirkle

For a summary of actions taken by OIE, we have put on our web site the report that Dr. Robert Kahrs submitted to USDA. Please look to our site [www.usaha.org](http://www.usaha.org) for this very thorough meeting summary.

**OIE History**  
In 1920, rinderpest occurred unexpectedly in Belgium, as a result of Zebus, originating from India and destined for Brazil, transit-

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## Pearson Joins OIE in France

by Dick McCapes, Editor

Jim Pearson of Ames, Iowa, has accepted the position of Head, Scientific and Technical Department of the Office International des Epizooties (OIE) in Paris, France.



Jim Pearson

He will report directly to the OIE Director General and will be responsible for a variety of scientific activities, including:

- Management of personnel and activities of the Scientific and Technical Department;
- Organization and support of meetings of Specialist Commissions, Working Groups, Ad Hoc

Groups and conferences;

- Supervision of the updating of the Manual of Standards for Diagnostic Tests and Vaccines;
- Advising the Director General on scientific and technical matters related to OIE
- Representing the OIE at relevant international conferences and meetings.

Jim served as Director of the USDA-APHIS National Veterinary Services Laboratory in Ames until his retirement this year. He first joined NVSL in 1970 and served as Chief of the NVSL Diagnostic Virology Laboratory prior to being named as Director.

He was born in Springville,  
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## President's Corner

**T**HE BOARD of Directors has met monthly by conference call this year. This frequency, combined with an hour to hour and a half call duration, provides the Association with a up-to-date, decision-making body with a bias towards collegiality, continuity and forward movement.



Dick McCapes

Improved telephony services permitting individuals to call in to the conference call from anywhere, by land line or cellular, makes it convenient to all.

Add to this the rapidly changing communications support provided by digital technology, in-

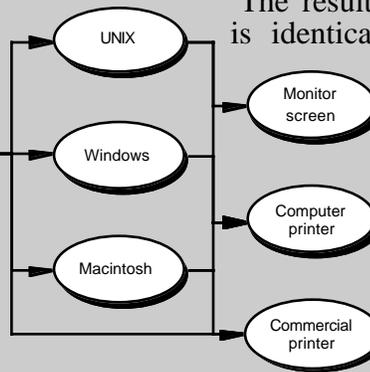
cluding the world-wide-web, email and electronic publishing and you have the foundation for Association activities and services undreamed of just a few years ago.

Electronic publishing is one of those rapidly changing areas that seems to offer USAHA great opportunity for expanded service to its members right now and for the foreseeable future.

One of the most intriguing electronic publishing software technologies today is the Adobe Acrobat Portable Document Format (PDF) developed by Adobe Systems. A digital document file created by any software applica-



Distribute via  
USAHA webpage,  
email, disk, LAN



tion on any computer utilizing Windows, Macintosh or UNIX operating systems can be "distilled" into a PDF digital file utilizing Acrobat software.

The resulting PDF file is identical in appearance to the original document and can be viewed and printed by computers utilizing the three operating systems following installation of Acrobat Reader software, which is free and widely available.

There is also a revolution taking place in the commercial

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# Time for Action in Yellowstone

The USAHA directed a June 25, 1999 letter to the Secretary of Agriculture, the Secretary of the Interior, the White House and Chairs and Ranking Members of several House and Senate committees, pertaining to the current status of the wildlife brucellosis situation in the Greater Yellowstone Area.

The letter stated, in part, "We feel strongly the time has come for the Department of Agriculture and ... Interior to cooperatively work with ... the states of Idaho, Montana and Wyoming to develop an action plan that will eliminate the interminable delays and begin the task of eradicating brucellosis ... in the Greater Yellowstone Area."

Dr. John Melcher, former United States Senator from Montana and advisor to the AVMA, and Dr. Dean Goeldner, AVMA Government Relations

Division, personally delivered the letter on behalf of USAHA. The Committee on Brucellosis and others provided support in the development of the letter, which was approved by the Board of Di-



rectors.

USAHA stressed its concern about the apparent lack of urgency in dealing with the wildlife brucellosis situation in the Greater Yellowstone area. Also addressed were the issues of human health and international trade.

Included with the letter was the Association's October, 1998 response to the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Interagency Bison Management Plan for the State of Montana and Yellowstone National Park. Included in this response was USAHA's recommended strategy for control.

