U.S. ANIMAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION MEETS WITH AGRICULTURE SECRETARY

RICHMOND, VA, Feb. 12, 2004 - Agriculture Secretary Ann Veneman met with officials of the United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) and the American Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians (AAVLD) yesterday in conjunction with the annual meeting of the USAHA Government Relations Committee in Washington, D.C. Discussions revolved around surveillance for diseases of livestock and poultry, animal identification, and the enhancement of the National Animal Health Laboratory Network (NAHLN). Other (Continued on page 13)

Report from the Special Committee to Review the Implementation of the 1997 USAHA Long-Range Plan

Dr. Richard McCapes

This shall serve as the report of the special committee appointed by President Bob Frost in June 2003, to review the implementation of the 1997 United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) Long Range Plan (LRP). President Frost’s charge to this committee was to focus primarily on where the Association is relative to the implementation of the three objectives identified in the LRP. The committee met by conference call on September 25, 2003 to discuss your charge to the committee and to review documentation of previous strategic planning efforts. Included in our review was the “Comprehensive Review of USAHA Strategic (Long Range) Plan, 1992 to 2003” prepared by First Vice President Rick Willer in June 2003. The Comprehensive Review is posted on the USAHA website. The committee met again on October 11-12, 2003, to further discuss the issues and to prepare this report. The results of our review are (Continued on page 11)

Veneman Announced Framework and Funding for NAIS

Agriculture Secretary Ann Veneman announces the framework for implementation of a National Animal Identification System (NAIS) designed to identify any agricultural premises exposed to a foreign animal disease so that it can be more quickly contained and eradicated.

Veneman also announced that $18.8 million would be transferred from the USDA Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) to provide initial funding for the program during fiscal year 2004.

“While many livestock species in the (Continued on page 14)
This spring continues with a hectic pace for USAHA. The Executive Committee has been busy with numerous meetings and conference calls including our monthly conference calls, the informational conference calls with USDA-APHIS-VS and the National Assembly of State Animal Health Officials, Animal Agricultural Coalition, and USAHA subcommittees and special working groups.

At the National Cattlemen’s Beef Association’s (NCBA) annual meeting in Phoenix, Arizona, Jan. 27-31, we met with several state veterinarians, leaders from USDA/APHIS/VS, John Adams of National Milk Producers Federation and Gary Weber of NCBA to discuss recent setbacks in the bovine tuberculosis eradication program including continuing threats from Mexican steers and the TB problem in Michigan. A subcommittee was established to review the Comprehensive Strategic Plan for the Eradication of Bovine Tuberculosis (2000), update that strategy and develop funding recommendations for FY 2006. The subcommittee recommendations will be further discussed at the 108th Annual Meeting in Greensboro, NC.

I want to thank the working group that studied enhanced BSE surveillance following the announcement by Secretary Veneman excluding non-ambulatory cattle from slaughter. I hope the exercise was helpful in formulating state surveillance programs. USAHA will continue to work closely with USDA, states and the cattle industry to make this program successful.

Bret Marsh, chair of the committee on Government Relations, organized an excellent meeting in Washington, DC. (Feb. 7-12). In addition to the Executive Committees of USAHA and AAVLD, USAHA’s five District Presidents, seven committee chairs, and AVMA’s USAHA liaison were in attendance. A highlight of the meeting was the visit with Secretary Veneman where the main issues of BSE, animal identification, the National Animal Health Laboratory Network and foreign animal disease surveillance were discussed. We met with several other federal agency officials and representatives from the Animal Agriculture Coalition, AVMA Government Relations, the Association of the American Veterinary Medical Colleges and the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies.

I attended the annual USDA, APHIS Wildlife Services Rabies Cooperators Meeting at the Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta, GA, on March 30-April 3. Excellent presentations on all aspects of wildlife rabies vaccination were delivered and several working groups on all aspects of the subject met and discussed the strategies to control and eliminate strains of terrestrial rabies in the United States. Eastern seaboard raccoon rabies, Texas coyote and grey fox rabies and California skunk rabies vaccination projects were discussed. Research on new wildlife oral rabies vaccines using the human adenovirus (Ontario, Canada) and the canine adenovirus (Jefferson Univ., Philadelphia, PA) as carrier viruses for DNA recombinant rabies vaccines were updated. Several projects on bait types and uptake by small rodents are being performed in the field and at the new Wildlife Research Center of USDA-APHIS-VS in Fort Collins, CO. The potential for conversion of the vaccinia recombinant DNA rabies vaccine to infect small rodents and create an orthopox reservoir is being studied. This year the western raccoon oral rabies vaccination barrier of the United States should be complete with the extension of the barrier from Tennessee through Alabama to the southwest corner of Georgia.

I’ve had the pleasure, along with President-Elect Rick Willer, to attend all four of the regional USAHA meetings. It was an excellent time to continue to study several of the current issues and hold discussions with state and federal agencies and industry. Hot topics included BSE surveillance, animal identification, bovine tuberculosis, avian influenza and exotic Newcastle disease surveillance. All four meetings were well attended, and I want to thank all of the hosts for their invitations and excellent programs. These meetings provide an excellent forum for continuing USAHA business and developing new resolutions throughout the year. I hope we have stimulated some new members from these meetings. We distributed a number of membership brochures and past newsletter editions.

