

January 2001 • No. 4

Annual Meeting, University of York, 9-11 April

The Programme Committee recently met in York to assess all the summaries and to review the facilities of our new venue for the Annual Meeting. Nearly 250 summaries were submitted, which is more than last year. The Programme Committee were impressed with the overall standard and under their new 'inclusive' approach have rejected less than 10%. Most summaries have been sent back for modifications but the delegate audience will ultimately judge the quality by questioning the authors on the science presented.

The Committee also spent a good deal of time putting the sessions together. The vast majority of people wishing to give theatre presentations have been duly accommodated. Consequently there are a number of parallel sessions and inevitably delegates will have to make choices about which sessions and papers they would like to attend (no grumbling please, just choose!)

There are a number of minor clashes between sessions, but the committee decided that the programme is the best that can be achieved in the short time available.

- Most of the invited sessions, as suggested previously, have now come together and these include - Endocrine Disrupting Compounds and their Implications for Domestic Animal and Human Health (jointly with the EU Concerted Action Group);
- Ethical Issues in Animal Science,
- Improving Beef Production Systems - The Way Forward (jointly with the National Beef Association);
- Alternatives to Anti-microbials (jointly with WPSA); and the satellite on
- the Science of Meat and Milk Quality, which will also include a session on Future Directions of the Livestock Industry; and
- The Sir John Hammond Memorial Lecture by Sir John Krebs of the Foods Standard Agency on 'Is Food Safe?'

The submitted theatre sessions include, Human Animal Interactions; Pigs; Ruminant Nutrition; Pig Nutrition; Feed Intake in Pigs; Animal Health; Cattle Breeding; Sheep Genetics; Pig Behaviour and Welfare; Tropical Animal Production; Ewe Nutrition; Diet Selection and Feeding Behaviour.

There are two extra interesting sessions i) on the output of the workshop held on Nutritional Standards (October 2000) and ii) Integrated pollution, prevention and control regulations. The latter one is designed as a Continued Professional Development session where interested parties will be updated on regulations and will be able to question experts in this field. This is an add-on session and will require a small extra fee.

A large number of posters will be displayed with two poster discussions – Minerals; and Genetic Breeding; others include Endocrine Disrupting Compounds; Product quality; Forages and their utilisation; Animal Health; Topical feeds and feeding systems; Ruminant and pre-ruminant nutrition; Rumen and in vitro metabolism; Pigs; Behaviour and welfare; Dairy cow nutrition; and Monogastric feeds.

The authors will be expected to stand by their posters during the tea and coffee breaks. Each poster session will be displayed for half of the meeting, with a change over at Tuesday lunch time.

York is a new venue for most people. The theatre rooms are conveniently close together and adjacent to where the posters will be displayed. Accommodation will be ensuite although economy accommodation is also available. The Programme Committee tested it and were impressed by the high standard of comfort and convenience. All meals will be on site except the conference dinner which will be at the Race Course (minus the horses).

York has received a soaking due to the abnormal rain fall and subsequent floods in 2000. The University has not really been affected. We are quite confident that by April the trains will be running to schedule and York is a very easy

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place to reach by rail. Nearest international airport is at Leeds/Bradford although Manchester should be considered, as there is a direct rail link from Manchester Airport to York. The train station is a quick taxi ride away or there is a very frequent bus service for those on a tight budget. The campus is also easily accessed by road.

Please note that the University is participating in the Government policy of encouraging people to use public transport. It has therefore imposed a daily parking fee of £3.00 for each car left on campus during the conference.

You will notice from the programme that we have a number of other Society organisations joining us, WPSA is coming to York but this time its meeting is on Tuesday and Wednesday during the BSAS meeting. This will enable the WPSA delegates to mix with BSAS members and to attend sessions such as those on CPD, the Nutritional Workshop and Ethical Issues.

The International Society of Applied Ethologists is also coming and their meeting will run on the Wednesday at the end of the BSAS meeting, which will also enable their delegates to attend the Ethical Issues workshop. The farmers will be with us, this time under the auspices of the National Beef Association with the session on Wednesday morning followed by an afternoon visit to a beef farm.

Costs

You will note from the application form that the costs have increased but we hope that everybody recognises that the meeting is still very good value for money. The increases reflect the slight increase in costs for moving the venue, and the need for BSAS to cover its fixed costs which it has not done fully in the past. Our new Honorary Treasurer Brian Cooke has quite rightly identified that up to now our Annual Meeting has not paid its fair share of the Society's annual costs. Changes have to be made. You will find that this will also happen with the smaller Occasional Meetings. This is part of the re-adjustment to make sure that your Society continues to be financially viable and sustainable in the future.

Changing Times.....