The letter concluded, "The experience of eradicating brucellosis from cattle is proof that the task with wildlife will not be easy. However, the long term national and international implications of brucellosis in bison and elk make eradication of this disease from the GYA an essential endeavor."

The June 25, 1999 letter and the October, 1998 response to the Draft EIS can be viewed and downloaded from the USAHA web page ([www.usaha.org](http://www.usaha.org)).

# Case Report: Brucellosis in Texas

## Running to Catch Up

by  
Terry Beals, Texas State Veterinarian &  
Jon Lomme, Assistant AVIC for Texas, APHIS

Consider a disease that can exist in a state of dormancy in individual animals for extended periods of time; the inability of available tests to identify such animals, in many cases, prior to those animals transmitting the disease agent to previously noninfected herd mates; thousands of infected herds ranging from a single cow staked to the side of the road to forage, to herds with thousands of cows on hundreds of thousands of acres owned by fiercely independent cattlemen and women; and a



Terry Beals

government program to control and eradicate the disease perceived as being formulated and enforced by "out of touch," non-compromising, State and Federal bureaucrats. The foregoing represents some of the essential ingredients for a recipe that assures the development of a profound distrust of and resistance to such a "government program" by an affected industry. So it was with Texas and the National Brucellosis Control and Eradication Program for many years.

After nearly two decades of herd testing and retesting, following the inception of the National Brucellosis Eradication program, where the economic loss associated with the cure was, indeed, worse than the disease for many cattle owners, the resistance to the program in Texas became more

intense and organized. An organization of independents was actually borne to fight the "bangs program" with pooled resources and a united front. The group flourishes to this day though they have moderated their position to support the current effort.

During the mid-seventies, the intensity of the resistance to the program in Texas led to a rejection of the National Uniform Methods and Rules for the eradication of brucellosis which in turn led to a threatened Federal quarantine that would severely restrict the interstate movement of Texas cattle. As a result of action taken by the Texas legislature in a



Jon Lomme

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## Animal Antibiotic Use Research Needed

by Mike Chaddock, Second Vice President,  
USAHA

On May 27, 1999, I was pleased to represent the United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) at the Antibiotic Use in Animals: Food Safety and Risk



Mike Chaddock

Assessment forum organized by Georgetown University's Center for Food and Nutrition Policy, Washington, D.C. This excellent one-day forum was facilitated by Dr. Lester M. Crawford, Research Professor and Director of Georgetown University's Center for Food and Nutrition Policy. Participants included representatives of national livestock industry associations, public health officials, the American Veterinary Medical Associa-

tion (AVMA), congressmen, livestock pharmaceutical companies, and national and international food safety researchers.

The forum was divided into three areas. The first area dealt with sound science and public policy making. The Honorable Charles Stenholm, ranking Democrat on the House Agriculture Committee, presented the keynote address. Congressman Stenholm reminded the audience that technology to date has allowed the world population to be fed. We must continue to be able to use technology in a responsible manner to feed the world of tomorrow. This includes pesticides, herbicides, antibiotics, and biotechnology. We are not spending enough on food safety and technology research in animal and plant food safety science areas. Low level antibiotic usage to enhance livestock rate of gain and

reduce time to market have been used for years. Now there is evidence this practice may have a negative impact on human health. Congressman Stenholm believes the antibiotic residue problem may be serious and more research in the area is needed. If research supports negative impact on human health, there needs to be a gradual change in the use of the products. He closed by emphasizing that everyone associated with agriculture needs to continuously tell people that we have the most abundant food supply and the safest food at the least cost in the world. Dr. Jaap Hanekamp of the Heidelberg Appeal Nederland Foundation and Dr. Ted Elsasser, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal Research Service (ARS), concluded this section of the forum by examining the facts known to date.

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# Southern Animal Health Association News

by Bill Simms, President  
and State Veterinarian for Virginia

The Southern Animal Health Association held its annual meeting at the Omni Hotel in Richmond, Virginia, the week of May 23-26, 1999.

After opening and welcoming remarks Monday, May 24, by J. Carlton Courter, III, Commissioner of the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, and Josh Lief, Deputy Secretary for Commerce and Trade, the meeting began with a report on current APHIS activities



Bill Simms

by Dr. Craig Reed, Administrator. During his comments, Dr. Reed ran through an emergency disease scenario and its repercussions.

