

BSAS Annual Conference

This year's Annual Conference in York, 26-29 March, attracted less people than last year but the delegates who came stayed for longer. They also enjoyed a very vibrant and challenging programme and excellent social events.

The conference commenced with 'Student Sunday' where participants joined sessions on presenting scientific papers, viva skills, handling the press and how to win scholarships. As customary, the programme and Sunday night accommodation were free to all BSAS student members who also received various goodies, including a classic BSAS purple mug which were much coveted by ordinary delegates throughout the conference!

The main BSAS conference started mid-morning on the Monday and ran through to a late lunch on Wednesday. Highlights included the Hammond Lecture by Dale Bauman from Cornell University, USA who spoke on Animal Products and Human Health. This lecture was part of a joint programme with the Nutrition Society and included a session on Future Food Policy in Sustainable Animal Agriculture with presentations by Chris Pollock, from IGER, BSAS President, John MacRae, and Professor Tim Lang, London City University. There was also a session on Meat as a Functional Food.

There were several genetics orientated sessions at York this year including Pay-off from Genomics Information; Cattle Genetics and Genetics of Poultry; as well as Breeding for Farming Systems. Some of the best attended sessions were in the smallest theatre including Sheep and Goats; Equines and Pigs. There was only one poster discussion session this year on Applications and Developments where a number of presenters gave short presentations during the lunch hour. Discussion went very well, marshalled by Fergus Mould, and spilled over its allotted time. Fortunately there were no sessions following it! A feature of this year's theatre sessions was the inclusion of submitted papers in invited sessions, that had one or two invited speakers. This worked very well and is likely to be repeated. With slightly fewer posters this year there was plenty of time for authors and delegates to discuss the work presented.

A crack team of BSAS judges assessed a number of theatre and poster presentations for the coveted President's Prize. The winner of the best poster for 2006 was Joanne Mallinson from Nottingham University for her paper 'Effective of Megalac supplementation on the total lipid content, moisture content and bound water content of sheep claw horn'. In the theatre category there was one outright winner in Camila Munoz from ARINI for her paper 'Nutritional status of ewes in early and mid-pregnancy: effect of selenium supplementation on ewe reproduction and offspring performance'. There were two runners up; Catherine Hayhurst from Liverpool and Mark Fenwick from the Royal Veterinary College in London. The winners received £150 and the runners up £50 each. They will be asked to come back to the Annual Conference Dinner next year to receive their certificates. Well done to them and to everybody who took part. If it's your first or second presentation then please consider having a go as this competition is well worth the effort.

On the social side BSAS delegates held their Conference Dinner in the National Railway Museum in York which was once again splendid! The food and wine was good and the speeches were not too long! On the Tuesday evening there was an event in the Pitcher and Piano bar alongside the flooded River Ouse. For the brave there was an historical tour of York and a very late night hilarious ghost hunt. For the thin-skinned who stayed in the warm there was a quiz with prizes run by the Student Council. This was where a certain prestigious group of scientists came bottom in the quiz league but were saved from ignominy by allowing the neighbouring table to accept the booby prize. The weather was awful but the company red hot. The WPSA dinner was in Chapter House of the Cathedral and once again extremely successful.

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2006 Conferences

24-25 May
New Developments in Sheepmeat quality, Bristol

14-15 September
Ethnoveterinary Medicine and Ethnobiological Issues
Wittle College, Chelmsford, Essex

19-20 October
Linking up the meat chain: Ensuring safety and quality for consumers
Krakow, Poland

BSAS,
PO Box 3,
Penicuik,
Midlothian EH26 ORZ. UK
Tel: 00 44 (0)131-445-4508,
Fax: 00 44 (0)131-535-3120,
Email: bsas@sac.ac.uk
Website <http://www.bsas.org.uk>

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The 2006 AGM was attended by 90 members who considered a number of issues put forward by BSAS Council. They agreed to a change in the constitution which introduced the post of Senior Vice-President. This means that in future the society will have a President, a Senior Vice-President and a Vice-President. The AGM accepted that a two-year period was insufficient for an incoming President to have influence on the direction of the society during his or her term. As a consequence the presidential team is now as follows :

President

Professor Peter Buttery, Nottingham University

Senior Vice-President

Professor Geoff Simm, SAC

Vice-President

Professor Jamie Newbold, University of Wales, Aberystwyth.

