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BSAS ANNUAL MEETING - YORK, 5-7 APRIL 2004

The Annual BSAS Conference will be held at York University, 5-7th April 2004. You'll note that registration fees have been held at the same rate as last year for both full and student/retired members. BSAS Council have deliberately kept fees down to try to encourage more delegates to attend what is the UK's largest meeting of animal scientists.

The programme is comprehensive, although we are always looking for new ideas, so there should be plenty of theatre and poster presentations that you will wish to attend. The show starts relatively early at 11.00 on Monday morning with sessions on **Feed into milk, Novel approaches to growth promotion in disease control in animal production, Pig growth modelling and Sheep and beef systems**. There is accommodation available on Sunday night for those who cannot make it in time for the start of the conference on Monday morning. Please see the programme included with this newsletter. For the complete conference programme go to www.bsas.org.uk, where you will find a whole variety of invited sessions over the three days.

PRESENTING SCIENTIFIC PAPERS

For any new scientists please remember the Workshop 'Presenting Scientific Papers' run by Phil Garnsworthy. The workshop is **FREE** and we recommend early registration as the number of participants are limited. The workshop starts at 15:30 on Sunday 4th April and finishes in time for the start of sessions on Monday morning. Last year several of the participants used the workshop as a practice before their live presentations in the conference. Phil Garnsworthy of Nottingham University has tutored these types of workshops for many years including EAAP Annual meetings. As well as the teaching, participants will receive a free copy of the Nottingham University Press *Writing and Presenting Scientific Papers* book.

There are some changes to the facilities at York this year, including the provision of a brand-new restaurant, the Gallery situated in the Roger Kirk Centre which is adjacent to the exhibition centre and easy to find. This 400 seater restaurant will mean that we can all have our meals together in one location. We could not, however, resist taking everyone out for the Conference Dinner to the National Railway Museum in the centre of York. The meal will be served amongst vintage trains and carriages and prior to dinner you'll have a chance to look around the whole museum and an opportunity to buy presents from the museum shop to take home!

We will be taking the opportunity during the meeting to survey delegates on what future presentations, sessions and conferences they would like to see BSAS organise. Although scientists in the UK are often driven to present only research which is core or industry funded, we recognise that some members of BSAS may not be getting the information they require for their professional careers. If you can't make the meeting do tell us please by e-mail/ letter what you would like next time – we are here to listen.

Remember if you cannot make the whole meeting then you are welcome to attend as a day delegate for part of the time.

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Where does BSAS go by 2010?

As you will be aware we live in a time where there seems to be constant change in the animal science industry. Many will cite a general decline and a specific move away from traditional farm species orientated research aimed at production. It is becoming difficult to predict what will happen in the future, but that is exactly what we have to try and do as professionals if we are to survive and evolve.

These changes have an ongoing impact on organisations including BSAS and this is reflected in the continuing, but slow decline in our full time ordinary membership. The BSAS Council have decided that the Society now needs to go through a strategic review process broader than the one in 1996, involving younger people both within and outside of BSAS, in order to identify if it is meeting the needs of its members and of other scientists working with animals.

The President's Committee will be considering how we might review the whole remit of BSAS and is likely to consult with those within and outside of the Society. BSAS wants to meet the needs of its current membership and attract other researchers and practitioners who currently know little about BSAS.

We would be grateful, even at this early stage, for views from the members on where they think both the Society and the journal should be going in the future.

At a recent Publications Committee meeting the editorial team of our journal *Animal Science* identified the need to review not just the appearance and structure of the journal but also how policy might be changed to attract new and exciting authors and readers. *Animal Science*, as a journal of integrated Biological Sciences, will always find it difficult to compete with specialist journals because it is trying to link disciplines together. It does however have a place, if supported by its authors and readers, in giving a holistic approach to animal science. It may in future need to look even wider than the animal species currently attracted. A lot of animal science work, for example, goes on in the biomedical field.