I want to thank John Smith, chair of...
At the risk of being repetitive, committees are the backbone of the Association. Over the past year, committee chairs have been asked to actively participate in addressing USAHA issues. A case in point would be the formation of a special subcommittee by the chair of the committee on Tuberculosis. President Lein and I asked Dr. Chuck Massengill to form this subcommittee in order to review and revise the strategic plan for the elimination of tuberculosis. That “goal” (December 2003) was missed, and with recent setbacks in several states that previously had attained free status, it was time to gather the experts together and come up with recommendations for enhancement of this nation’s eradication program. We appreciate the efforts of all committee members and USDA technical advisors that have participated in this group, and are especially grateful for APHIS’ willingness to support Dr. Billy Johnson as facilitator. Other committee chairs have been asked for input on various issues including proposed rules, and we will continue to call on them to provide input on the complex animal health issues confronting our nation’s agricultural animal resources.

My committee chair “communication initiative” continues. The fourth update in a continuing series I initiated right after the 2003 annual meeting was sent out to all chairs at the end of March. I suggested that chairs pass that information on to their committee members.

Your Executive Committee has been working on another communication initiative. While not necessarily Program Committee-related, the Executive Committee is exploring ways to not only improve our website, but also ways to capture and distribute current animal health information. After a short time of “beta testing” on members of the Executive Committee, we have expanded the distribution of the USAHA information “alerts” to the entire Board of Directors and committee chairs. Chairs have been asked for key words useful in their committee work, and we will be adding them to our information “mining” over the next few weeks. This will likely expand the length of the news alerts. Feedback on its usefulness is encouraged. Once we are satisfied that this type of information is of use to our membership, the Executive Committee will address costs associated with continuing on a long term basis. Our goal would be to send the alerts to all USAHA members that have electronic mail capability. This is just one more way that your Executive Committee is working to provide membership services throughout the year, as well as ensuring USAHA’s “year-round presence.”

Planning activities continue for the 2004 meeting in Greensboro, NC. Dr. Gary Osweiller (President-Elect AA VLD) and I have set a direction for the Monday Plenary Session and are beginning to line up presenters. Our focus relates to the importance of surveillance in disease prevention and rapid identification of animal diseases, including those that are zoonotic. We hope to include an international flavor to the topic, as well.

As part of the annual meeting planning process, a call for committee scientific papers was sent out to all committee chairs about mid-March. Because the Wednesday afternoon USAHA scientific session has been eliminated, AAVLD has agreed to include any of those USAHA committee scientific papers in their Saturday and Sunday scientific sessions. This will enable USAHA committees to continue to submit two committee scientific papers for inclusion in the annual meeting; one presented during the USAHA committee meeting and the other at an AAVLD scientific session. Both papers will still be included in the annual Proceedings.

With that, I want to personally thank all committee chairs for their past and future efforts. Your hard work is appreciated.

Saturday and Sunday scientific sessions.

On-Line Registration for 108th Annual Meeting

You may now register on-line for USAHA/AAVLD’s Annual Meeting October 21-27, 2004 and pay registration fees and dues with your Visa or Master credit card.

There are several ways to access the on-line registration on USAHA’s web site (www.usaha.org):

- Click on “What’s New On The USAHA Web” and pick the first option (108th Annual Meeting Information).
- Or you may also click on “Meetings” and then click on “Greensboro”.
- A third option to access on-line registration is by selecting “2004 Meeting Information”.

Pre-Registration cutoff date is September 17th.
Secretary’s Corner

J. Lee Alley

Annual Meeting

Greensboro, North Carolina, October 21-28, 2004

In an effort to reduce the annual meeting by one full day and to increase the efficiency of the meeting, we are planning several major schedule changes. The Wednesday afternoon (October 27) USAHA scientific session will be eliminated. The scientific papers normally presented during the Wednesday afternoon session will be integrated into the agenda of one of the AAVLD Plenary or Scientific Sessions on Saturday (October 23) or Sunday (October 24).

The National Assembly of State Animal Health Officials will meet on Saturday afternoon (October 23) rather than Sunday morning (October 24). The Regional Breakfast meetings will be Sunday morning (October 24) rather than Tuesday morning (October 26). The Prayer Breakfast will continue to be Sunday morning (October 24). Committee meetings will be Sunday afternoon (October 24), Monday afternoon (October 25), Tuesday morning and afternoon (October 26) and Wednesday morning (October 27).

Changes in committee meeting day and time are being proposed. A tentative agenda for the Greensboro meeting will be posted on the USAHA web site. This agenda shows the proposed schedule changes for committee meetings.

The USAHA/AAVLD President’s Reception will remain on Sunday evening (October 24). The Joint Plenary Session will be on Monday morning (October 25).