Dr. Richard McCapes, USAHA President, followed with a report on USAHA activities since the annual meeting in Minneapolis in October 1998, and Dr. John Ragan, USDA/FSIS, spoke on current food safety actions. Mr. Glenn Slack, Executive Director of the Livestock Conservation Institute, closed out the joint morning session with a report on LCI's activities and vision for the 21st century and a major reorganization to meet the changes experienced and expected.

Following a buffet luncheon, the group divided into separate meetings for the State Directors of Meat and Food Inspection and the other attendees from state and federal government, industry, academia and guests.

Dr. Alfonso Torres, Deputy Administrator for APHIS/VS, began the Monday afternoon session with an update of VS activities.

He was followed by Drs. Valerie Ragan, Arnold Taft, and Joe Vantiem, who provided status reports on the national eradication programs for brucellosis, pseudorabies and tuberculosis.

Tuesday's program began with Dr. Joseph Corn, Research Coordinator for the Southeastern Cooperative Wildlife Disease Study, presenting information on the Elk Relocation Program. This was followed by presentations on Emergency Management Programs by Dr. Leroy Coffman, State Veterinarian for Florida, Dr. Lee Myers, State Veterinarian for Georgia, and Ms. Laura Bevan, Director of the Southeast Regional Office of the Humane Society of the United States. The Tuesday morning session concluded with Dr. Marilyn



Southern Animal Health Association Meeting, Richmond, VA.

Balmer's Food and Drug Administration update on Salmonella enteritidis and Egg Quality Programs.

The Tuesday afternoon program began with a presentation on electronic health certificates by Mr. Kevin Maher, from E-Markets in Ames, IA. Dr. Tom McGinn, Assistant State Veterinarian for North Carolina, gave his presentation on Geographic Information Systems in Regulatory Programs, followed by presentations on the status of Contagious Equine Metritis by Dr. Morley Cook, Senior Staff Veterinarian with APHIS/VS in Riverdale, Maryland, Avian Influenza

Initiatives by Dr. T. J. Myers, Senior Staff Veterinarian with APHIS/VS, also in Riverdale, Maryland, and an update on National Animal Identification presented by Dr. John Wiemers, Senior Staff Veterinarian, with the Illinois office of APHIS/VS.

The SAHA banquet was held on Tuesday evening. Dr. Joseph W. A. Whitehorne, historian, gave a presentation on "Animal Logistics and Civil War Veterinary Service."

The Eastern Region meeting of the National Association of State Meat and Food Inspection Directors was held in conjunction with the 1999 Southern Animal Health Association meeting. At the opening session Monday afternoon, May 24, Dr. David E. Cardin, President, welcomed the group. Dr. Bill Barnum, State Director from Oklahoma, presented the National President's report. Mr. Art Simmonds, USDA Civil Rights Office from Washington, D.C., addressed civil rights initiatives within USDA and their application to state meat and poultry inspection programs. Dr. Steven W. Berg of the Virginia Department of Health presented

a comprehensive update concerning foodborne pathogens in meat and poultry products. The Monday afternoon session concluded with a panel discussion on Comprehensive Federal Reviews from the states' perspective. Panel members included Dr. Cardin, Virginia State Director, Dr. Jim Quigley, Georgia State Director, and Dr. Lynn Hagood from Alabama.

Dr. Craig Reed, USDA/APHIS Administrator, keynoted the Tuesday NASMFID session by discussing Animal Health

## www.usaha.org webpage update

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

As this is written, we're awaiting our 10,000th visitor to the USAHA home page since it was first posted in November 1997.



Larry Mark

Since the end of March, we've been averaging a little more than 800 visitors monthly, so we should hit the five-figure mark shortly. (Sorry, no prize if you're No. 10,000!)

Now, what's new on the USAHA Web? First of all is a page with information about the 1999

meeting. In here, you'll find links to an updated AAVLD/USAHA meeting agenda (as of late July); air travel discounts; hotel reservation information and the hotel layout; and tour sign-up information. Nearly 400 of you have checked out this page since it was first posted in mid-May.

Next, through the collaborative efforts of Dick McCapes and myself, we posted the June 1999 issue of the USAHA Newsletter on our website in PDF format. These pages look exactly like the printed form of the newsletter and can be accessed and either read on-line or printed out through the free Adobe Acrobat Reader. If you don't have this free software,

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### Pearson joins OIE from page 1

Iowa and attended Iowa State University for undergraduate, veterinary medical and graduate studies. After receiving his BS, and before entering veterinary school, he joined the Air Force as a Navigator Radar Intercept Officer. He flew in the Iowa Air National Guard for several years, retiring in 1984.