A small team will be considering the future of the journal at a meeting in Nottingham in March

An occasional meeting at Writtle College in September is looking at the challenge facing the animal science education industry which will also offer an excellent opportunity for academics, employers and young people to paint a picture of the education system of the future, for those interested in studying the science relating to keeping and caring for animals. There is a great need to continue to attract good quality young people into the animal industry. This will only occur if both the educators and employers identify appropriate quality education that stimulates and rewards young people to commit to coming into an animal science industry where animal science is considered in its widest context.

Student activities

Essay Competition

We had an encouraging response to our first student essay competition. The best essays as selected by university supervisors are currently with the judges and we hope to announce the winners shortly. As well as monetary prizes the best participants will be asked to come to the Annual Meeting at York as fully funded technical helpers. This will hopefully give them an insight into an animal science conference and access to all the shakers and movers in the UK animal science industry. The essay competition will be repeated again later this year based on essay topics that fit university and college dissertations.

Student Council

A small group of Phd students are being identified to form the first student council of BSAS. This will meet in York and discuss the ways in which the society can better focus on young people interested and involved in animal science. BSAS Council is keen to resource student activities that will encourage good quality young people to enter and remain in the industry. Whilst the first members of the student council are appointees it's hoped that in future we will have a more democratic electoral system. The first members of the student council will be surveying views of all student delegates at the Annual Meeting in York to gauge opinions and views on the role of BSAS in servicing younger members.

CPD Update

The development of a register of animal scientists and an associated continuing professional development scheme continues to progress well. Janice Harland, Bruce Cottrill, Paul Hocking and Cled Thomas have all been involved in identifying a suitable scheme for animal scientists that would suit both BSAS and WPSA.

Guidelines are currently being written for both a register and CPD based on the Nutrition Society scheme. These will shortly be piloted in a trial with a small number of BSAS and WPSA members. A report on progress will be given as part of the AGM in York in April.

AGM Papers

The BSAS AGM will take place at the University of York on Tuesday 6th April, 2004 at 18:00 hours in Room L001, Exhibition Centre, where all members are welcome. The AGM papers will be sent electronically to members who are on email. They are also available in hardcopy to any member on request. We would welcome any comments in advance of the meeting if you cannot make it.

Society accounts

If you would like a set of the society's accounts please contact the office. The accounts will also be available at the AGM where the Honorary Treasurer who will be happy to explain all aspects.

COUNCIL MEMBERS WANTED!!

You will find below current members of the BSAS Council three of whom retire this April. We are very grateful to Sandy Mackenzie, John Alliston and Peter Rowlinson for their contributions as Council members over the past three years.

The Society is thus looking for volunteers to be nominated as members of Council and to serve on one of the three standing committees. Members are elected for a three-year period. There are three vacancies available in April. We need nominations to be received in the office by Tuesday 30th March. Candidates must be supported by two members of the Society. If more than three nominations are received then a simple paper vote will be taken at the AGM. If you are interested then please let us know as soon as possible. We are happy to answer any queries regarding responsibilities and duties. Council and Publications Committee meet in London in September and January each year. T&E and Programme meet together in May, usually in Edinburgh and separately in November/December.

BSAS Council 2003/04

Dr John R Newbold	President
Prof Sandra Edwards	Vice-President
Dr Brian C Cooke	Honorary Treasurer
Mr Mike A Steele	Chief Executive
Prof John C MacRae	Publications Chairman
Prof Steve C Bishop	Programme Chairman
Dr Alan J Duncan	T & E Chairman
Dr Sandy M MacKenzie	Member since 2001
Prof John C Alliston	2001
Dr Peter Rowlinson	2001
Dr Susan Jarvis	2002
Dr Melissa Royal	2002
Dr Alastair Wylie	2002
Dr Jonathan Mills	2003
Dr Aidan P Moloney	2003
Dr Spiradoula Athanasiadou	2003

OBITUARY

BSAS is very sad to report that Peter Wilson died on 29th January 2004 following a short illness. Peter was one of our most active senior members of the Society, President 1977-78, an Honorary member and chairman of the 1996 strategic review.

