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BSAS ANNUAL MEETING - YORK, 5-7 APRIL 2004

The full programme for the Annual Meeting in 2004 is enclosed with this newsletter. There is a pdf version available on the website at www.bsas.org.uk

Following the submission of 270 summaries, we have many interesting theatre and poster sessions.

York 2004 starts early on Monday 5th April at 11.00 hours with theatre sessions on

- *Feed into milk*
- *Novel approaches to growth promotion and disease control in animal production*
- *Pig growth modelling*
- *Sheep and beef systems*

In the afternoon we have a special symposium on *Intermediary metabolism in the dairy cow* followed by *Immuno-modulation to improve production and welfare*. These run in parallel with sessions on *Nutrition and Health*; *Implementation of selection indices*; *Pig nutrition* and *Developments in quantitative genetics*.

The Hammond Lecture, first thing Tuesday morning, will be given by Professor J Bruce German from the University of California who will explain why every animal scientists needs to know more about genomics, proteomics and metabolomics.

WPSA will join us on Tuesday for their Spring Meeting which includes a joint session on *Poultry diseases*. We then have sessions on *Breeding and animal welfare: threats and opportunities*; *Nutrition and health*; *Livestock and sustainable livelihoods*; *Finishing pigs systems* (organised by MLC); *Reproduction*; *Pig production*; *Dairy production* and *Ethology and welfare*.

Wednesday has *Animal genetic resources*, *Experimental genetics*, *Ruminant meat quality*, *Pig nutrition* and *Pigmeat quality*.

There are a whole variety of poster displays including three with discussions:

- *Equines*
- *Genetics*
- *In-vitro and analytical techniques*

As usual there will be a lot going on and although the Programme Committee have tried extremely hard to avoid major clashes, it is appreciated that sometimes you will want to be in two places at once (suggestion - bring a friend?).

To help make this a bigger and better meeting than ever before, we would be grateful if you could disseminate information about all the sessions (drawing their attention to the programme on the website) through the networks that you have with colleagues and friends who are not BSAS members. Remember the aim is to bring all sorts of people together to discuss animal science whether they are members or even animal scientists!

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New Features at York

You will be pleased to know that there is a brand new restaurant which seats 400 in Goodricke College, adjacent to the Exhibition Centre. This means we will all be able to eat together. So less walking and more time to meet and chat! It even has a bar!

Whilst posters will still be displayed in the Exhibition Centre we also hope to use the old Goodricke restaurant for poster discussions. This should provide more room in the exhibition area for tables and chairs where delegates can sit with friends and colleagues. An Internet Café is also planned in the Exhibition Centre so that delegates can check their emails and keep in touch with home.

Annual Conference Dinner –You'll be chuffed!

As an alternative to the Racecourse we are dining in the National Railway Museum at York, so you will be sitting on the platform adjacent to some very historic steam engines and trains. We hope you enjoy the experience! We promise no British Railway sandwiches (This is a joke that only UK residents of a certain age will understand).

Programme Committee

- working hard and on the look out

Once again the committee have worked very hard (each member assessing 135 summaries over three weeks!) to sort 270 submitted summaries into acceptable theatre and poster presentations. The number is up by 20% on last year, which is very gratifying. The committee have noticed a significant improvement in quality by some of the authors who did not do so well in 2003. The committee is also conscious that a number of authors last year did not attend the meeting to present their work. We understand that sometimes there is a valid excuse, but we now have a list of no-shows and the committee will be keeping a very close eye on those who submit summaries with no intention of attending. If you submit a poster please do make every effort to come and if you cannot make it let us know in advance who will present your poster.

Admin/Finance Officer

Peta Garrad has joined the BSAS secretariat until the end of June 2004, whilst Fiona Ferguson is on maternity leave.

Technical & Ethical Committee

The T&E Committee recently met in London and discussed a number of topics including:

Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

BSAS and WPSA are currently working with the Nutrition Society to develop a register of animal scientists. Janice Harland, Bruce Cottrill and Mike Forbes are working as a small sub-group on the modus operandi of this initiative. A report will go to the AGM in April outlining the scheme and potential costs. The register will cater for all animal scientists who will be able to declare their area of specialism. The CPD element involves scientists actively keeping their CPD records up to date on an annual basis. Their aims, objectives and performance would be monitored on a five year cycle. The system will work using a series of mentors. Janice Harland will take part in a mentoring training course in January and a pilot of the scheme will run in early spring.