Following veterinary school, he was in a mixed animal practice in Iowa before joining the staff at the USDA National Animal Disease Center in Ames as a research virologist in 1968.

Jim has been frequently called upon for a wide variety of international veterinary medical responsibilities and has been a major presence in the U.S. delegation to OIE.



From left: Jim Pearson and Joan Arnoldi, APHIS, taking a break at the 1999 OIE meeting in Paris, France (Photo by E. Zirkle)

He helped finalize the first edition of the OIE Manual Of Standards for Diagnostic Tests and Vaccines in 1990 and was elected Vice President of the Standards Commission in 1991.

Jim received the AAVLD E. P. Pope Award for Excellence and is the author or co-author of 115 scientific publications.

A colleague in USAHA, Jim serves on the USAHA Committee on Transmissible Diseases of Poultry and Other Avian Species and the Committee on Bovine Retroviruses.

Our nation and the world community have greatly benefited from Jim's exceptional achievements in public and professional service. His quiet and determined dedication to excellence is a standard for us all to aim for.

Good luck, Jim!

## Excellence in Agriculture Prize Goes To Pomeroy

Office of the Dean, College of Agriculture,  
Food and Environmental Sciences, University  
of Minnesota

USAHA member, Ben Pomeroy of St. Paul, Minnesota, was one of three outstanding agricultural citizens that were selected to share the \$150,000 in cash which accompanies the Siehl Prize for Excellence in Agriculture. Each was also presented with a unique crystal, brass and marble sculpture designed by a noted University of Minnesota artist.



Ben Pomeroy

The award was presented by University President Mark Yudof on July 7, 1999 during a global agricultural summit titled "Exploring our Global Community."

The College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental awards the Siehl Prize every two years to one accomplished leader in each of three categories: production agriculture, agribusiness and academic.

Dr. Pomeroy first arrived at the University's division of veterinary medicine in 1934 and went on to compile an impressive list of personal, scholarly, and scientific accomplishments, including ground breaking work that helped to bring under control salmonella, mycoplasma, and other potentially devastating infections which once threatened the poultry industry.

The Siehl Prize was established by Eldon Siehl, a businessman, to recognize professionals

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## OIE Meeting

from page 1

ing via the port of Antwerp. This was the first realization that the disease could be transmitted this way.

France then took the initiative and called an information conference 25-28 March, 1921. Forty two States, dominions and colonies attended the meeting and addressed rinderpest, FMD and Dourine. It also studied the exchange of animal health information between countries and export health measures.

The final international agreement was signed by 28 States on Jan, 25 1924 and thus OIE was born. This group met with the blessings of the Secretariat General of the League of Nations.

The Office operates under the authority and control of a committee composed of the delegates of contracting governments, on an egalitarian basis of one delegate by country. It meets at least once a year.

The cost of setting up, running and maintaining the Office is covered by annual contributions from contracting states. A permanent Central Bureau has its headquarters in Paris. Its Director is chosen by the Committee.

In 1928, a Geneva Conference met to establish international sanitary regulations and continues to meet each year with more participants.

In 1945, the United Nations replaced the League of Nations. In the 1950's the Foreign Agriculture Organization (FAO) and World Health Organization (WHO) was established, but only partially met the needs for international trade.

Finally, in 1957, the OIE lent its support to attempts to harmonize animal health within the EC and thus became the focus for scientific information for developing regulations to prevent the spread of disease internationally.

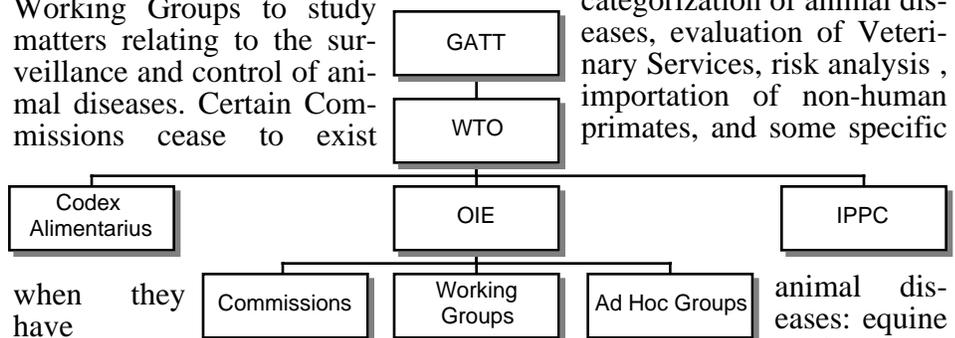
The General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) estab-

