

BSAS ANNUAL MEETING - YORK, 5-7 APRIL 2004

This year's Annual Meeting at York attracted 380 BSAS delegates and nearly 100 WPSA members who all enjoyed a very full and varied meeting in some early spring sunshine and showers. The BSAS programme started early on Monday with four parallel sessions! There were seven invited sessions as well as the joint WPSA/BSAS poultry diseases session and all attracted good audiences. The Hammond given by J Bruce German from California on Genomics, proteomics and metabolomics was particularly enjoyable because he pitched the terminology at the right level, despite arriving at 2am on the morning of the presentation, having flown in from Switzerland to Manchester, then driving on the M62 - his first time on the left hand side of the road!

In a survey of delegates who attended the genetics sessions, pig nutrition and the Hammond got special mentions as being particularly good. It was indeed very encouraging to see so many submitted genetics papers and it's likely that there will be more invited sessions next year to encourage the genetists to come on a regular basis.

The workshop 'writing and presentation presenting scientific papers', organised by Phil Garnsworthy from Nottingham, started off on the Sunday afternoon with double the number of young scientists to that of 2003. They all enjoyed a very interactive event which helped with their subsequent presentations at the meeting.

This year the organisers made great efforts to make the exhibition area at York much more friendly in terms of having places to sit, lounge and talk as networking is by far the most popular reason for people coming to the Annual Meeting. Next year we hope we can do something about the bar arrangements which are still not ideal.



Technical assistants relaxing at the NRM

The Conference Dinner this year was held in the National Railway Museum in York and gauged by all to be a runaway success, a sparkling event, original and well-organised. The other meals were all taken in the spanking new Roger Kirk restaurant on campus. We might even see the conference dinner there next year!

BSAS is particularly grateful to the following sponsors who supported the meeting or specific sessions :

- UFAW
- Alltech
- MLC
- Carina
- The Nutrition Directory

The Nutrition Directory part sponsored and organized the very nice bags which have been spotted at subsequent meetings!

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Good News - Annual Meeting prices for 2005 to be held at 2003 rates !!

The President's Committee met in early May and decided that the registration fee for York 2005 should be held as it was for 2004 and 2003. York is perceived to be expensive, although the organisers would argue that it is excellent value, relatively easy to get to and now has a registration fee that will not have changed for three years. However, we appreciate that some delegates still miss seagulls, and sitting drinking on the Grand Hotel staircase in Scarborough!

4-6 April 2005 - Annual Meeting

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@ed.sac.ac.uk
Website <http://www.bsas.org.uk>

Student Technical Helpers

We could not run the meeting at York without the input of a small band of students who run the technical side of the meeting. We are extremely grateful for their assistance and in particular the good humour with which they worked together sometimes under difficult circumstances. We are very pleased to have such highly promising young scientist as part of the team. Our thanks to :

| | |
|----------------------|----------------------------------|
| Stacey Bush | Harper Adams University College |
| Sarah Icely | Harper Adams University College |
| Kathryn Cooke | University of Wales, Aberystwyth |
| Adele Lloyd | Moulton College |
| Iain Pepper | Moulton College |
| Kennedy Nelson | University of Aberdeen |
| Gustavo Romero-Perez | University of Aberdeen |
| Joseph Uguru | University of Plymouth |

Prizes and Awards

The winner of the **2004 Sir John Hammond Award** was Professor John Woolliams from Roslin Institute. This was presented at the Conference Dinner in recognition of his contribution to the development of both theoretical and practical applications in the fields of animal breeding and the conservation of genetic resources

The **RSPCA/BSAS** winner this year was Steve Kestin from Bristol University. Dr Arthur Lindley, Director of Science at the RSPCA, gave the award. In his acceptance speech Steve highlighted the contribution his colleagues at Bristol had made to the work that he had undertaken over many years on poultry and fish.

President Prize Winners 2004

This year's best new presenters were Troy Fischer, University of New England, NSW, Australia for his theatre presentation on *'Description of weight, fat and muscle in growing lambs using random regression'*, and Jenny Macfarlane, SAC Edinburgh, for her poster *'Genotype by nutritional environment interactions for lamb growth and carcass composition'*.