Nutritional Standards

Following the success of the Nutrient Standards for Pigs booklet by Colin Whittemore, the Nutritional Standards Group is now in discussion with DEFRA and others looking at feed into beef (FIB) about addressing standards for beef and sheep. BSAS is also helping to organise sessions covering the *harmonisation of feeding standards in Europe* at the EAAP meetings in 2004 and 2005. BSAS President, John Newbold, will be chairing next year's meeting in Bled, Slovenia.

Piotr Pasciak from Poland

Piotr Pasciak is one of the new and 'remote' members of the T&E Committee as he lives in Southern Poland. Peter came to London for the recent T&E Committee meeting to talk about how BSAS might better serve potential members in Eastern Europe. There is considerable potential for animal science activities in this part of the world. We are now talking about a possible meeting/workshop to encourage more members from Poland. The subject is likely to cover *meat quality* which will be of interest to colleagues both in Greece and at Bristol University. Peter also demonstrated a Polish version of our website that he had produced.

Books

CABI have a new Publication 'Poisonous plants and related toxins' BSAS members will receive a 20% discount. See www.cabi-publishing.org/bookshop for details.

Committee members and society representatives

Both Programme and T&E committee met recently and are looking for 'new blood' to join them. Members do not have to join Council to be on a committee as each committee has non-council members.

Chairmen of Programme and Publication's Committee and the IOB Representative will be stepping down at the AGM. Chairmen normally come from within the committee, but any member of the society is welcome to put their name forward for consideration by Council which meets on 21 January 2004. The Society will also be looking for three new Council members at the AGM in April.

If you would like an informal and confidential chat over any of the above, including IOB Rep., then please give Mike Steele a ring on 01848 331437 or email m.steele@ed.sac.ac.uk

EAAP SCHOLARSHIPS

Each year EAAP gives scholarships to young scientists (under 39) to attend their Annual Meeting. This year EAAP will meet in Bled, Slovenia, 5-8 September. If you fit the age criteria and are thinking of submitting a paper that fits this year's programme (see www.bfro.uni-lj.si/eaap2004) then you may be eligible to be put forward by BSAS for a scholarship that will cover all registration, travel and accommodation costs. BSAS usually nominates two BSAS members and if one is successful then we normally fund the other.

We need a copy of your **full paper, by 20 January 2004**, which must not exceed five pages including all diagrams, a copy of your abstract, an estimate of travel costs for Bled and your bank details.

Your paper must fit one of the programme sessions and you must also send your EAAP abstract to Wageningen Press. Successful candidates normally hear by May 2004.

GENESIS FARADAY PARTNERSHIP

Two CASE scholarships are available from the Genesis Faraday Partnership (Farm Animal Genetics and Genome mix). These are targeted at students studying for their PhD with both an academic institution and a commercial company involved. The studentships include top-up funds above normal BBSRC rates. For full details contact Pauline.McCrossan@genesis-faraday.org Deadline for applications is **29th February 2004**.

Grass Farmer

Our sister society, the British Grassland Society, produces a very attractive magazine called the Grass Farmer, targeted at farmers. If you would like copies, the BGS are offering BSAS members a special rate of £2 per year which covers all three issues. We will be selling the spring edition at York, but if you are interested please contact miranda@britishgrassland.com

Sponsorship - BSAS Annual Meeting

If your company would like to provide sponsorship for the Annual Meeting then please contact the BSAS Office for an application form. Companies are welcome to sponsor sessions or specific items such as delegate bags and receptions.

FREE MEMBERSHIP

BSAS Council have decided to offer free membership to scientists in developing countries who are unable to fund their subscription. A list of target countries is being placed on the website and any animal scientist who wishes to take up this offer is asked to contact the office. Memberships will be reviewed annually. If you know of suitable individuals please tell them to contact us.

If you are able to pay or are employed by one of the multi-national organisations working in developing countries please leave the free membership places to scientists who lack funds.

Animal Science journal - free copies available for your library!