lished World Trade Organization (WTO) in 1995. OIE is the WTO designated international standard setting body for animal health. The basic responsibility of WTO as far as OIE is concerned today is negotiation and settling of disputes.

The organization chart below gives an illustration of OIE and its relationship to GATT and WTO. There are two other organizations similarly answering to WTO. Codex Alimentarius which is responsible for international food safety and the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC).

### Commissions and Working Groups

Whenever the Committee considers it appropriate, it can establish Specialists Commissions or Working Groups to study matters relating to the surveillance and control of animal diseases. Certain Commissions cease to exist



when they have achieved

their goals. Others are still active. Four Commissions are active in 1999:

- Foot and Mouth Disease and Other Epizootics Commission was established in 1946. In fifty years the Commission has organized more than twenty scientific conferences.

- Standards Commission established in 1949 for the use and application of biological products in the control of epizootics by OIE.

- International Animal Health Code Commission established for the study of sanitary regulations on the importation and exportation of animals and animal products.

- Fish Diseases Commission established in 1961 for the study of diseases of fishes and has organized three scientific symposia.

Four Working Groups are also

active in 1999:

- Working Group on Informatics and Epidemiology, was formerly known as the Working Group on Animal Health Information Systems.

- Working Group on Veterinary Drug Registration

- Working Group on Biotechnology

- Working Group on Wildlife Diseases

### Ad hoc Groups

During the 1990's, there was an increase in the number of Ad hoc Groups (reaching nine in 1998), convened to assist the Specialists Commissions with their work.

The most important points to have been submitted to Ad hoc Groups were those concerning the categorization of animal diseases, evaluation of Veterinary Services, risk analysis, importation of non-human primates, and some specific

animal diseases: equine viral arteritis, bovine spongiform encephalopathy, Aujeszky's disease, contagious bovine pleuropneumonia, piroplasmosis, rabies, salmonellosis, scrapie etc.

### OIE Membership, Functions and Goals

Each of 153 member countries has one vote and one delegate, usually the Chief Veterinary Officer (CVO). Major OIE functions and goals are to:

- Collect and disseminate information about distribution and control of animal diseases;

- Coordinate research on contagious animal diseases;

- Standardize rules for international trade in animals and animal products;

- Prevent the spread of contagious animal diseases;



From left: Ernie Zirkle, USAHA, Joan Arnoldi (head of U.S. delegation), APHIS & Leonard Zeda, AVMA, at Paris OIE meeting



From left: Alex Thiermann, , Joan Arnoldi, and Chris Groocock, APHIS, at OIE meeting (All OIEphotos provided by E. Zirkle)



From left: Linda Logan-Henfy, ARS, Jim Pearson and Alfonso Torres, APHIS, at OIE



From left: OIE Director General Jean Blancou, France, and OIE General Assembly President Norman Willis, Canada

### OIE Meeting from page 6

- Improve animal production through animal health standards;
- Encourage international cooperation among public and private veterinary authorities;
- Ensure that scientific measures govern international trade in animals and animal products; and
- Recognize disease-free status of countries and categorize diseases into List A and List B.

### USAHA OIE INVOLVEMENT - Scientific Section Presentation

The Tuesday afternoon, October 12, Scientific Section in San Diego will have presentations by Dr. Alfonso Torres, Deputy Administrator, USDA APHIS, VS, Dr. Alex Thiermann, APHIS International Services (IS) and Vice Chair of the International Animal Health Code Commission, Dr. Linda Logan-Henfy, National Program Leader-Animal Health, USDA Agricultural Research Service, and Dr. W. G. Steritt (Canada) Chair of the Foot and Mouth Disease and Other Epizootics Commission. The initial ten minute presentations will allow time for



Bob Kahrs, APHIS, at OIE meeting in Paris

each panelist to present their unique role in the OIE process. The panel will then address questions from the audience. This session will allow members of USAHA to have any questions addressed by the people who are members of the OIE process.