The Animal Science Industry

As we pointed out in the last newsletter the Society is having to adapt to the changing conditions of the Animal Science Industry. It is interesting to note that other Societies like the Nutrition Society and BGS are going through the same process. As you may know the Institute of Biology are looking at the formation of a Federation of Bio-Science organisations and BSAS are beginning discussions with a number of similar organisations including the BGS on how we might work closer together. In the first instance this will cover joint marketing to help avoid conference clashes but in the long term it could lead to pooling of resources. Our incoming President Dr John Milne has decided that his presidential theme will be 'Pooling of resources for like minded organisations'.

It is quite clear that in the future, organisations such as BSAS will have to work together, perhaps in some form of federation, to be able to survive. This will be following the route that four American Societies have successfully taken in forming the Federation of Animal Science. There is a great deal of potential for organisations moving together in terms of generating new ideas, and also there are obvious savings to be made in standardising what is done and sharing resources e.g. publishing. David Leaver and Jan Crighton of BGS met with John Milne and Mike Steele from BSAS just before Christmas to talk about closer liaison between BGS and BSAS. If you have any thoughts on this topic we would be very pleased to receive them. Everybody is very keen that each Society retains its independence but they recognise that working together with others may be one way to secure long term sustainability.

Journal subscriptions for BSAS members and changes to subscriptions

For many years now the cost of the journal to members has been kept at a very low figure. With the increased economic pressure on the society this is likely to change over the coming 12 months. At its January meeting, Council will discuss separating the provision of a journal for each member from the annual subscription. Undoubtedly some members will then wonder what they get for their subscription. Council realise this and intend to look at how benefits that members receive can be enhanced.

Currently membership brings:

- *Cheaper rates for conferences*
- *A newsletter four times a year*
- *Access to, and help from the BSAS secretariat, including access to BSAS databases and information*
- *Access to funding for study travel, conferences and short research projects*
- *A subsidised journal*
- *Membership of the country's premiere Animal Science Society*

Enhanced benefits might include:

Access through the website to significantly larger amounts of relevant information either onsite or through links to other sites. Currently the website is open to all. In the future specific information such as publications from occasional meetings may only be available to members through the use of a membership number. This is likely to include the on-line version of Animal Science.

The electronic version of *Animal Science*

The early launch of the electronic version of *Animal Science* is now the major aim of the Publications Committee for 2001. This will be accessed through the BSAS Website. From 2002 it is likely that members will be asked to choose between receiving only the electronic version or the electronic plus the paper version of the journal.

We appreciate some people prefer paper and others are happy with shelf-less offices! With the increasing costs of printing and posting hard copies it is likely that the cost of continuing to receive the journal as a hard copy is likely to increase substantially by 2002. Council will be discussing appropriate rates shortly. In the USA, ASAS include their electronic journal in the ordinary membership fee but charge an additional \$50 dollars per annum for the paper version. Half their members have opted for the electronic journal. Current BSAS thinking is that the BSAS membership with electronic journal is likely to cost in the order of £50-£60. Membership including electronic and papers likely to cost nearer £100.

Do you need hardcopies of all newsletters and leaflets?

BSAS has been looking hard at its postage and printing bills recently. It would like to follow the line of its American cousins in ASAS where they have asked their members if they are happy to receive at least some of their newsletters and leaflets electronically via their website. Currently around 50 per cent of ASAS members are happy with an electronic version of the newsletter.

BSAS would like to try this out in 2001 and will be asking you to accept two of the four newsletters and their accompanying leaflets via the website. We would let you know when they were available by e-mail. If you want to continue receiving all information by post that is no problem, but if you can help us by downloading them electronically it will save the society money and ultimately keep your subscription down! Of course if you have no e-mail facilities than we do not expect you to change. An email address database is currently being set up so that the May newsletter can be the first trial.

Please find enclosed a short form, which we ask you to complete **if you wish to continue receiving the newsletter by ordinary mail.** We also ask for your current e-mail address for our database if different from that which we have on our records/current membership list.

Constitutional changes

Council will also be discussing minor changes to the constitution concerning a reduction in members on committees.

As previously mentioned this will include:

Discontinuing the post of Junior Vice-President

A reduction in ordinary council members elected annually from four to three.

Combined with other moves such as:

Moving the representatives for IOB, & EAAP and the Press Officer from Council to the T&E committee;

Giving each ordinary member on Council more responsibility and involvement in standing committees.

These changes will make Council smaller and we hope more responsive. Currently it is too large to be an effective decision-making body.

Please let us have your views on any of the above topics

Mexico - warm and friendly

Responding to Increased Global Demand for Animal Products

BSAS Secretary Mike Steele and David Leaver, head of the conference organising team, visited Merida in October to initiate face to face discussions on the format and programme for the meeting 'Responding to the Increased Global Demand for Animal Products'. They also looked at the facilities. They were both extremely impressed with both the personnel in Merida and the facilities available for the conference. The venue is the the University's central administration block in the centre of the city. Delegates attending will be able to select from a large number of very attractive hotels in and around the centre of Merida, all within walking distance.