We've discovered several decades of the journal stored with our printers in Scotland. Rather than let them continue to gather dust we would be happy to give them to organisations or institutes in developing countries who would like them for their libraries for the use of scientists and students. We will even pay the freight. If you're interested in receiving journals up to 1998 then please contact the BSAS office so we can arrange despatch. Giving the journals away will save BSAS storage costs.

STUDENT COUNCIL

BSAS is working on the development of a BSAS Student Council. A number of postgraduate students, currently studying at a variety of UK Universities, are being approached to attend the Annual Meeting at York next April. They will be asked to consider how a council might operate to advise the BSAS Council on how it should better meet the needs of young people, interested or involved in animal science. This group would be asked to collect, collate and communicate the views of animal science students to the Society. Council are well aware that more needs to be done to retain the younger members we have and attract new ones. Susan Jarvis and Melissa Royal from T&E Committee are assisting but if you have a postgraduate student who might like to get involved please contact BSAS.

£1000 awards for projects in animal-welfare

Applications are invited for the Humane Slaughter Association's Dorothy Sidley Awards. These are available to students and trainees to undertake projects relating to improving animal welfare in markets, during transport and at slaughter. Five are available worth £1,000 each. Students working in agriculture, vet medicine, animal science, aquaculture, and animal welfare and behaviour or attending relevant courses are eligible. Deadline for applications is the 31st January 2004. For full details see www.hsa.org.uk

Assuring the Quality of Research

Defra Peer Review

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) is a major funder of science, spending over £300 million annually on research and other scientific activities such as surveillance and monitoring to underpin its policies.

Defra's Chief Scientific Advisor is required to provide an independent challenge to the science commissioned by the Department and to assure himself that the Department's policies are informed by high-quality science.

To do this completed Defra-funded research projects will be peer reviewed.

Defra are seeking a large number of peer reviewers from a wide range of disciplines to take part in reviewing its research. In the next twelve months we particularly require expertise in the following areas: animal science; animal/ruminant nutrition; livestock agriculture and breeding; grassland ecology; and plant breeding. We will also require a significant number of statisticians.

Peer reviewers will be paid an honorarium of £130 per report reviewed.

Peer reviewers may be requested to review up to three final reports a year, with each report normally being around 20 pages long.

We will also require co-ordinating peer reviewers, which in addition to peer reviewing reports, will also be asked to summarise the peer reviewers' comments for up to 20 projects in a research programme and summarise all the reports on a similar subject. A co-ordinating peer reviewer will be paid an additional £500 per day for report writing.

For further information and to register your interest please see <http://www.defra.gov.uk/science/quality/default.asp> or contact Dr Iain Williams or Dr Konrad Bishop, Science Quality and Priorities Branch, Cromwell House, Dean Stanley Street, London SW1P 3JH. Telephone: 020 7238 1685/1832. Email: sqp.enquiries@defra.gsi.gov.uk



OBITUARY

John Corbett

We are sad to report the loss of one of our oldest members John Corbett who died on December 7 and present the following from James Greenhalgh.

'John was one of a group of 1940's agricultural graduates from Reading who later became distinguished animal scientists. After graduation he went to Massey University, New Zealand for postgraduate studies, then joined the Rowett Research Institute to work on the nutrition of grazing animals. His work there included studies of winter grazing of cattle (a considerable challenge in NE Scotland!), the development of methods for estimating feed intake, and calorimetric studies of grass-fed ruminants. In 1963 he was drawn back to the Antipodes, this time to CSIRO Pastoral Research Laboratory in Armidale, New South Wales, where he built on his work in Aberdeen to measure the energy transactions of free-grazing animals. Much of his research was aimed at improving the definition of energy and protein requirements of ruminants, and it was entirely appropriate that he led the group of scientists who produced the 1990 publication "Feeding standards for Australian livestock: Ruminants". He retained his interest in requirements after he had retired, and was never happier than when "comparing and contrasting" standards from different countries. Also in retirement, he was much involved in fostering collaboration in research between Australian and Asian countries.

John very competently supervised a number of PhD students before obtaining a doctorate himself, this being a DSc from Massey University. His work in Australia received national recognition when he was awarded the order of Australia medal. Despite spending 40 years away from Britain he remained a loyal and active member of BSAP/BSAS, and returned frequently to attend the Society's meetings. His wife, Audrey, pre-deceased him; he leaves a son and two daughters, all well-established in Australia'.