### USAHA OIE Committee

I am working with Dr. Torres and Alex Thiermann to have USAHA directly involved on the OIE process at the appropriate times. We can have meaningful input, at the appropriate time, to the issues that are being considered, assist VS with collecting scientific information and relay decisions and USDA policies in a timely manner to our membership.

The purpose of the committee will be to understand the importance of this standard-setting organization and how this relates to trade facilitation. We will coordinate with committee chairs and any other appropriate groups (Allied Industry etc.) to develop statements or positions on the issues for use by the VS negotiating team. This group will communicate with each other and the VS negotiating team through a confidential internet web page service, utilizing the USAHA web provider.

**Kahrs' 1999  
OIE Meeting Report**

A summary report of the 1999 OIE meeting in Paris authored by Dr. Robert Kahrs is available for viewing and downloading on the USAHA webpage [www.usaha.org](http://www.usaha.org)

**USAHA**

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## Southern News

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Emergency Management Systems. Mr. R. Douglas Saunders, Program Manager in the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services' Office of Dairy and Foods, updated the group on the initiative to develop a fully integrated national food safety system. Dr. Dale Boyle, Executive Vice-President of the National Association of Federal Veterinarians, discussed the future role of veterinarians in USDA/FSIS. Dr. Boyle is a member of the task force studying this issue. Dr. Daniel Lafontaine, a member of the National Advisory Committee on Meat and Poultry Inspection, briefed attendees on activities of the Committee. The USDA initiative to provide field automation to all state meat and poultry inspection programs was discussed by Mr. Barry Blumreich of USDA/FSIS. The Director of the USDA/FSIS Federal/State Relations, Dr. William Leese, presented a briefing on the current initiatives to include lifting the ban on interstate shipment of state inspected meat and poultry products. The formal session concluded with a presentation on valuing and managing cultural diversity in the workplace by Ms. Leigh Neal from the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services' Human Resources Office. Prior to the Tuesday afternoon adjournment, a business meeting was held.

For the closing session Wednesday morning, May 26, the combined groups heard presentations by Dr. Bruce Akey, Chief of the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services', Office of Laboratory Services, on the National Animal Health Reporting System and an OIE update presented by Dr. Ernest Zirkle, State Veterinarian for New Jersey and President-elect of the USAHA. Dr. Niall Finnegan, Executive Director of the Government Relations Division of the AVMA in Washington, D.C., closed the combined session with an update on AVMA programs.

A business meeting followed

the presentations. The revised constitution and by-laws were approved for presentation at the next annual meeting of the SAHA. The members also approved a donation of \$1,000 to Texas for support of the Feral Swine Symposium held in Fort Worth, Texas on June 2-3, 1999. A resolution was passed to contact the USDA, APHIS Administrator and express concern about brucellosis slaughter surveillance and request that a qualified individual be appointed to monitor this program. During the business meeting, Dr. Leroy Coffman was elected Vice President/President-elect of our organization. Dr. William Sims, State Veterinarian of Virginia, yielded the SAHA Presidency to Dr. Burke Healey, State Veterinarian for Oklahoma, which concluded the 1999 annual meet-

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## Antibiotic Use Research

from page 3

According to Dr. Hanekamp "It is clear that reproducible and documented data concerning antibiotic resistance transfer from animals to humans is lacking. This makes a formal risk assessment of this issue not possible. Epidemiological data to this date do not show that use of antimicrobial growth promoters in animal rearing has compromised the use of related antibiotics in human medicine." Dr. Elsasser indicated there is no clear indication that there is an overt threat to the human population.

The second section of the forum examined streptogramin resistance in animals and humans. Dr. Frederick Angulo, Medical Epidemiologist, National Center for Infectious Disease, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, presented work which supported that the feeding of the streptogramin virginiamycin as a growth promoter in chickens may compromise the effectiveness for the treatment of *Enterococcus faecium* infections in humans. Dr. Angulo reminded the audience that the European Union has prohibited the use of virginiamycin in