They each received a cheque for £150 and a certificate. Formal presentations will take place at next year's conference dinner in York.

Essay Competition

Winners of the essay competition are students at the University of Wales, Aberystwyth. Kathryn Cooke won first prize for her essay on *'Alternatives to the use of antibiotics in the production of food from animal.'* Hedwig Emmerig was highly commended for her essay on *'The advantages and disadvantages of organic animal production systems'* as was Victoria Last for her essay on *'Alternatives to antibiotics in food production.'* We would like to congratulate all three on their success and thank all students who submitted essays. All entrants receive free membership of BSAS until the end of their course, the winner receives £150 and a certificate and those who are highly commended receive £50 and a certificate. Topics for next year will be advertised in September.

Student activities

Student Council - Persuades BSAS to provide free workshops and subsidised accommodation at York

For the first time a BSAS Student Council met at York to discuss what young people would like the society to do for them. As well as talking amongst themselves the group consulted with other students at the student reception. Penny Hawkins, on behalf of the group, then came to the AGM to present their findings to the members. These included the need to bring young people together at the Annual Meeting in a much more organised way and to facilitate their need to talk to scientists, within what is still perceived to be an old boys' network, which for them is sometimes like an impenetrable forest! They also identified the need to provide a series of workshops during York 2005 that would update or upgrade their skills in topics like experimental design, genetics, presentation skills and obtaining grants and jobs. Penny has subsequently attended the joint Programme/T&E meeting in Edinburgh to take part in the discussions for York 2005. BSAS have agreed that all of the ideas put forward by the student council should be implemented and will part fund accommodation on the Sunday night, prior to the meeting in 2005, so that students can attend the free workshops identified. It might even be possible to encourage some of the invited speakers to come early and give briefings for student groups. The student counsellors are now looking at ways that the Student Council might become a democratically constituted group within the society. Our thanks go to :

| | |
|--------------------|---------------------------------|
| Alison Bond | Harper Adams University College |
| Leon Broom | University of Leeds |
| Catherine Hayhurst | University of Edinburgh |
| Penny Hawkins | University of Newcastle |
| Jenny Macfarlane | SAC Edinburgh |
| Victoria Morris | Writtle College |

Susan Jarvis and Melissa Royal from the T&E Committee did much of the preparation work to make it all happen.

Stop Press – The Student Council will send representatives to each of the BSAS Committee meetings in 2004 and 2005 in order to get fresh ideas into the Society.

Industry Representatives attend an ideas session in Edinburgh

In May, BSAS was pleased to welcome three industry representatives to a joint meeting of Programme/T&E Committee to discuss ideas for York 2005 and occasional meetings.

Tim Brigstock (RABDF), Peter Baber (NSA) and Nigel Miller (Scottish NFU) gave their views on the potential of joint sessions with industry bodies to attract more farmers/practitioners to BSAS meetings.

They pointed out that farmers were looking for practical, take-home messages, but that this is often difficult to achieve from Annual Meeting sessions. They felt that BSAS was seen by the industry as an academic institution and should maintain this focus. However, it was likely that BSAS would become much more relevant to industry and should provide a scientific basis to review changes. In reality they could not see many farmers attending the Annual Meeting, but could see potential in specialised occasional meetings.

AGM

The AGM at York this year was a very lively event. It debated on whether BSAS should continue to be a member of IOB and/or join the new Federation of Bio Science. As you might expect a whole spectrum of views were put forward but the consensus was that BSAS should move on to the Federation and, with the Nutrition Society, become active members in promoting whole animals to a molecular biology audience. Subsequent to this John MacRae, the incoming Vice-President, agreed to take on this initial task as part of his Vice-Presidential responsibilities.

The journal was also discussed, and it was agreed that the impact factor needed to improve in order to entice authors who currently target more specialist journals for their publications. Currently the Publications Committee and editors are discussing these concerns and options for better marketing of the journal with the current printer and a number of publishers. Significant changes will occur in how journals are used in future and BSAS has to be ready to adapt. Electronic only is one possible eventuality and 'bundling' journals together is something that is already occurring.