The USAHA Board of Directors will be meeting in the afternoons Monday (October 25), Tuesday (October 26) and Wednesday (October 27). The Business Meeting will remain on Monday morning (October 25) and Wednesday afternoon (October 26).

The Executive Committee will be meeting on Friday afternoon (October 22) and Thursday morning (October 28). The Executive Committee meeting on Thursday (October 28) will be the only scheduled USAHA function on Thursday.

Please review the tentative agenda on the web at www.usaha.org. Let us know as soon as possible if you see problems with these proposed schedule changes for 2004.

News Release

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CLIFFORD NAMED VETERINARY SERVICES DEPUTY ADMINISTRATOR

WASHINGTON, May 19, 2004—John R. Clifford, DVM, has been named deputy administrator of the veterinary services program in the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

“John’s leadership skills and experience are a welcome addition to our management team,” said APHIS administrator W. Ron DeHaven. “His knowledge and experience will serve the agency well as it addresses the many issues related to safeguarding America’s animal health.”

Since April 2002, Clifford served as VS’ associate deputy administrator for national animal health and policy programs. In this position, he led APHIS’ efforts to protect, sustain and improve the productivity, marketability and health of the nation’s animals, animal products and biologics, in addition to protecting the nation from the introduction of dangerous and costly pests and diseases. Before becoming associate deputy administrator Clifford served as VS’ assistant deputy administrator.

Since joining APHIS in 1985, he has served as the area veterinarian in charge of Ohio, West Virginia, Michigan and Indiana; as the national animal health monitoring system coordinator for VS in Ohio; and as the brucellosis epidemiologist and veterinary medical officer in Kentucky. He is a member of the American Veterinary Medical Association and the United States Animal Health Association.

Before he began his work with APHIS, Clifford was a private veterinarian. He received his DVM and BS degrees in Animal Science from the University of Missouri. A native of Kentucky, he currently resides in Virginia with his wife Sarah.
Names in the News

Welcome new State Veterinarians
Dr. Thomas J. Holt – Florida
Dr. Donald Hansen – Oregon
Dr. Kathleen M. Connell – Washington

Retired or Resigned State Veterinarians
Dr. Joan M. Arnoldi – Michigan
Dr. Jim Logan – Wyoming
Dr. Clifford McGinnis – New Hampshire

Awards:
Dr. Thomas Conner, Ashville, Ohio Veterinarian of the Year. Dr. Conner served as director of the Cattle Division of the Indiana Board of Animal Health and worked in large animal medicine and co-chaired the IVMA Program Committee for more than 15 years.

We say goodbye to old friends who have passed away
Dr. Ahmed H. Dardiri – Frankenmuth, Michigan – October 4, 2003, USAHA Life Member and served as laboratory chief of Diagnostic Research and Service at the Plum Island, New York, Animal Disease Center until his death.
Dr. Benjamin S. Pomeroy – St. Paul, Minnesota – January 16, 2004, USAHA Life Member, professor emeritus at the University of Minnesota College of Veterinary Medicine since 1981. He was know for his expertise in avian diseases and published numerous articles.
Dr. Marion T. Szatalowicz – Stanley, Wisconsin – January 19, 2004, was a retired food animal practitioner and AVMA’s liason to USAHA.

News Release

Release No.0140.04

Veneman Names Nation’s Top Vet as APHIS Administrator

Washington, April 9, 2004 – Agriculture Secretary Ann M. Veneman today announced the appointment of Dr. Ron DeHaven as administrator of the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

“I am very pleased that Dr. DeHaven has accepted this appointment,” Veneman said. “His leadership and management experience are valuable assets as we continue to strengthen our animal and plant protection systems.”

As administrator, DeHaven will manage programs that are critical to the protection of America’s livestock, plants and food supply. DeHaven replaces Bobby Acord, who retired on April 3, after almost 38 years of federal service. Acord served as administrator since November 2001.

Prior to his appointment, since April 2002, DeHaven served as deputy administrator of APHIS for Veterinary Services, the nation’s chief veterinary official, where he provided leadership in safeguarding animal health, most notably the management of the detection and investigation of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) in a cow in Washington state in December 2003. He served as the acting associate administrator for APHIS from October 2001 through April 2002.

From 1996 to 2001, DeHaven was the deputy administrator for the Animal Care (AC) unit of APHIS, administering the Animal Welfare Act and the Horse Protection Act. Before assuming the deputy administrator position, DeHaven was AC’s western regional director in Sacramento, California, for seven years.

DeHaven obtained a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine degree from Purdue University in 1975 and a Masters in Business Administration from Millsaps College in Mississippi in May 1989. After graduating from veterinary school, he spent four years in the U.S. Army Veterinary Corps before beginning his career with APHIS in 1979.

DeHaven lives in Crofton, Maryland, with his wife Nancy. They have two grown children, a daughter and a son.

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Veneman Announces Expanded BSE Surveillance Program

Washington, March 15, 2004 – Agriculture Secretary Ann M. Veneman today announced details for an expanded surveillance effort for Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) in the United States.