food animals, an action which he stated was scientifically justified and consistent with World Health Organization recommendations. Dr. Judith Johnson, Director, Clinical Microbiology Laboratories, Veterans Administration Medical Center, recognized that infections due to multiple drug-resistant bacteria are an increasingly significant problem and that agricultural use of antimicrobial agents may play a role in promoting human infection with drug resistant bacteria. However, quantitative data critical for formulating public health policy are lacking. The final speaker in this section, Dr. Marcus J. Zervos, Department of Medicine, Wayne State University School of Medicine, reported on several cases of streptogramin resistant enterococci isolated from both humans and livestock. The livestock resistant enterococci were isolated from pigs and broilers fed virginiamycin in Denmark and from chicken parts and feral droppings from chickens, pigs, and cows at state and county fairs in Maryland. According to Dr. Zervos, "In view of studies that have suggested a link between the use of antibiotics in animal feed and resistant bacteria in humans and the recent identification of streptogramin-resistant enterococci in animals fed virginiamycin and in stools of healthy outpatient humans, it is recommended that streptogramin use in animals be limited."

The remainder of the afternoon was spent in lively discussion and debate about antibiotic use in animals. The take home message of this forum was that there will be more changes in the use of antimicrobial products in food producing animals with particular scrutiny and evaluation of antimicrobial growth promoters. Much more objective research in this area is needed and, hopefully, decisions on the use of these products will be determined by science-based information and the use of credible risk assessments

## Antibiotic Research

from page 8

and a level of acceptable risk for our animal industry producers to continue to produce the most abundant and safest food supply at the least cost in the world in a responsible manner to not threaten public health.

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## Brucellosis in Texas

from page 3

specially called session, the Federal quarantine was avoided; however, the distrust of those associated with the "government" program was significantly reinforced. The intense polarization by industry and government in respect to the brucellosis program in Texas also severely taxed efforts to establish a harmonious relationship between state and federal employees with program responsibilities. Such a relationship is considered essential to a highly effective program.

The National Brucellosis Technical Commission was appointed in 1976 to evaluate all aspects of the national brucellosis eradication program. The conclusion of this group in their report of August, 1978 was that the goal of eradicating brucellosis from cattle in the United States was feasible. However, the commission recognized that the goal of eradication was not likely to be obtained without some major adjustments to the program in effect at that time. The Technical Commission also recognized that industry support was vital to the program's success and that industry support could not be obtained with an inflexible "one size fits all" approach to eliminating the disease in any given herd.

The many changes to the Uniform Methods and Rules for conducting the National brucellosis program as recommended by the United States Animal Health Association and adopted by the United States Department of Agriculture following the National

Brucellosis Technical Commission report are well documented. The implementation of these changes in Texas provided the opportunity to tailor individualized brucellosis herd plans, with such options as whole herd vaccination with extended herd testing intervals, that could be expected to lead to control with eventual eradication of the disease from the herd. The key component of such plans was owner participation and buy-in which served as the first step in the very long process of establishing a credible industry/state/federal partnership based on mutual trust and a willingness to consider the concerns of all those affected by the program.

Texas has "met the test" in resolving the many obstacles associated with eradicating brucellosis from the state. There are only four known brucellosis infected herds today compared to more than 1,000 herds less than 10 years ago. Due to the size (147,000 herds) and the diversity of the Texas cattle industry, it was imperative that an effective industry/state/federal partnership be established and maintained to efficiently deal on a day-to-day basis with the idiosyncrasies of this insidious disease. Because of this, we believe that Texas is now on the "high road" in the effort to successfully eradicate brucellosis in a timely manner.

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## webpage news

[www.usaha.org](http://www.usaha.org)

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there's a link right on our home page that will take you to where you can download it -- a fairly simple process.

We plan to post this issue and future issues of the Newsletter on the Web as well as looking into using the PDF format for standardized USAHA pamphlets or factsheets.

Then there's the Johne's Disease home page. Thanks to the help of Dr. Leslie Bulaga and

others, this provides a "base of operations" to access information about this insidious disease.

As always, I'm looking for help from members and others to link additional sites to ours. So, if you have some favorite Johne's or animal health web sites, let me know (the e-mail address is above).

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## Excellence in Ag Prize

from page 5

who strive to better the agriculture industry and provide the world with more and better food.

Editor's Note: Ben has been a staunch supporter and active member of USAHA since the mid 1930's. His leadership and accomplishments on behalf of the Association remain undiminished today.

He twice served as chair of the poultry committee, first in in 1951 and again in 1954. And, from 1981 to 1993, Dr. Pomeroy served as chair of the Committee on Salmonella.