The University of Yucatan is putting its resources fully behind the conference. The city is very attractive, friendly and comfortable, and at the moment good value for money. The climate can sometimes be a little wet, but it is warm and within easy reach of some very interesting Mayan sites. The food is excellent! You might just consider combining the conference with a Cancun or Mayan site holiday.

The programme is gradually coming together, please visit bsas website. The American Society of Animal Science are going to be working closely with ourselves and the people in Merida, as well as the Mexican Society of Animal Production. This is going to be a truly International effort and the topic is likely to create a great deal of interest.

Merida is not very expensive to go to. The Secretariat will be looking at whether a package tour is possible to minimise travel costs.

A number of invited speakers are being asked to give key note papers. Specific organisations will also be asked to submit papers for theatre presentation and the meeting will obviously be open for submissions for posters from any relevant individual or organisation.

Future meetings - BSAS

- 9-11 April 2001 **BSAS Annual Meeting** to be held in the new venue at York University. Please see programme enclosed.
- 25-26 June 2001 **What price cheap food?** University of Edinburgh. Please see enclosed leaflet for more details.
- 11-12 September 2001 **Integrated management systems for livestock**, Cambridge, joint BSAS /Institute of Agricultural Engineers meeting, a revised leaflet is enclosed.
- 4-6 October 2001 **Organic meat and milk from ruminants**, Athens – please see enclosed leaflet.
- 12-15 November 2002 **Responding to the increased global demand for animal products**, Merida, Mexico. Visit: www.bsas.org.uk

Other meetings

- 16-25 March 2001 National Science Week. Run by the British Association. Details from Maria Roy 020 7973 3074 or www.britassoc.org.uk
- 3-5 April 2001 British Ecological Society Meeting on 'Dispersal', Reading, UK. Sessions include Dispersal techniques, Dispersal in evolution and behavioural ecology, Dispersal and spatial process, applications. Info: www.demon.co.uk/bes
- 24-28 April 2001 ASAS Annual Meeting Indianapolis, USA. Jointly with FASS this is a big meeting with up to 32 parallel sessions! Info: ellenb@assoqh.org
- 23 May 2001 4th Conference of the Langford Food Industry, Developing the markets for British Livestock Products. Langford, Bristol. For information please contact Rita.Hinton@bristol.ac.uk
- 26-29 August 2001 EAAP Annual Meeting, Budapest, Hungary. See EAAP www.eaap.org website or contact www.atk.hu
- 22-25 July 2002 ASAS Annual meeting, Quebec. Jointly with the Canadian Association for Animal Science and the American Dairy Science Association. Info: ellenb@assoqh.org
- September 2002 EAAP Annual Meeting, Cairo Info: esap.org.eg

Ideas for meetings?

If you have a good idea for an occasional meeting, please let us know about it as soon as possible.

In 2002 BSAS will be collaborating with the Nutrition Society at its meeting in Leeds to formulate an Animal Science orientated module. For 2003 there is an idea that we might have a follow up to the *In Vitro* Techniques meeting which tend to run every three years, but this time Cornell University, New York State, USA, is the possible venue. We would be very keen to identify any good ideas that are either UK or European based on topics that are pertinent and attractive.

Please contact BSAS office with any good ideas. How about 'Companion Animals'?

Foresight programme

The DTI have recently published their report on The Food Chains and Crops for Industry preparing for the future. This is available free from John Flack, Office of Science and Technology, Bay583,1 Victoria Street London S W 1H OET. Telephone 02072156705 or e-mail john.flack@osct.dti.gov.uk See www.foresight.gov.uk/fcci for other reports.

Courses

6-10 August 2001, Michigan State University. Environmental consequences of Animal production: Comprehensive Nutrient management Planning. For full details and costs contact Nanda Prakash Joshi, MSU, 1250-I Anthony Hall, East Lansing, MI 48824-1225, USA. joshin@msu.edu or tel USA 517 353 5102

Books

Organic Farming in Europe by 2010: Scenarios for the future. 24 Euros. This is part of a series. More info. from ofeurope@uni-hohenheim.de

Websites

Institute of biology (IOB) has recently up graded its website at www.iob.org
If you are interested in the human genome project then this can be found at www.ornl.gov/hgmis

Our web-site is developing and has further potential in providing a service to our members. We want new links on our site so that it can assist those interested in obtaining information on all aspects of animal science. Can you please give us the web address of your organisation so that so that we can add it to our links section.

Consensus meetings

This spring Technical & Ethical Committee are organising a *consensus meeting* on Farrowing Crates. The aim is to bring together 30 or 40 participants to listen, discuss and debate this topical issue. They will then agree a consensus statement, which could be incorporated into a press release and issue paper. This first consensus meeting is being organised by Jon Day. If you are interested please contact him on email: jon.day@adas.co.uk, tel: 01553 828621

If you have any ideas for other appropriate topical issues, Geoff Simm, Chair of T&E would like to hear from you. You can contact him via the BSAS office.

British Society of Animal Science

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