“We are committed to ensuring that a robust U.S. surveillance program continues in this country,” said Veneman. “This one-time extensive surveillance plan reflects the recommendation of the international scientific review panel.”

On Dec. 30, Venman announced that an international scientific review panel would review the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s investigation into the BSE find in Washington State and provide recommendations for future actions. Last month, this panel, operating as a subcommittee of the Secretary’s Advisory Committee on Foreign Animal and Poultry Diseases, recommended a one-year enhanced surveillance program targeting cattle from the populations considered at high risk for the disease, as well as a random sampling of animals from the aged cattle population.

The panel also complimented USDA on its investigative efforts as well as commented that the removal of specified risk materials from the food supply was the single most important action USDA took to protect public health.

USDA’s BSE surveillance program historically has been focused on the cattle populations where it is most likely to be found, including those condemned at slaughter because of signs of central nervous system disorders, non-ambulatory cattle and those that die on farms. In FY 2004, USDA sampled 20,543 animals—a sample size designed to detect the disease if it occurred in one animal per million adult cattle with a 95-percent confidence level, which is 47 times the international standard for low-risk countries.

Veneman said that $70 million will be transferred from the USDA Commodity Credit Corporation to fund the enhanced program with the goal to test as many cattle as possible in the high-risk population as well as to test a sampling of the normal, aged cattle population over a 12 to 18 month time frame.

The enhanced surveillance plan incorporates recommendations from the international scientific review panel and the Harvard Center for Risk Analysis; both have reviewed and support the plan.

In addition, USDA is appreciative of the advice, assistance and analyses provided by the House and Senate Agriculture Committees, House and Senate Appropriations Committee and the House Government Reform Committees in developing this robust, aggressive surveillance plan.

The primary focus of USDA’s enhanced surveillance effort will continue to be the highest-risk populations for the disease, but USDA will greatly increase the number of target animals surveyed and will include a random sampling of apparently normal, aged animals. USDA will build on previous cooperative efforts with renderers and others to obtain samples from the targeted high-risk populations, which are banned from the human food supply.

Under the enhanced program, using statistically geographic modeling, sampling some 268,000 animals would allow for the detection of BSE at a rate of 1 positive in 10 million adult cattle with a 99-percent confidence level. In other words, the enhanced program could detect BSE even if there were only five positive animals in the entire country. Sampling some 201,000 animals would allow for the detection of BSE at the same rate at a 95-percent confidence level.

The sampling of apparently normal animals will come from the 40 U.S. slaughter plants that handle 86 percent of the aged cattle processed for human consumption each year in the United States. The carcasses from these animals will be held and not allowed to enter the human food chain until test results show the samples are negative for BSE.

USDA will begin immediately to prepare for the increased testing, with the anticipation that the program will be ready to be fully implemented June 1, 2004. In the meantime, BSE testing will continue at the current rate, which is based on a plan to test 40,000 animals in FY 2004. Testing will be conducted through USDA’s National Veterinary Services Laboratories in Ames, Iowa, and a network of laboratories around the country.

Detailed information on the surveillance plan can be found at www.usda.gov.
Under mostly cloudy skies that occasionally resulted in frozen precipitation (it is spring New England after all!), the Northeast Regional USAHA meeting took place in Burlington, VT from April 26-28, 2004. As usual, the program was packed for the full three days with a variety of topical, relevant and often controversial presentations. While no one appears to have kept close track of past attendance, we’re fairly sure an attendance record was set for NEUSAHA with over 150 registering. The meeting began with the phenomenally good news that Dr. John Huntley has arrived home in New York a year after serving in Iraq. While John was unable to be with us, everyone rejoiced in the news of his safe return.

Three meetings were held concurrently on Monday morning. We re-instituted an AAVLD session by popular demand with the program planned and organized by Drs. Bob Eisner and Mark Walter. Drs. Don Lein and Laura Bigler put together the session for the rabies group, and the Regional Dairy Quality Management Alliance (RDQMA) meeting was planned by John Adams. The focus of the RDQMA meeting was dairy beef and beef quality assurance. On Monday afternoon, our keynote speaker for the Johne’s disease session was Dr. Mike Collins from the University of Wisconsin who provided us with an interesting and provocative update on the Johne’s/Crohn’s situation. Other afternoon speakers included Drs. Bob Whitlock, Sue Stehman, Mike Carter and Rick Willer. IDEXX Labs, one of our sponsors, also gave a brief update on several of their new product initiatives, including the rapid BSE test.

The evening on Monday was set aside for social interaction, and the group dined at the lovely ECHO Leahy Center on beautiful Lake Champlain. Mother Nature cooperated by providing a stunning sunset over the lake. Our after-dinner speaker, Rosemary Speers from the Center for Naval Analysis, gave a presentation on the Amistad FMD exercise recently held on the Texas/Mexico border. She also briefed us on plans for a similar exercise to be held in several Northeastern states and Canada in the coming months.

Steve Kerr, Vermont Secretary of Agriculture, welcomed us on Tuesday.