As Jamie is already an ordinary member of Council, all four nominations to join Council were accepted with one of them replacing Jamie for his remaining period of office. Which one this is will be decided at the first Council meeting in September.

The new ordinary council members are welcomed:

Lindsay Heasman, ADAS

David Kenny, University College Dublin

Liam Sinclair, Harper Adams University College

Angela Wright, University of Oxford

Thanks go to the outgoing members of Council :

Spiridoula Athanasiadou, Jonathan Mills and Adian Moloney

Moving on from York?

Peter Rowlinson, Chairman of the Programme Committee explained the option of moving the Annual Conference from York to Southport, Lancashire for 2007. The spiralling costs at York University were becoming a major issue.

Programme, along with T&E and Presidents were holding their committee meetings in May in Southport so that members could see the proposed venue. The Borough Council in Southport have offered to provide their conference facilities (which are very similar but much more modern than Scarborough) free of charge, which would result in a huge saving on costs. Southport are keen to see the Annual Conference in their town and have this year attracted the British Veterinary Cattle Association.

If the move is made to Southport then accommodation would be in one of the town's many good hotels/guesthouses. Peter Rowlinson and Mike Steele visited Southport in March and were very impressed with accommodation and the range of eating houses and bars available. Southport would, in ambience terms, be very like Scarborough minus the hills! It is by the sea but being on the west coast the tide always seems to be out! Getting to Southport is not as difficult as you might think, it is well-served by trains through Liverpool or Wigan (West Coast main line) and has hourly direct services from Manchester airport. There are cheap flights into Liverpool, Manchester or even Blackpool airport. Driving is straight forward and once parked then walking from hotel to conference centre is never more than 10 minutes.

Where are the new BSAS members?

Alan Duncan, who has now retired from Technical and Ethical Committee, outlined plans for reviewing the membership of the society and the direction BSAS might take in the future. He is forming a small task force that will look at the current and future membership. He would be very happy to receive any views or thoughts on the direction the society might take and future membership - please contact a.duncan@macaulay.ac.uk.

Alan paid tribute to the Student Council, led by Ruth Pickard from Newcastle University, for the initiatives it had undertaken to encourage young people to join BSAS and the activities provided at the Annual Conference.

His successor as chair of T&E is Alistair Carson from ARINI.

New Journal - animal

Nigel Scollan, Chair of Publication's Committee, reported on the developments undertaken since the last AGM regarding a European joint venture journal. The BSAS, INRA and EAAP have joined forces to launch a new journal

animal: *an international journal of animal bioscience*

The first edition will appear in January 2007. It will eventually be published as a monthly aiming for 200 papers annually. Animal Science and the INRA journals Animal Research and RND will stop publishing at the end of 2006 and the new journal will be EAAP's official publication.

animal will publish original, cutting-edge research and horizon-scanning reviews on animal-related aspects of the life sciences at the molecular, cellular, organ whole animal and production system levels. The main subject areas include animal breeding and genetics, nutrition, physiology and functional biology of systems, behaviour, welfare and health, production and livestock systems and animals and the environment. Animal models and papers dealing with the integration of research between these topics and their impact on the environment and people will be particularly welcome.

The new journal, like Animal Science will be published by CABI. It should be open for submissions in June 2006. The Management Board of the journal will shortly appoint the following:

Dr Michel Doreau, Editor-in-Chief

Prof John Oldham, Strategy and Development Executive

Dr Kris Sejrsen, Review papers and External Relations, Executive

They will work to launch and develop **animal** including overseeing the integration of current journals, initiating new methods of delivery and raising the profile and impact of the journal. This is no easy task and to be successful **animal** needs help from the BSAS membership in terms of submitting their own original research papers and encouraging colleagues to do the same. **animal** is your journal jointly owned by BSAS, INRA and EAAP.

Authors of papers currently submitted to Animal Science, Animal Research and Reproduction, Nutrition, Development that cannot be published by January 2007, will be contacted to ask if they wish to submit their paper to the new journal.