BSAS Occasional Meetings 2004 - 2005

2004

- Autumn 2004 **Decoupling: Implications for UK Farmers** (this may become a joint BSAS/BGS Meeting)
Royal Agricultural College, Cirencester, organiser John Alliston. Email: John.Alliston@royagcol.ac.uk
- 16-17 September 04 **Future Challenges to Animal Science Education**, Writtle College, Organiser Julian Hill. Email: jh@writtle.ac.uk
- October 2004 or 2005 **Food Quality and Safety** - Meeting in Eastern Europe - Details available soon.
- November 2004 **Low Input Sheep Systems**, Ireland, organiser Alistair Carson. Alistair.carson@dardni.gov.uk

2005

- 15-18 November **Equine Meeting**, Royal Agricultural College, Cirencester.
- September 2005 **Integrating Crop and Livestock Systems: Meeting the challenge of globalisation**, Khon Kaen, Thailand.
(Jointly with Animal Husbandry Association of Thailand)
Draft Components
- An introductory session on issues covering the globalisation of trade and politics.
 - The changing relationship of ASEAN countries with the developed world
 - The impact of globalisation on developing countries including human health
 - The impact on farming systems in ASEAN countries especially livelihoods of smallholders
- Issues
Livelihoods/ poverty/ sustainability, Food safety/ traceability/ zoonosis & animal health /GIS, Social science aspects/ employment/ urban drift, GMO's/organics/herbal, Environment/deforestation/ water quality/ pollution, Smallholders/ backyard production/ Industrial/ Commercial Units, Trade issues/ politics/ marketing/ economics, Nutrient balances/ recycling/ energy/ soils, Use of crops for animals
- All Livestock species will be covered including ducks and chickens, fish, and species relevant to Asia like buffalo/yaks plus a wide range of crops including tree & plantation crops, vegetables, rice and those used in industrial commodity production.
- Format 2 days presentations, one day visits, one-day with innovative interactions
Adequate space would be allowed for traditional animal production/science research for all delegates to present information as posters.
- Date to be confirmed **Human health from manipulating animal products** contact - John MacRae, Rowett Institute, Aberdeen.
- Date to be confirmed **Dairy cow fertility and health** contact Melissa Royal, Liverpool Vet School.

Other Meetings 2004

- 19 April 2004 **Plants as Animal Foods: a case of Catch 22?**
A one day conference in the Royal Botanical Gardens in Edinburgh. This conference will focus on antimicrobial and antiparasitic properties of plant products for animals as mediated through plant secondary metabolites. A joint Nutrition Society/BSAS initiative - For further details visit the bsas website or email: J.Houdijk@ed.sac.ac.uk
- 20-22 April 04 **British Grassland Society - symposium on Organic Farming, Harper Adams University College, Shrops, UK**
see www.britishgrassland.com
- 28 May- 3 June 04 **34th ICAR and Interbull meeting, Sousse, Tunisia.** For details check website www.icar.org/Tunisia2004
- 11-14 July 04 **British Grassland Society Summer Meeting, Askham Bryam College, York.** Visit www.britishgrassland.com
- 5-9 September 04 **EAAP Annual Meeting, Bled, Slovenia.**
See see www.bfro.uni-ij/EAAP2004 for full details of programme and costs. Note that you can fly Ryanair to Austria (Klagenfurt) and northern Italy (Trieste) for connections to Bled as well as Adria Airways to Ljubljana, the Slovenian capital.
- 14-17 September 04 **The Nottingham Feed Conference** - Always inspiring - University of Nottingham, Sutton Bonington, UK
The meeting attracts delegates from all parts of the Feed Industry, ranging from compounders/raw materials through to supplement/additive companies, vitamin manufacturers, pharmaceutical suppliers, advisors, consultants, university/research personnel, government personnel. With its mixture of basic science and application, together with liaison between the university and the world of commerce, the meeting represents an excellent example of technology transfer. **Register your interest NOW: Feed-man-conf@nottingham.ac.uk**
check the website: <http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/feedconf>