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The 2004 annual meeting of the Southern Animal Health Association (SAHA) was held May 2-5 in Chattanooga, TN, with over 100 registered guests participating in the educational forum and various social activities that were part of the meeting. The annual meeting was supplemented by an excellent informational forum co-sponsored by the American Horse Council and USAHA, which provided updates on regulatory health issues confronting the horse industry. Dr. Lee Myers served as moderator for the session, which included formal presentations by Dr. Ernie Zirkle (equine infectious anemia), Dr. Peter Timoney (equine viral arteritis) and Ms. Amy Mann (proposed U. S. Animal Identification Plan for horses).

Special guests attending the meetings included USAHA Executive Committee officers Dr. Don Lein (President), Dr. Rick Willer (President-Elect), Dr. Bret Marsh (First Vice President), Dr. Lee Myers (Second Vice President), Dr. J. Lee Alley (Secretary) and Dr. Jones Bryan (Treasurer). Also welcomed at the meeting were newly appointed state veterinarians Dr. Robert Stout (Kentucky) and Dr. Tom Holt (Florida). Dr. Tony Caver was also recognized for his service to our country that prevented his attending last year’s meeting.

On Monday, May 3, the SAHA meeting began with a warm welcome from Tennessee Commissioner of Agriculture Ken Givens. Dr. Jere Dick provided a USDA-APHIS-VS update on various activities and issues, followed by an overview of the current status of National Animal Identification and Surveillance Programs offered by Dr. Valerie Ragan. Dr. Barbara Porter-Spalding moderated a panel of presentations reflecting on lessons learned from the avian influenza outbreak in Virginia in 2002. The avian influenza review provided a foundation for Dr. Robert Webster, a world-renowned researcher on influenza viruses, to present an overview of influenza viruses, focusing on avian influenza virus and the risk for animal and human disease. Dr. Webster’s presentation highlighted the substantial challenges currently facing veterinarians involved in regulatory medicine and animal health, and the important responsibility veterinarians have in supporting human health.

On Monday afternoon, the group toured the Tennessee Aquarium

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The Western States Livestock Health Association (WSLHA) annual meeting was held at the Sparks, NV, Golden Nugget on March 10-11, 2004. An exceptional number of animal health officials attended the meeting, including all the western states with the exception of Alaska were in attendance along with visitors from nine other states and Washington, DC. In all there were over sixty attendees.

Presentations and discussions were centered on current livestock issues, including BSE, AI, bovine tuberculosis, brucellosis, USAIP and NAHEMS. President John Wortman kicked off the meeting with a warm welcome to WSLHA members and visitors. Dr. Don Lein, USAHA President, set the stage for the meeting by addressing USHA’s position and concerns about the current animal health issues.

The group was updated on the current BSE situation, surveillance efforts, epidemiology and handling of the BSE-positive Canadian Holstein dairy cow case. Dr. Robert Meyer provided a bovine TB report for the Veterinary Services Western Region. States that are currently involved with positive TB herds discussed their progress in handling the disease in their state. Animal health officials from all states expressed great concern about the increased TB prevalence, especially in dairy cattle. The lack of control and testing of animals from dairy heifer development operations is problematic because of the multi-state sourcing and the absence of traceability of these animals. Many states have instituted TB testing requirements in the last year. Dr. Jim Logan discussed the Wyoming brucellosis situation and informed the group about the transmission of that disease from free-roaming elk to a beef herd with questionable management practices. Each state was asked their approach and requirements for Wyoming-origin cattle. Texas also discussed its efforts in controlling brucellosis in that state.

Dr. John Weimers, updated the

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that:

1. A tremendous amount of effort has been made by USAHA leadership since 1992 to make the Association more effective in addressing ever increasing and changing challenges to our nation’s animal agriculture. The Comprehensive Review details those efforts.

2. The Constitution has been eliminated and the Bylaws completely rewritten to partially fulfill the objectives of the LRP.

3. The LRP, with its roots in the Strategic Plan of 1992, reaffirmed the goals of the Association and recommended three objectives to meet those goals. A copy of the LRP is attached. The three objectives addressed in the LRP are:
   a. Make the annual meeting a more effective and efficient forum for discussion and growth;
   b. Expand USAHA’s role as a clearinghouse by increasing the impact of its communication efforts, for both internal and external audiences; and
   c. Expand USAHA into a more active year-round organization.

4. The Association has made great strides in completing the objectives of the LRP:
   a. Improvement of the annual meeting. A number of significant improvements have been made including:
      ▪ Greater coordination with the American Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians (AAVLD) on the annual meeting format;
      ▪ Reduction in duplication of presentations during the meeting;
      ▪ Consolidation of some committees, including the formation of joint committees with AAVLD;
      ▪ Lengthening of some committee meetings in order to reduce the number of committee sessions;
      ▪ Oral committee reports have been eliminated through a change in the Association Bylaws;
      ▪ Time-specific scientific paper presentations were implemented allowing the Association to focus on emerging disease issues during the general scientific sessions; and
      ▪ Beginning in 1998, the annual meeting has provided for separate scientific and business sessions.