AWARDS

Prize winners 2006



John MacRae presents the Hammond to Alistair Carson

The winner of the 2007 **Sir John Hammond Memorial Award** was Dr Alistair Carson. His award for outstanding contribution to the development of sustainable sheep and dairy heifer rearing systems was presented at the Annual Dinner in York by Professor John MacRae.

The **RSPCA/BSAS prize** was presented by the chairman of the RSPCA Council, Mike Tomlinson, to the Bristol-based group AWTraining, Steve Wotton, Alison Weaver, Lindsay Wilkins, Leisha Hewitt and Paul Whittington, for their outstanding contributions to scientific research, information transfer and training in the area of farm animal welfare at stunning and slaughter.



Mike Tomlinson presents the RSPCA/BSAS Award to AWTraining

John MacRae also presented certificates to last year's **President Prize winners:**



Suzanne Rowe, Roslin Institute, (best theatre)



Lenice Bell, Myerscough College (best poster).



Ruth Pickard, University of Newcastle, (highly commended).

BSAS Summer Placements Deadline 30 April 2006

It is never too late to get involved in the **BSAS Summer Placement Scheme** which funds undergraduates to undertake a placement and a small piece of research work during their summer vacation. This normally lasts 4-8 weeks. BSAS offers £500 towards funding each student with the expectation that the participating organisation will also provide the equivalent either as funds or in kind. BSAS is also willing to consider an additional £500 per project towards consumable items or materials that are required to undertake the research project that would not normally be available under an organisation's budget.

If you have a placement or are a student looking for a replacement please contact the BSAS office for further details which are also available on the BSAS website.

EAAP

Board member

BSAS Council have agreed to be put forward the name of Prof. Sandra Edwards to serve on the EAAP Council for a period of four years from 2006.

EAAP Scholarships

Two BSAS members, Kamara Scott from Newcastle and Kate Breuer from ADAS have won EAAP scholarships to present papers in Turkey this year.

Ninth Langford Food Industry Conference

New Developments in Sheepmeat Quality

24-25 May 2006

School of Veterinary Science, Langford, Bristol, UK

Day 1

Nutritional manipulation of sheep meat fatty acid composition	<i>Liam Sinclair, Harper Adams University College</i>
Vitamin E and meat quality in sheep	<i>Michael Enser, University of Bristol</i>
Effects of diets on the composition of milk and meat in sheep: developing a diet authentication system	<i>Sophie Prache, INRA Theix, France</i>
Factors influencing sheepmeat flavour	<i>Owen Young, Auckland University of Technology, New Zealand</i>
Video image analysis for lamb carcass classification	<i>Mike Owen, Meat and Livestock Commission</i>
Effects of pasture type on lamb product quality	<i>Frances Whittington, University of Bristol</i>
Transfer of R & D to industry for better marketing of lambs	<i>Chris Lloyd, English Beef and Lamb Executive</i>

Visit to Bristol University's Food Science Research Group: Measurement of meat quality/Taste Panel Tests of Eating Quality/Carcass composition analysis

Day 2

Including meat quality in sheep breeding programmes	<i>Geoff Simm, Scottish Agricultural College</i>
Breed effects on growth, carcass and meat quality traits	<i>Kreg Leymaster, MARC, Nebraska, USA</i>
QTLs for meat quality in sheep	<i>Stephen Bishop, Roslin Institute</i>
Production and processing effects on lamb eating quality	<i>Ian Richardson, University of Bristol</i>
Genetic effects on carcass shape and eating quality	<i>Elly Navajas, Scottish Agricultural College</i>

For further information contact Langford-CE@bristol.ac.uk or visit www.bsas.org.uk. PLEASE REGISTER NOW!

Linking up the meat chain: ensuring quality and safety for consumers

19-20 October, 2006, Krakow, Poland

Session 1 Primary production and quality

(technological quality aspects (fat consistency and stability, water holding capacity) .

Three general talks –

1. Mike Ellis, University of Illinois, USA, *Producing high quality pork meat*
2. Paul Wariss, Bristol University, *Handling broiler chickens anti mortem to optimize carcass yield and quality*, (mortality during transport and lairage and carcass yield, pre-slaughter food withdrawal and how it might relate to carcass hygiene, and the potential effects of handling on lean meat colour (mainly PSE))
3. Jeff Wood, Bristol University, *beef production and quality*

Session 2 Genetics and Meat Quality (palatability, flavour, tenderness, etc)

Tim Parr, Nottingham University, *The molecular control and genetics of meat Quality tenderization across species.*
Wladek & Piotr Pasiak, Agricultural University of Krakow, *Production and genetics of quality pig and poultry meat.*

Session 3 Food safety and Human Health - risks and opportunities (undesired/toxic residues (mycotoxins, pollutants, medical residues, microbials.)