More good news - No increase in BSAS Subscriptions for 2005

The AGM unanimously agreed to stand still on subscriptions for members for 2005. Nobody objected!

The future of BSAS

As previously mentioned BSAS is again reviewing where it should be going in the future. Delegates at York took the opportunity to spend part of their Tuesday evening debating future model scenarios for BSAS in 2010. The first was whether we should continue as a farm species orientated society with a declining number of people involved or interested in farm animals. The other was whether we should take a more expansionist view and look at animal science as part of work being undertaken by a whole variety of scientists in fields like bio-medical and molecular biology.

Membership and subscriptions to the journal Animal Science continue to decline in line with the contraction of the animal science industry, particularly in the UK and Europe. If we do nothing then the society is likely to get smaller but could still remain viable if costs and perhaps activities were adjusted accordingly.

The meeting identified a number of options that it might be prudent for BSAS to follow rather than putting its eggs all in one basket. The diminishing flow of young people in the biosciences was cause for some concern and members are urged to promote BSAS to potential young members within their sphere of activity. They also thought that there was much scope within specific areas like companion animals, particularly with equines, and with new member countries of the EU there was also potential for encouraging additional members from Central Europe as well as further a field.

New Council Members

We welcome 3 new Council Members

Dr Bob Mayes, Macaulay Institute

Bob's work on radionuclide transfer to sheep (in collaboration with the then Institute of Terrestrial Ecology) was crucial to the development of regulations surrounding the movements and sale of animals in the aftermath of the Chernobyl disaster. Bob's membership of the Society extends over many years and he helped to organise the recent BSAS satellite meeting in Mexico on New Techniques in Animal Science. As well as having a wealth of experience to bring to BSAS, Bob is an ideas man and at this stage in the development of BSAS this is what the Society needs.

Dr Bevis Miller, University of Bristol

Bev's research interests are anti-nutritional factors, in-feed enzymes, stress and immune function, particularly in pigs. His general area is pig nutrition and he is very well known for his work on the nutrition of the neonatal and early-weaned pig. Much of this work is conducted with industry and Bev has good contacts and awareness of the industry. At Langford he formed the Pig Discussion Group which brought together industry and academe and ran for many years.

Bev is interested in rural development in countries abroad and has a particular involvement with rural development in Zimbabwe. He is currently supervising a project on the potential of an indigenous pig breed in Zimbabwe to contribute to cross breeding.

Professor Jamie Newbold, IRS, University of Wales Aberystwyth

Jamie has recently moved from The Rowett Research Institute, Aberdeen to take up the post of Professor of Animal Science and Director of Research within the Institute of Rural Science, University of Wales, Aberystwyth. His research interests focus on the understanding and manipulation of the rumen microbial ecosystem to improve animal productivity while reducing the environmental impact of ruminant farm livestock enterprises. In particular he has developed an interest in the role of ciliate protozoa in the recycling of microbial nitrogen within and production of methane from the rumen. In this context he has been co-ordinator in the formation and launch of the European Rumen Ciliate Culture Collection and is on the scientific advisory board of the Tetrahymena genome-sequencing project.

Programme Committee

As part of the discussions and planning for the York 2005 BSAS Annual Meeting the Programme Committee recently met along with the T&E Committee to discuss ideas for 2005. Some of the session ideas and organizers they came up with include :

Developing countries – Livestock and Livelihoods
Organisers - Wyn Richards and Peter Rowlinson

President's Session & Hammond - Ecology, Land Use, Diversity
Organiser - Sandra Edwards

Lessons from model animal species
Organisers - Lutz Bunger and Bevis Miller

Equine or Companion Animals
Organisers - Andrew Hemmings

Breeding for Health
Genetic Evaluations
Organiser - John Woolliams

Microbial ecology of the gut action
Organisers - John Wallace and Jamie Robertson

Immunology for health and production/mechanisms of growth control
Organisers - John Wallace and Rod Hill

If you have any thoughts on the above or other ideas please get in touch as we are always pleased to hear from members.