   All of these changes have resulted in a more streamlined meeting with a decrease in meeting length by one full day.

b. Communication.
   ▪ A web page has been implemented that, among other things, now posts the committee work products (committee report and resolutions) immediately following the annual meeting;
   ▪ The newsletter has been enhanced and frequency increased;
   ▪ A number of Association position papers in the form of special newsletter editions addressing critical subjects have been produced;
   ▪ The proceedings are compiled and distributed earlier than they have ever been at a reduced cost;
   ▪ A new member orientation has been established at the annual meeting;
   ▪ A brochure has been prepared;
   ▪ A procedure manual for committee chairs has been produced; and
   ▪ The Executive Committee meets regularly by teleconference with the Deputy Administrator of Veterinary Services and his staff.

   c. Year-round presence.
      ▪ The Executive Committee, especially through the active engagement of the President, the Secretary and Committee chairs, has maintained year-round presence for the Association;
      ▪ In 1998/1999 the Executive Committee began meeting monthly by conference calls;
      ▪ The Presidents have been more actively engaged in national issues and provide a year-round presence for the Association during their term of office;
      ▪ Other members of the Executive Committee, as well as Committee chairs, have been called upon to attend meetings on behalf of the Association or to address issues between annual meetings; and
      ▪ The Government Relations Committee meetings have included committee chairs on occasion.

5. Financial issues were identified in the beginning as a limiting factor to full implementation of the LRP. Some financial constraints still exist today in spite of significant adjustments in annual dues and registration fees. However, the Association has been able to meet the objective of establishing a one-year reserve of funds. In addition, a new fiscal accounting system has been incorporated into the Association administrative office that has provided valuable information and guidance on financial matters.

6. Enhanced year-round activity was desired by the Association, partly through the hiring of an Executive Director (ED). This expertise was intended to be primarily administrative in nature as described in the job description for the ED dated September 1998. One of the main responsibilities for that position was to find avenues for increasing our membership that would also improve our financial health. The budget proposed in 1999 and 2000 for the Executive Director included four trips to Washington, DC. This was only as an estimate of the number of meetings requiring USAHA attendance that the President or another member of the Executive Committee could not attend. The intention was for the President, or in his absence, another member of the Executive Committee, to be the primary representative of the Association.
Association and fulfilling the administrative goals in the LRP.

We feel that through the collective efforts of the Executive Committee since 1997, exceptional progress has been made and represents a successful implementation of the LRP. The unprecedented attendance at the 2003 annual meeting reflects this. While great progress has been made, to encourage continued growth and success of the Association we offer the following recommendations:

1. The President must continue to be actively engaged in all issues that are critical to the Association—if necessary, financial support should be provided;
2. The Secretary of the Association must perform administrative duties necessary to operate the Association;
3. Make membership growth a top priority;
4. Re-activate the Annual Meeting Review Working Group in order to determine if there are additional changes that can be made to streamline the meeting;
5. Conduct a comprehensive review of the committee structure to identify areas of further improvement;
6. Evaluate the need for updated computer equipment and software;
7. Continue the close coordination with AAVLD, including the further integration of the two meetings in subject areas of common interest; and
8. Maintain the location of the office in Richmond for the foreseeable future.

Long Range Plan Review Committee: Dick McCapes, Chair; Richard Willer; Bret Marsh; Thomas Hagerty; Larry Williams; J. Lee Alley.

SAHA Meets

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followed by a presentation by Dr. Christian Keller, aquarium veterinarian. The evening culminated with a dinner cruise down the Tennessee River on the Southern Belle Riverboat. Dr. Darl Enga, a veterinary colleague and aspiring country music entertainer, provided musical entertainment.

Tuesday’s agenda offered overviews of several Tennessee programs including a credentialing program for volunteers working in disaster management involving animals and the benefits of a weapons of mass destruction working group. Dr. Bob Linnabary, Animal Emergency Coordinator for Tennessee, detailed the concept of credentialing being implemented in Tennessee with a synopsis of educational initiatives associated with the training program. Mr. Rick Shipkowski, Director of Weapons of Mass Destruction Prevention and Assistant Director of the Tennessee Office of Homeland Security, offered his insight on the development of a WMD working group, along with the benefits derived from collaborations across a broad range of disciplines involved in preventing terrorism. A theme of bringing animal health and public health together continued as Dr. Jennifer McQuiston, veterinary medical officer at the Centers for Disease Control, discussed the challenges faced by agriculture and public health.
USAHA Meets Secretary  
(Continued from page 3)

Discussion topics included the recent discovery of a single case of Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) and the current outbreak of low pathogenic non-human avian influenza in Delaware.

According to USAHA President Dr. Don Lein, the Association is particularly pleased that President Bush’s 2005 budget proposal includes $178 million to complete the renovation of the Department of Agriculture’s diagnostic, biologics and research laboratories located in Ames, IA. “The work conducted in these federal laboratories is vital to protect animal and human health, and the safeguarding of this nation’s food supply.” Lein said.