Martin Scheeder, Swiss Research Inst, *Trans fatty acids of animal origin - an attempt to judge potential health risk and benefits*
Jonathan Guy, University of Newcastle, *Pig meat quality and health problems*
Marek Pieszka, Agricultural University of Krakow, *Oxysterols in meat and health Implications*

Session 4 Meat and its nutritive value (lipid composition, trace elements, vitamins)

Vigilijus Jukna, Lithuanian Veterinary Academy (TBA)
Prof Rambek, Munich University (TBA)

It is a chance to return to beautiful Krakow to meet colleagues from East and central Europe to discuss the issues associated with producing good quality and healthy meat. Excellent value flying with Ryanair or Easyjet from a number of UK cities and even cheaper to stay and eat. After the conference visit the Royal salt mine, castle and churches or just do some early Christmas shopping. An ideal conference to combine business with a long weekend!

Harvesting Knowledge, Pharming Opportunities

Ethnoveterinary Medicine - Harvesting Knowledge, Pharming Opportunities

14-15 September 2006

Writtle College, Chelmsford, Essex, UK

The use of natural products, of plant origin to treat animals has been part of traditional livestock production systems in most parts of the world. The introduction of synthetic veterinary medicines and intensification of livestock production has resulted in a decline in the knowledge based and a loss of traditional knowledge about the medicinal properties of plants and their potential in the treatment of animal diseases and the promotion of health. Because of concern over the excessive use of veterinary pharmaceuticals and a move towards more sustainable approaches to livestock production, there is growing interest in the identification and application of botanicals with veterinary medicinal properties

This two day conference will address 4 major issues

- (1) the conservation of the knowledge base and information gathering techniques, respecting intellectual property and creating trust, making the most of local knowledge,
- (2) learning the lessons from local farmers, botanical identification, matching growing conditions to optimise medicinal properties translating symptoms into veterinary diagnosis,
- (3) traditional veterinary medicines; origins and applications throughout the world
- (4) targeting biological systems, the gut, immune system and animal health.

Invited speakers at the conference are:

Prof Chris Garforth, Reading University

Local knowledge as a resource in developing livestock systems

Dr Evelyn Mathias

Livestock keepers' knowledge versus test tubes and mice: ethnoveterinary validation and use in animal healthcare projects

Dr Irene Mueller-Harvey, Reading University

Sustainable farming practices for optimising the synthesis of natural and veterinary products

Dr Spiradoula Athanasiadou, SAC

Medicinal plants for parasite control: fact and fiction

Dr R John Wallace, RRI

Natural plant materials for manipulating rumen fermentation

Dr Harindar Makkar, University of Hohenheim

Bioactivity of phytochemicals in some lesser-known plants and their potential applications in aquaculture and livestock production systems.

CALLFORPAPERS

Authors wishing to submit a paper (poster or theatre) should submit a summary up to 2 pages of A4 by **Friday 5 May** to the BSAS Office. Papers will be selected in May and authors will be requested to submit complete papers to the BSAS Office by **Friday 23 June 2006**. For further information contact a member of the organising committee at Writtle College jes.scaife@writtle.ac.uk, bsas@sac.ac.uk or visit www.bsas.org.uk