Peter was born in 1928 in Kent and studied agriculture at Wye College. He then went to Kampala, Uganda as a lecturer for six years where he successfully completed his PhD., working on East African goats. He then took up a post with the University of the West Indies before eventually returning to the UK to work with Unilever and BOCM rising to become their chief agricultural adviser. In 1984 Peter became Professor of Agriculture at the University of Edinburgh, as well as head of the East of Scotland School of Agriculture, and successfully managed the transition from full public funding to earning revenue from advisory work and research. He was popular with students and teaching staff, and maintained direct contact by teaching the introductory course to first year students.

Whilst Peter officially retired in 1990 he merely concentrated his professional life on over 40 charitable activities and organisations. As well as becoming Honorary Secretary of the Institute of Biology he also became a very active and influential member of the Edinburgh Centre for Rural Research (ECRR) and the Royal Society of Edinburgh.

Of late Peter had not been able to make all of the BSAS Annual meetings, although he would without fail always send his apologies to the AGM. When he did attend you would be well aware of his presence through his constructive contribution to discussions and debates. Peter was very much a leader wanting to play a major role in the activities in which he was involved. An excellent chairperson he was a mind of useful information, stories and statistics but with a diplomatic air. His good judgment and gentlemanly manner will be missed but his contribution to BSAS has been of a significance that will survive and for which the society is grateful.

Peter is survived by his wife Bunny, a daughter, two sons and five grandchildren. A packed memorial service was held in Edinburgh in early February.

International Cattle Breeders Round Table, Scotland, 2003

In December, a plethora of the worlds leading dairy breeding scientists and industry representatives descended on a wintry Peebles, some 20 miles south of Edinburgh. Over 50 researchers from as far a field as the US and Australia spent a very productive two days in the luxury of the new McDonald Cardrona Hotel to discuss up to the minute developments in dairy genetics research.

This conference (the second in a series of bi-annual Round Tables) was organised by SAC, with the help of BSAS and industry sponsorship (Genus, Cogent, National Milk Records and Holstein UK).

The main focus of discussion was on the genetics and recording of health, longevity, fertility and energy balance. It was clear that, in recent years, a lot of the scientific research on these topics has been undertaken and implemented in the global dairy industry and a shift away from selection on production alone to include functional traits is evident. Open sessions on potential research areas discussed incorporating environmental and consumer concerns into dairy breeding programmes, international co-operation in dairy evaluations and future developments in dairy recording and databases. One of the highlights of the conference was that the format allowed frank and open discussions, giving delegates information and contacts to help them move forward with issues of importance in national and international dairy genetic evaluations.

Eileen Wall, SAC Edinburgh

BSAS Occasional Meetings 2004

16-17th September 2004

The challenge facing Animal Science Education, Writtle College, Essex.

This meeting will address the issues facing Animal Science Education in the UK. The programme is still under development but will include the whole system from schools through further and higher education to employment. Participants are likely to include those delivering education, employers and policy makers as well as those involved in attracting young people into animal science at the schools level. Julian Hill at Writtle is heading the organising team and he would be very happy to talk with any individual or group interested in influencing the programme and participating in the conference.

Besides keynote presentations there is likely to be a significant amount of time allocated to discussion through workshops. Sessions are likely to include scene setting, the changing market for graduates, what's happening in Europe and internationally. We realise this is a very competitive area for potential delegates, but it is a topic that needs addressing.

Writtle College is located near Chelmsford on the Ipswich mainline from Liverpool Street, London, and is only 30 minutes by road from Stansted airport so communications could not be easier. The conference venue will be in Writtle's new state-of-the-art conference centre and all delegates will be accommodated on campus and well fed!

