



USAHA

Protecting Animal and Public Health Since 1897

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109th Annual Meeting in Hershey

This year's Annual Meeting will be November 3 thru 9, 2005 at the Hershey Lodge and Convention Center, Hershey, PA. A healthy wildlife population in North America is the "theme" of the November 7th United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) and American Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians (AAVLD) Plenary Scientific Session. Featured speakers



will address health concerns at the interface of wildlife, people and domestic animals. In addition to the Plenary Session, there are scheduled meetings of USAHA's 34 species and subject-oriented, science based committees, including the new Committee on Diagnostic Laboratory and Veterinary

Workforce Development, AAVLD's 11 Scientific Sessions, 3 special Symposiums, 25 committees and subcommittees and over 20 supporting industry and professional organizations.

During the USAHA/AAVLD meetings, several important United States government leaders in animal and pub-

lic health will speak to the challenges facing the animal community in safeguarding animal and public health.

On line registration for the meeting and sleeping rooms is available at the USAHA website (www.usaha.org). We would encourage you to make your sleeping room reservations as soon as possible. Sleeping rooms availability at the Hershey Lodge will be tight. We

do have additional sleeping rooms blocked at other Hershey hotels.

To get your sleeping rooms at the Hershey Lodge make your reservation immediately.

For more information on the Annual Meeting visit USAHA's website at www.usaha.org. ■

PAUL OTT TO ENTERTAIN AT PRESIDENT'S DINNER



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, "Listen to the Eagle." The show is also being aired on television weekly. Both shows are growing each week across the South.

Paul Ott has presented his program "Listen to the Eagle" to all fifty State Governors' Conventions, over half a million school children, six State Legislative Sessions, and has performed for the President of the United States, at his request; sang at the Grand Old Opry and appeared on NBC's First Tuesday. ■

Rick Willer



I take great pleasure in inviting you to join us for the 109th Annual Meeting of the United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) held in conjunction with the 48th Annual Conference of the American Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians (AAVLD) in beautiful Hershey, Pennsylvania. Our 2001 Annual Meeting in Hershey was the site where I began my "journey" on the USAHA Executive Committee and I am pleased to be able to wind up my term as President where it all started.

Because the health of wildlife has a direct and indirect impact on the health of people as well as domestic animals, healthy wildlife is the "theme" of this year's USAHA/AAVLD Plenary Scientific Session. USAHA and AAVLD Presidents-Elect Bret Marsh and Donal O'Toole (respectively) have been working hard to flesh out the agenda for the Session. Featured speakers will address health concerns at the interface of wildlife, people and domestic animals. Wildlife health experts and conservation partners have been invited to join with agriculture animal health experts at the Annual Meeting to exchange ideas on the development of a *North American Healthy Wildlife Initiative*.

Our Presidents' Dinner and General Session on Sunday evening should be fun for everyone. We plan to shorten our usual program of speeches and award presentations in order to include some fun time. Paul Ott, nationally known singing spokesman for the American agriculture producer and wildlife conservationists, will spend some time with us and promises that we'll all leave our dinner inspired and feeling good about ourselves. Don't miss it!

The Special Committee I appointed in Greensboro to address wildlife issues in the Greater Yellowstone Area (GYA) under the able guidance of chair Bret Marsh continues the planning process for a Technical (as opposed to

policy-making) Symposium on Brucellosis Vaccines in Wildlife. The Workshop will be held August 16, 17 and 18 at the University of Wyoming in Laramie. They anticipate having about fifty invited scientists participate along with the same number of observers with the goal of having a research "roadmap" for a brucellosis vaccine that is tailored to the needs of bison and elk. It is anticipated that a preliminary draft of the research strategy will be available for discussion at Hershey.

I want to recognize the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) and state animal health officials, for the phenomenal progress that has been made in the national surveillance effort for BSE. Undoubtedly, this has been the largest single surveillance effort in our nation's history. Many on both the state and federal level need to be congratulated for the success of this huge effort. We also need to thank our producers and the rendering industry for their great cooperation. We now have over 300,000 samples tested with no positives. USDA's early proactive intervention is responsible for our country's current BSE status.

The Committee on Government Relations (CGR) met in Washington, D.C. at the end of February. In addition to the Executive Committees of USAHA and AAVLD, in attendance were the USAHA District Presidents and seven of our committee chairs. We were fortunate to have an opportunity to meet with our new Secretary of Agriculture Michael Johanns. During our meeting, Secretary Johanns emphasized the importance of basing decisions on science and expressed his commitment to maintaining markets and establishing new ones for our agriculture products. We let him know who USAHA and AAVLD were and that we were a resource to help him address the complex animal issues fac-

ing our nation today. We look forward to continuing our strong relationship with USDA and pledged our continuing support. We also met with Undersecretary of Marketing and Regulatory Programs Bill Hawks. We appreciate Mr. Hawks' support of USAHA's efforts over the past four years.