Conference Calendar

- 24/25 May 2006 **Langford Food Industry Conference, Bristol, UK** - New Developments in Sheepmeat Quality - see page 4
- 14-15 Sept 2006 **Ethnoveterinary Medicine - Harvesting Knowledge, Pharming Opportunities, Writtle College, Chelmsford, Essex, UK** - see page 5
- 4-6 Sept 2006 **BGS 8th Research Conference RAC, Cirencester** www.britishgrassland.com/bgs/about/calendar.asp
- 17-20 Sept 2006 **EAAP Annual Meeting, Antalya, Turkey**. See www.eaap2006.gen.tr for full details.
- 18-20 Sept 2006 **What will organic farming deliver? Heriott Watt University, Edinburgh** The programme will be opened by Prof John Oldham, SAC, Edinburgh, and has a number of plenary papers including:
What can research deliver for organic farming? - David Atkinson, SAC
Linking livestock production and human health - creating sustainability through farming - John MacRae, Rowett Institute, Aberdeen
Theatre sessions include:
Delivering Environment? Delivering Health? Knowledge transfers, sharing research, learning together, Delivering profit?
Poster Topics include:
Soil, Research Approaches, Crops, Systems and Environment, Crop protection and Livestock
Public Evening Meeting - Can organic farming take the lead in a post fossil carbon society?
A full programme will shortly be available on the BSAS website.

...Conference calendar

- 19-20 Oct 2006 **Linking up the Meat Chain: ensuring quality and safety for consumers, Krakow, Poland.** - see page 4
- 17-19 April 2007 **High Value Grassland: providing biodiversity, a clean environment and premium products, University of Keele, Staffordshire.** A British Grassland Society managed meeting with assistance from BSAS and the British Ecological Society. Topics will include: the ecology of agricultural systems and the conservation of plants, invertebrates, birds and other fauna; nutrient flows through soil, plant and animal and impacts on water and air; effects of climate change; quality of meat and milk, sustainability of production and food chains; effects of CAP reform; marketing and engaging with the public; practical management strategies and integration into support policies. Invited speakers include: Mike Hammell (DG Environment, Brussels), Helen Wakeham (EA), Poul Christensen (farmer and chair of RDS), Johannes Isselstein (Univ Goettingen), Jeff Wood (Univ Bristol), Sion Roberts (EFFP), Chris Pollock (Director IGER, chair Defra SFF Research Priorities Group).
Day 2 will include visits to farms in the lowlands and uplands.
- 26-29 August 2007 **EAAP Dublin** - University College Dublin, Ireland. For further information visit www.eaap2007.ie
- Sept 2007 **Fertility in Dairy Cows, Liverpool.** To be involved contact mdroyal@liverpool.ac.uk or mike.steele@sac.ac.uk

Professor William Holmes 1922-2006

Bill Holmes, born in Renfrewshire, educated at the University of Glasgow and at WSAC Auchincruive was a founder member of the British Society of Animal Production and its President in 1969/1970. His working career at the Hannah Research Institute began in 1943 when he was appointed an Assistant in Animal Husbandry. He was awarded his PhD in 1947 and in the same year became the Head of Department of Dairy and Grassland Husbandry.

He accepted in 1955, the Chair in Agriculture at the University of London at Wye College and this in turn sparked off a fulfilling career in academic agriculture which lasted until 1987.

Bill Holmes' research interests were based primarily on the ruminant and its intake together with the management and utilisation of grassland, but his interests and influence spread far beyond these topics. He traveled in the Commonwealth on University business taking part in the establishment and reviews of a number of schools of agriculture through the special relationship held by the University of London.

Undergraduates from Wye will remember him perhaps as slightly aloof and shy, a soft accented voice propounding lectures. For others to whom he acted as an external examiner, there was perhaps a hint of menace across the table in a viva as one floundered through some question on grassland utilization! Postgraduates will remember a very questioning but very supportive supervisor with a keen eye for detail and a long term interest in their careers, publications, life and professional achievements.

Bill Holmes served on many committees associated with agricultural research and with applied aspects of the industry. In addition to his Presidency of BSAP, he was the President of the British Grassland Society (1968/1969). He was the founder Chairman of the BSAP Technical Committee and was instrumental in framing much of the committee structure the Society uses today.

In his long retirement his thoughts and actions turned to conservation and ecological topics, he lectured within the University of the Third Age, he attended Departmental seminars and also maintained his interests in beekeeping, publishing his last paper on this topic in 2002.

Bill Holmes' legacy above all else lies in his enthusing of many generations of undergraduates and in the international network of influential research workers in agricultural science who passed through his rigorous pattern of supervision and training at Wye and in whose careers he held a lifelong passionate interest, always ready to offer advice, criticism and encouragement.

Bill's wife, Jean predeceased him. We offer our sympathy to his daughters, their husbands and their families.