Indiana State Veterinarian Dr. Bret Marsh, who participated in the meeting with Secretary Veneman, stated that, “I believe I speak for all state veterinarians when I say that this is the most important investment we can make at the federal level to support our nation’s animal investment we can make at the federal level to support our nation’s animal disease research and diagnostics.

“These federal laboratories are recognized nationally and internationally for their scientific expertise and professional ability, and they serve as the nation’s reference laboratory for the NAHLN and other state and university animal health diagnostic laboratories,” Marsh stated.

USAHA and AAVLD also discussed with Secretary Veneman the importance of the NAHLN, which began in the summer of 2002 to link state animal health diagnostic labs in 12 states into a network with federal animal health labs. They encouraged the expansion of the network to enhance animal disease surveillance throughout the nation.

USAHA and AAVLD officials in attendance stated to Secretary Veneman that they strongly support the implementation of the U.S. Animal Identification Plan (USAIP). They encouraged the Secretary to move forward as rapidly as possible on its implementation.

USAHA and AAVLD also complimented the Department of Agriculture on its actions in response to the BSE case in Washington state and commended Secretary Veneman on her leadership in ensuring that this nation has the federal laboratory capabilities to protect animal and human health, and ensure the safety of our food supply.

USAHA is a 108-year-old science-based national organization of state and federal animal health officials, animal agriculture industries, animal health research scientists, and other government agencies. It addresses issues of animal health and disease control, food safety, homeland security, animal welfare and public health and serves as a clearinghouse for new information and methods that may be incorporated into laws, regulations, policy and programs. USAHA acts to develop solutions based on science, new information and methods, public policy, risk/benefit analysis and the ability to develop consensus for changing law, regulations, policies and programs.

President’s Corner  
(Continued from page 4)

the committee on Transmissible Diseases of Poultry and Other Avian Species, and his committee for developing a plan for the control of Low Path AI, and Lee Myers and her working group for their work on the END national surveillance program.

Special thanks also to J. Lee Alley, Rick Willer and Linda Ragland for their initiation of the USAHA News Alerts. I find them a daily must do to help keep up with current happenings. They are also working on enhancement of the USAHA website. Rick Willer must be commended for his excellent updates on USAHA business to the chairs.

USAHA has responded to several rules proposed by USDA-APHIS-VS and the Food and Drug Administration. These comments related to BSE Minimal Risk Regions and the Importation of Commodities, and the FDA rule concerning the revoking of the interstate movement ban for animals involved in the monkeypox outbreak. USAHA also responded to California Senate Bill 1425 addressing the testing of all slaughtered cows for BSE in California as not being scientifically justified. A letter was sent to Secretary Veneman and the APHIS Administrator supporting the U.S. Animal Identification Plan and RFID as the technology when individual animal identification is required.

On behalf of the USAHA, I want to thank Bobby Acord for his support of USAHA and AAVLD during his tenure as APHIS Administrator. We welcome Dr. Ron DeHaven into his new position as Administrator and look forward to working with him. Congratulations are also extended to Dr. John Clifford, recently appointed as Deputy Administrator for Veterinary Services.

It is with great joy that USAHA welcomes John Hunley, New York state veterinarian, back home from over a year’s tour of military duty in Iraq. We are glad to have him back safe and appreciate his service to our country.


**Framework and Funding**

(Continued from page 3)

United States can be identified through a variety of systems, a verifiable system of national animal identification will enhance our efforts to respond to introduced animal disease outbreaks more quickly and effectively,” Veneman said. “This framework is the result of concerted efforts to expedite the implementation of a system that meets our goals and enables farmers and ranchers to adopt existing identification programs and to use all existing forms of effective technologies.”

Veneman announced December 30, 2003, that USDA would expedite the implementation of a national animal identification system for all species after the discovery of a BSE-positive cow in Washington State. Today’s announcement concludes several months of a USDA working group’s efforts to develop an implementation framework for a U.S. animal identification plan.

The implementation of a NAIS will be conducted in three main phases. Under Phase I, USDA would evaluate current federally funded animal identification systems and determine which system(s) should be used for a NAIS, further the dialogue with producers and other stakeholders on the operation of a NAIS, identify staffing needs, develop any regulatory and legislative proposals needed for implementing the system.

Phase II would involve the implementation of the selected animal identification system at regional levels for one or more selected species, continuation effort, addressing regulatory needs and working with Congress on any needed legislation.

In Phase III, the selected animal identification system(s) would be scaled up to the national level.

The first step in the process is to select an interim data repository to handle incoming national premises data. USDA has commissioned an independent analysis of repositories that are currently part of various USDA-funded animal identification projects around the country. Once the system is identified that shows greatest potential for use on a national level, USDA will enter into cooperative agreements with states, Indian tribes and other government entities to assist them in adapting their existing systems to the new system.