In 1989, he was instrumental in the formation of the USAHA Task Force on Salmonella Enteritidis, which led directly to the formation of the new USAHA standing Committee on Salmonella Enteritidis in Eggs in 1999.

Congratulations, Ben!!

## 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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printing and copying industry which utilizes PDF technology for high quality, rapid turn-around, out put.

For USAHA, combining PDF technology with distribution via our web page and email systems is a powerful and efficient idea. It means we can efficiently deliver standardized USAHA documents on a variety of subjects to individuals desiring the information at a cost relatively lower than traditional printing, inventory and mailing by the Association.

The recipient of USAHA PDF information can view it on their computer monitor screen, print it out on a PC printer or send it to a commercial printer/copier for high volume reproduction. A major part of the power and efficiency of the idea is that the recipient decides how to present the information and assumes the cost of doing so.

The purpose of this discussion is to lay out this idea to you so you can be thinking about it and ways we might exploit it. For example, USAHA's strength and scientific expertise resides in our standing committees. PDF offers USAHA committees a new way to communicate with their constituencies, including industry, academia and public agencies.

We are in the initial stages of learning PDF technology and how it might be fully implemented. Both the June and August issues of this newsletter are available as PDF files on the USAHA web page ([www.usaha.org](http://www.usaha.org)). I urge you to download these PDF files and view them as an example of what can be done. Let me know your thoughts and ideas.

**I**HAVE HAD the opportunity to spend about seven weeks in Richmond, Virginia, since last October working at the USAHA office on a variety of endeavors.

A principal effort has been working with our staff, fellow of-

ficers and the Association's accountant in developing three financial planning scenarios, two of which support hiring a full or half-time Executive Secretary/Director called for in the Long Range Plan approved last October by the Executive Committee. The third scenario presumes no change from the present.

These scenarios have been submitted to the Board of Directors and they will be considered during the August conference call.

The Board, in turn, will submit their recommended scenario(s) to the Executive Committee in September for discussion during the October San Diego meeting. This recommendation will also be discussed with the membership during a Business Section of the General Session in San Diego.

If approved by the Executive Committee, a plan calling for hiring an Executive Secretary/Director will require increases in individual, official and allied organization dues and the annual meeting registration fee.

Dues increases would likely be voted on during the 2000 meeting, meaning the earliest we would hire the person would probably be during 2001.

**T**HE NATIONAL Assembly of State Chief Livestock Health Officials held their mid-year meeting in Nashville earlier this year, which I was invited to address.

As part of my comments, I reiterated a proposal I first made in 1996\* and again in 1998\*\* for the implementation of a voluntary accreditation program for state animal health agencies in the U. S. based on uniform standards for resources and programs.

It was further proposed that the accreditation program be administered by the USAHA and that the accreditation criteria and standards be developed by the National Assembly.

This accreditation program would be similar in nature and

purpose to the the AVMA accreditation of veterinary schools and the AAVLD accreditation of diagnostic laboratories.

This would provide State Veterinarians with periodic comparative review of their agency's strengths and weaknesses in all program and resource areas and specific recommendations for improvement necessary to attain or retain accreditation status.

It would be a valuable management tool for State Veterinarians use in planning and budgeting within their agency, administration and legislature.

The idea for the accreditation program emerged from a survey of State Veterinarians in 1996 on the nation's preparedness to eradicate foreign animal disease outbreaks.\*

From the survey it was clear there is a range of responsibilities, capabilities and authorities between states in the area of animal health and there are many needs in the face of budget restrictions.

At the same time it is clear federal downsizing in animal health is bringing additional responsibility to state animal health agencies. And this is compounded by increasing responsibilities for state animal health agencies in the new international trade agreements, WTO and NAFTA, as well as in the resolution of bilateral trade negotiations, such as the Russian/U.S. poultry dispute.

In my opinion, the future success of our nation's animal health programs is dependent on maintaining a strong, reasonably uniform system of independent state animal health agencies which is accepted throughout the world. The proposed USAHA accreditation program would be an important tool in achieving this goal.

\*1996 Proceedings of the 80th Annual Meeting of the Livestock Conservation Institute, page 75; 1996 Proceedings of the 100th Annual Meeting of the USAHA, page 163.

\*\* 1998 Proceedings of the 102nd Annual Meeting of the USAHA, page 60.