14-15th October 2004

Meat Quality and Food Safety (pigs and poultry) University of Krakow Poland

This is the first in a series of meetings organised with our colleagues in Poland and Greece addressing meat quality and some aspects of food safety. Speakers from the University of Bristol will join colleagues in Poland in this first ever BSAS joint meeting in Eastern Europe. It is hoped that subsequent meetings in Greece and Bristol will cover sheep, beef and dairy issues. We hope to attract EU funding to enable young people to attend in order to meet with the experts presenting papers. Additional masterclasses for these young scientists to enable them to discuss issues with world authorities.

In Poland sessions are likely to include:

- What is meat quality and how can we improve it,
- Genetics and their influence on meat quality,
- Genetic and none genetic influences on muscle structure,
- Pre-and post slaughter handling effects on carcass and meat quality,
- Major poultry meat attributes,
- The fatty acid composition of meat,
- Nutritional aspects of oil feed supplementation,
- How native breeds of poultry can influence meat quality
- Quality assurance and food safety.

Speakers will include Professor Jeff Wood, Paul Warriss and Mike Enser from Bristol, Piotr Pasciak, Prof Migdal and Kathrin Poltowicz from Krakow University, Professor Mike Ellis from the University of Illinois and Martin Scheeder from the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology.

As well as presentations there will be a series of workshops as part of the second day.

Krakow is easily reached from London with direct flights for October 2004 costing around £100 return. The cost of living in Poland is excellent so the conference package should be very good value. If you are interested in getting involved in the programme then please let us know.

Other Meetings

19/26 March 2004 **Pig Health Conferences** at Ingliston, Edinburgh and Milton Keynes. Results from the largest study of health management in the GB pig industry. Full details from Pig Health Conferences Aberdeen University 01224 274230 or see www.abdn.ac.uk/bioscience/

23 March 2004 **Risk: Food, Fact & Fantasy**
Prof. John Krebs, Chairman of Food Standards Agency Royal Society Lecture www.royalsoc.ac.uk/events

22 April 2004 **Meeting the information needs of the changing animal health professions**
RAC London. Annual conference of the Animal health information specialists. Contact Robert Taylor, CABI rtaylor@cabi.org or tel 01491 829450 for full details

15 Sept 2004 **Research Into Practice**
Writtle College, Chelmsford, Essex. First conference on Equine Behaviour and Welfare
This will aim to disseminate current behaviour and welfare science from research professionals to the interested horse owner and manager.

Speakers and Topics include:

Why Do Foals Crib-bite?
Dr Amanda Badnell-Waters

Horse Welfare and the Impact of European Union Legislation
Professor Don Broom, University of Cambridge

Stable Design and Enrichment
Dr Jonathan Cooper, University of Lincoln

Temperament and Welfare in Horses
Dr Emma Creighton, University College Chester

Behavioural Considerations in Feeding Horses
Dr Deborah Goodwin, University of Southampton

Nutrition and Welfare
Dr Pat Harris, Effem Equine Ltd

Equestrian Science: The Application of Science to Training Horses and Assessing Pain in Horses
Dr Natalie Waran, Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies, University of Edinburgh

Interested? Then please contact Mark Kennedy at mjk@writtle.ac.uk

June 2006 **Paradigms in Pig Science**
The latest in the highly successful Nottingham - Pig Science Conferences will be held in June 2006. Please contact julian.wiseman@nottingham.ac.uk for information; more details will follow in due course.

For sale: Animal production Journals 1966 to 1994, Vols. 8 to 59. Animal Science Journals 1995 to 2001, Vols. 60 to 72. [Unbound] Replies to: sflanagan@athenry.teagasc.ie

GIFT AID

As we explained in the September newsletter BSAS is able to reclaim tax on membership subscriptions for UK-based members. So if you do not already reclaim your income tax on your subscription we would be very grateful if you would allow us to do so and thus increase the society's income. All you need do is send us a note or e-mail with your permission.