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**SAHA Meet**

(Continued from page 12)

associated with the introduction of monkey pox virus into the United States last year. Dr. Michael Blackwell, retired Assistant Surgeon General and now Dean of the University of Tennessee College of Veterinary Medicine, closed the public health/animal health sessions by challenging attendees regarding their important role of working together with public health in preventing the transmission of zoonotic diseases. The group then traveled to the hills of middle Tennessee for a tour of the Jack Daniel’s distillery followed by dinner and entertainment at the distillery pavilion overlooking downtown Lynchburg.

The meeting concluded with Wednesday’s sessions, which included an update on USAHA activities by President Don Lein and USDA veterinary services updates provided by Eastern Region Director Dr. Jere Dick and Western Region Director Dr. José Diez. Dr. Bret Marsh also provided a report on the meetings and accomplishments of the USAHA Government Relations Committee. Dr. Rick Willer and Dr. Bob Hillman offered a state veterinarian’s perspective of tuberculosis, and the need for renewed focus on increased surveillance and control of bovine tuberculosis. The SAHA business meeting concluded the agenda with additional discussion and adoption of a target date for the Equine Interstate Movement Program. Members also took action on resolutions regarding translocation of wildlife and improvement of the generic database. The meeting concluded with Dr. Dave Marshall presenting a financial report and the election of the following new officers for the upcoming year:

2005 President: Dr. Maxwell Lea, Louisiana; 2005 Vice-President: Dr. Robert Hillman, Texas; 2005 Secretary-Treasurer: Dr. David Marshall, North Carolina; Industry Representatives to the USAHA Board of Directors: Mr. Wayne Godwin, Florida; Dr. Greg Rosales, Alabama.

Dr. Lea invited everyone to the 2005 annual SAHA meeting to be held in New Orleans, Louisiana.

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**Johnne’s Educational Tools**

(Continued from page 8)

of audiences including producers and those working with producers. The CD and website also both provide a variety of other resource materials. New PowerPoint’s will be included on the “Subscriber Only” section of the website as they become available.

The second set of information is a series of three handbooks that provide risk assessment tools. All three are included in electronic form on the CD and on the website, but you also have the option of purchasing them in hardcopy form to use directly with producers. The first handbook provides a review of “How to do Risk Assessment,” while the others are designed to use specifically with dairy or beef producers.

Order forms for subscription to “Johne’s and Beyond” as well as for the risk assessment handbooks are included in this newsletter. You can also print order forms from the “Subscription/Order” section of the website–www.JD-ROM.com–and fax or mail them to the USAHA office. We believe that you will find them to be valuable tools for use in educational programs.
morning as we began another busy day of presentations. Drs. Rick Willer and Don Lein brought the group up to date on current USAHA activities, and Dr. Willer gave an overview of the current TB situation in the United States. Drs. Beth Lautner and Lynn Creekmore spoke by phone (on the subjects of Plum Island and CWD, respectively) with their PowerPoint presentations simultaneously being shown on the screen. The audience was appreciative of their “remote” participation that went off without a glitch. Other morning speakers included: Dr. Lisa Ferguson—overview of BSE surveillance; Dr. Bruce Akey—NAHEMS and electronic health certification; Drs. Chip Ridky and Tom Gomez: personal protective equipment with emphasis on avian influenza; Dr. Ernie Zirkle: live bird market update; and Kevin Maher, Global Vetlink, another of our sponsors who provided further information on electronic health certification.

Tuesday afternoon was dominated by discussion of poultry and avian influenza issues. Dr. Barbara Porter Spalding and several others gave brief presentations on several studies resulting from the Virginia AI outbreak in 2002 and Neil Hammerschmidt ended the days’ sessions with a talk on animal identification.

Sunny skies and warmer temperatures on Wednesday provided the backdrop for the meeting’s conclusion. Dr. Zirkle started off the morning with an update from the USAHA EIA subcommittee followed by brief reports from state veterinarians whose states had experienced AI problems during the previous year (Drs. Enck, Cassano, Hannafin and Lis). Unfortunately, Dr. Wes Towers could not be with us due to illness, and we all wish him well. We also heard from sponsors Immucell and the Holstein Association.

At the business meeting following the conclusion of presentations, Dr. Don Hoenig was elected unanimously as the nominee for third vice president of USAHA. Dr. Nancy Halpern was also unanimously elected as the next NEUSAHA president. Drs. Bob Eckroade and Vic Lebranch were reelected as USAHA regional delegates. The group also honored Dr. Cliff McGinnis who will be retiring in June after serving for more than 20 years as the New Hampshire State Veterinarian. We all wish Cliff and his wife good health and much happiness in the future.

A huge thanks goes out to Dr. Todd Johnson for coordinating the meeting facilities, which were superb, and for helping to plan the program. Thanks also to Dr. Kerry Rood and his staff for hosting and providing clerical support. We’re grateful also to our corporate sponsors for their continued support (Immucell, Holstein Association, Eagle Technologies, Merial, IDEXX, and Global Vetlink). And finally, thank you to all the speakers who gave of their time and expertise to help make the meeting a great success. We all look forward to gathering again next year from April 25-27 somewhere in Connecticut!
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