During our three days of meetings, the CGR met with a number of leaders of government agencies to discuss issues, including current and proposed budgets. Federal agencies are facing severe budget pressures as we seek to pay for our overseas obligations. In spite of an extremely lean future for animal health programs, USDA-APHIS Administrator Ron DeHaven and USDA-APHIS-VS Deputy Administrator John Clifford are committed to leveraging all of their available resources, working closely with state animal health agencies, to safeguard animal agriculture, one of our nation's critical infrastructures.

While in D.C., the CGR also met with several of our allied industry partners. Given the importance of the role the allied industry partners play in lobbying Congress on animal agriculture, the Executive Committee plans to follow-up on our February discussions during a scheduled meeting with them in D.C. in July.

Right on the heels of the CGR meeting, I attended the Western District meeting in Sparks, Nevada. The meeting was well attended. District President Wayne Cunningham did a fine job in putting together a good program with great discussion. At the end of the meeting, the gavel was passed to Tom Linfield who was elected to serve for 2005. I look forward to the other three District meetings and the opportunity to share more about my activities serving as your President. ■

American Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians (AAVLD) President's Report

Gary Osweiler



Gary Osweiler

Spring has arrived all over most of the country. It is always a new beginning, uncertain but full of promise. Our efforts in disease detection and control parallel this. Just as the seasons across the country, change does not always come equally or at the same rate. AAVLD since 2000 has begun initiatives that reflect vision and optimism of our past leaders and our current executive board. Our enhanced accreditation plan is on schedule and new features and approaches for the National Animal Health Laboratory Network (NAHLN) are in progress. These initiatives have a good conceptual basis, but the hard work of making them effective, recognized and enthusiastically added to the nationwide response team is only in its spring season. Our AAVLD Executive Board Meeting in Las Vegas followed by the United States Animal Health Association (USAHA)/AAVLD Committee on Government Relations meeting in Washington help to strengthen our efforts. USAHA has been a principal partner and supporter in laboratory use and improvement. USAHA gave strong support to the NAHLN concept during our visits in Washington DC, and we were able to send a message of the importance of organized state laboratory response to Animal Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) and to American Association of Veterinary Medical College (AAVMC) and American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA). We in AAVLD appreciate this continuing relationship and the need to continue these efforts and to persevere in the face of need to expand the NAHLN by providing concrete and specific authority and funding for our state labs in the NAHLN con-

cept. Currently, the NAHLN is considered to provide 43 laboratories in 37 states, based on state laboratory activity in some sort of government surveillance or testing activities, e.g. approved foreign animal disease testing, bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE), chronic wasting disease (CWD), brucellosis or tuberculosis to name a few. Last October a joint statement by USAHA, AAVMC, National Veterinary Services Laboratory (NVSL) and AAVLD renewed the original goal of \$85 million to complete the infrastructure and preparation of the NAHLN as well as \$30 million for AAVLD laboratories and NVSL to maintain the network. The action of USAHA in turning this to a specific resolution is greatly appreciated.

Planning and organizing the 2005 annual meeting for USAHA and AAVLD in Hershey is well underway. The coordination of our two groups in scientific programs, committee meetings, administrative management, funding and social functions continues to be evaluated and advanced. Each year we learn more about the benefits of this long and growing cooperative venture. AAVLD scientific and plenary programs will again dovetail with USAHA activities, and we look forward to another successful meeting this year.

Just as our seasons are changing across the country, the scenes and circumstances of animal disease control and recognition are changing. Our combined efforts will cultivate the best resources and ideas from everyone to make the changes needed for growth and productivity. ■

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Feral Swine Distribution, 2004 SCWDS

Feral swine can serve as reservoirs for pseudorabies virus (PRV) and *Brucella suis*. These pathogens have been detected in feral swine populations throughout much of their range in the United States. When the current United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) PRV and *Brucella* eradication programs among domestic swine are successfully completed, feral swine will persist as a potential source for disease reintroduction to domestic herds.

The Southeastern Cooperative Wildlife Disease Study (SCWDS) has been working with USDA-APHIS-Veterinary Services (VS) to develop a rapid and cost-efficient strategy to evaluate this risk. SCWDS is developing site-specific information regarding the status of PRV and *B. suis* in feral swine in areas with significant domestic swine production. As part of this effort, SCWDS has developed geographic information system (GIS)-based maps that detail the distribution of feral swine populations in the United States.

Two maps of the 2004 nationwide distribution of feral swine have been completed. One map depicts the actual distribution of feral swine and the second identifies feral swine distribution at the county level. These maps were produced using data provided primarily by the respective state and territorial natural resources agencies but also with some data from agriculture agencies and universities. Providing current density information was not an objective because reliable population density estimates do not exist on this scale, and densities can vary dramatically from year to year, as well as between seasons and specific habitat types.

Feral swine distribution has increased dramatically in the past 16 years. This is easily seen when comparing the 2004 map to the feral swine distribution map developed by SCWDS in 1988. These maps can be viewed at www.scwds.org. The number of counties reporting established populations increased from 462 in 1988 to 1,042 in 2004, a 225% increase.