International Convention on Corruption. Mérida, Yucatán, México. December 2003

1500 delegates from 47 countries attended the Second International Convention on Corruption held in Mérida. All four and five star hotels were fully booked – or so the radio told us. It did not tell us whether the delegates were Hares or Hounds, nor did it tell us who was/were picking up the tabs for the hotels. Some six weeks earlier (19th-24th October) the 6th International Symposium on the Nutrition of Herbivores ‘Matching Herbivore Nutrition to Ecosystems Biodiversity’ was also held in Mérida and was hosted by The Autonomous University of Yucatán (UADY). Some 135 delegates from 31 countries (two and three star hotels) attended. We had excellent plenary papers on the manatee, herbivorous lizards and warthogs. Cattle, sheep, goats and deer also featured in a good and well balanced programme, and 140 posters were presented. The session on food intake provoked most discussion which was extended to a second session on the final day. The International Committee (Chairman Andrew Sykes) has appointed a few new members to itself, and the current count includes BSAS members Juan Ku Vera, Ilias Kyriazakis, and Bob Orskov, The next meeting in 2007 will be in Beijing, China. (Chinese Association of Animal Science and Veterinary Medicine. caavxshb@public.bta.net.cn

Entertainment on the first day was provided by the UADY Yucatan Dancers who gave a superb demonstration of artistry and style in national dress, and at the dinner by the UADY Singers who sang Mexican and Yucatan songs, and then by Juan Ku, his Father and Gloria Dominguez who played their guitars. Bob Orskov provided the percussion, and later did a very energetic Mexican dance with a Mexican partner! The UADY main building built in traditional style with a central courtyard and close to the centre of Mérida provided a splendid venue with lecture theatres and poster sites in same building, and the central courtyard for entertainment, the dinner, and sitting in the sun. Good and relatively cheap hotels and restaurants are within easy walking distance. Thus the meeting had an excellent ambience, good papers and posters, and was greatly enjoyed by all. Your reporter heard of only one example of Moctezuma’s continuing studies on rate of passage.

Plenary sessions were:- The role of herbivores in agro-ecosystems; Unique features of Latin American feed resources and herbivores; Gastrointestinal microbiology; Advances in estimating gastrointestinal transformations; Strategies for nutrient acquisition: Intake regulation; Medicinal aspects; Plant secondary compounds; Marine and reptilian herbivores; Rumen microbiology in the genomics era. Bound copies of the plenary papers (\$US 35), Poster summaries (\$US 25), and a CD-ROM (Plenary papers and Poster summaries \$US 20) These prices are exclusive of postage and packing. Details can be obtained from Gabriela Sacramento at gschan@tunku.uady.mx

The satellite meeting ‘Wild and Domestic Herbivores Diet Characterisation’ held under a BSAS umbrella was on 17th and 18th of October with 50 participants from 18 countries. The meeting covered the use of alkanes and other plant waxes for the measurement of intake and digestibility, and use of the *in vitro* and *in sacco* techniques for diet evaluation. A workshop on application of the alkane technique was run by Bob Mayes and Hugh Dove. Twenty posters were presented. Running in parallel Felipe Torres of UADY had organised an excellent meeting ‘Secondary Compounds and Browse Utilisation’. with eight invited speakers. All the papers of the satellite, including poster summaries, will be published as a BSAS occasional publication, hopefully by the York meeting.

Dickon Hovell

The Seventh Annual Langford Food Industry Conference *Environment and Quality: Improving the Countryside and the Rural Economy* Wednesday 19th May 2004 *at the* University of Bristol School of Veterinary Science, Langford, Nr Bristol, UK

This year’s Food Industry Conference includes several subjects of current interest to livestock producers. The central theme is the need to improve the rural environment and product quality simultaneously – to satisfy legislators, consumers and producers themselves. We hear from DEFRA about CAP reform and a new strategy for animal health and welfare, from Danish Crown and BPEX about pig production in Denmark and the UK and from researchers about perceptions and realities surrounding ‘meat quality’. The speakers and topics addressed are detailed below.

- The new agenda for the livestock industry – linking environment and food quality
- CAP reform: Changes and opportunities for livestock producers
- Environmentally-sustainable grazing systems for livestock
- A market for meat from traditional breeds in the 21st century
- Animal health and welfare - a strategy for a sustainable livestock sector
- The Danish Crown approach to higher quality and profitability
- The British pig industry on the road to recovery
- Production systems and product quality – meat and myths
- Benefits of grass feeding for beef and lamb – development of grass-fed brands

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