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CWD UPDATE

APRIL 8, 2005: Iowa DNR reports that they tested 4,579 whitetail deer in 2004 with none of the animals testing positive. Samples were collected from all 99 counties in Iowa; however the majority - roughly 3,500 - was taken in the seven Mississippi River border counties. Emphasis was placed on that area due to the prevalence and proximity of CWD in Wisconsin and Illinois. Since 2000, the Iowa DNR has tested more than 12,300 deer; none have tested positive.

Two men in Minnesota have plead guilty to illegal trafficking in white-tailed deer and face fines up to \$250,000 and 5 year federal prison sentences. Investigators from the Minnesota DNR and the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service charged the men with the illegal transport and sale of more than 30 live deer between 1999 and 2002. Apparently, tens of thousands of dollars changed hands during the sales. Several aspects of the case are still under investigation and federal indictments have been handed down to an Oklahoma shooting preserve operator. The investigation continues in at least two other states with additional federal prosecution a possibility.

South Dakota Game, Fish, and Parks reports that they have received the results of 2004 testing for 2,687 cervids 2 from Wind Cave National Park pending. They tested 698 elk with 2 positive, 751 mule deer with 3 positive, and 1,238 whitetails with 4 positive. The most recent positive was a female elk from Custer State Park, the first positive cervid from the Park, which was collected due to clinical signs being observed. Two whitetails and one mule deer from Wind Cave National Park are included in the totals above.

A second case of CWD has been confirmed in Oneida County, New York. This animal was a four to five year old whitetail that had died from aspiration pneumonia and a sample sent in for testing. The animal had apparently been on the index farm then shipped to another facility in the county. Currently, the index herd and the six other associated herds including the second positive herd are under quarantine. All animals remaining in the index herd and the herd with the second confirmed positive will be depopulated and tested for CWD. The

investigation to determine the source of the infection is ongoing. Both facilities are from the area around Westmoreland, New York and have been depopulated.

The first white-tailed deer diagnosed with chronic wasting disease in Oneida County, New York was one of the deer donated to the Verona, New York Fire Department and served at its Annual Sportsmen's Feast on Sunday, March 13, an Oneida County Health Department spokesman said today. The deer was donated and consumed before the Health Department knew it had the disease, according to the agencies spokesperson. Public health officials are trying to contact all attendees at the feast to reassure them that the danger of them becoming ill from the venison is very minimal. (Look for a lot of media coverage of this incident).

The Pennsylvania Game Commission reports that they have received the results of 3,699 deer samples submitted for CWD testing during the 2004 hunting season. All samples were returned with CWD not detected. They also report that 32 elk were tested with no CWD detected. The elk samples also were tested for brucellosis and bovine tuberculosis and found to be free from these diseases. During the last four years, 162 elk and 6,259 deer have been tested with no positive results.

The Utah Division of Wildlife Resources tested 3,067 samples from deer and elk taken during last fall's hunting seasons. Seven mule deer tested positive for the disease all from the La Sal Mountains in southeastern Utah, an area where the disease has been confirmed in the past.

The Ohio DNR reports that tests from 656 deer submitted for CWD testing during the 2004-hunting season failed to detect any CWD in that state.

Late breaking news is that an additional 3 deer from the index herd in Oneida County, New York have tested positive for CWD. This brings the total to 5 for the state, 4 on the index facility and 1 on another facility, all in Oneida County.

Bruce Morrison
Nebraska Game and Parks
Commission

Foreign Animal and Emerging Disease Course

This course is jointly sponsored by the University of Tennessee College of Veterinary Medicine and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), and will include speakers with international expertise on foreign animal and emerging diseases. This training course will provide an excellent opportunity to enhance awareness of foreign animal and emerging diseases for veterinarians, veterinary technicians and Extension agents. Other allied professionals who may be involved in a response effort to a foreign animal disease outbreak may also find this training beneficial. Individuals in private practice, academia, industry and government are encouraged to attend.

Current concerns over the potential threat of agroterrorism in the US makes this course especially timely.

Registration spaces are limited, so register early to make sure that you do not miss this training opportunity for key individuals in your District. For more detailed information please visit our website at <http://www.vet.utk.edu/FAED/>. ■

Feral Swine

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This increase in feral swine distribution can be attributed to natural and human-assisted movement of the animals. In addition to the disease risks posed by feral swine, the expanding range of these animals has a significant impact on natural resources and agricultural crops.

The 2004 distribution maps currently are being used to prioritize surveillance for PRV and *B. suis* in feral swine. Together, these maps and accompanying surveillance data will enhance understanding of the epidemiology of these diseases in feral swine and the significance of infected feral swine to the domestic swine industry in the United States. In addition, these maps will be useful in conducting risk assessments regarding the potential role of feral swine in the epidemiology of emerging or foreign animal diseases and in developing response plans for emergency animal disease outbreaks that involve feral and domestic swine. (Prepared by Jay Cumbee and Brian Chandler, SCWDS) ■