They also highlighted a number of improvements needed for their next meeting including excluding poster presentations, of authors who did not turn up for the meeting, from the book of summaries. This will involve rescheduling of the hardcopy print schedule and a deadline for authors to register. Programme Committee are also keen to identify ways of raising the profile of posters and it is likely that two poster receptions, run as plenary sessions will be included to encourage all delegates to view and talk with authors. These are likely to be before dinner on the Monday and Tuesday night. They are also looking for much better arrangements for the bars at York as they wish to make sure that networking is made as easy as possible. This was identified as the most important reason for people to come to the Annual Meeting.

BSAS organised a delegate survey at York to try to identify the good and the bad things that the society was doing at its meeting, and what it might do to improve things in the future. The major benefits are the networking opportunities and the friendly attitude of both organisers and delegates. This year's Conference Dinner at the National Railway Museum was very highly praised as were sessions on genetics, pig nutrition and the Hammond. On the negative side they were less than happy with the bar facilities and ambiance of York campus, and felt that the society image was still 'old boy network' orientated.

Efforts will now be made to take these comments on board and the new BSAS President, Professor Sandra Edwards, from Newcastle University is very keen to see a significant emphasis on encouraging and servicing young people's needs as part of her year.

BSAS President - Professor Sandra Edwards

The society welcomes Sandra Edwards as our new BSAS President. Sandra grew up on a small, mixed farm in the East of England. After graduating with a BA (Hons) in Natural Sciences at the University of Cambridge, she completed a PhD at the University of Reading. She has since worked for more than 25 years in applied research for the UK Agricultural Development and Advisory Service, the Institute for Grassland and Animal Production, and the Scottish Agricultural College, where she has had responsibility for a range of projects on cattle and pig housing and welfare, nutrition and management. She has also been responsible for provision of specialist advice to Scottish pig producers and acted as consultant to a variety of industry bodies. From her position as Head of the Animal Management and Health Department of SAC, she moved in 1998 to become Reader in Animal Science in the Department of Agriculture at the University of Aberdeen. In 2000, she was appointed to the Chair of Agriculture at the University of Newcastle, where her research interests focus on the multidisciplinary interactions between nutrition, reproduction, behaviour and welfare in pigs.

She has been active in a number of national and international academic and industry committees, including appointment as a director of the Scottish Pig Industry Initiative, a member of the UK Pig Industry Welfare Advisory Group, and of the EU Scientific Veterinary Committee working group on the welfare of pigs. She has been an invited speaker at many international meetings on aspects of pig science and production, in Europe, North America, South America and Asia, and is author of over 300 scientific presentations relating to the nutrition, housing, welfare and management of pigs. In 1998 she was awarded the Roche National Livestock Nutrition Award for work on the interaction of nutrition and welfare in breeding sows, and in 1999 the RSPCA/BSAS Award for Innovative Developments in Animal Welfare for her multidisciplinary work on improving the welfare of pigs.

President's theme

The President's theme for 2004/05 of 'Enterprise and the Next Generation' is aimed at widening the society's links and focussing on younger scientists. We look forward to an interesting year ahead.

Plants as Animal Food: a case of Catch 22?

On 19 April this year the Scottish Section of the Nutrition Society, with support from BSAS, held a one-day meeting on the role of plant secondary metabolites (PSM) in animal nutrition. The meeting was held in the Royal Botanical Gardens, and was thus surrounded by a wide range of PSM. Whether the latter contributed to the success of the day by providing the right atmosphere requires further research but based on their responses, the 46 delegates very much appreciated the six main speakers and the four poster presentations, participated fully in all discussions and had the opportunity to meet old and new friends. In addition, the meeting attracted the attention of various industrial companies. Thanks go to Alltech Biotechnology, Bard Limited, Cotswold Seeds Limited, Crina SA, Kellogg's and Rumenco Limited for generously sponsoring the meeting.

Glenn Iason opened the morning series of keynote lectures with an overview paper on the ecological perspectives of PSM, which set the scene for the day to come. This was followed by a joint presentation from Tom Acamovic and John Brooker on the biochemistry of PSM. The last paper of the morning was on plant breeding perspectives for PSM, delivered by Phillip Morris.

After an excellent lunch, poster presenters had the opportunity to put over their main findings, with short presentations. Gwendolyn Jones presented her work on *essential oil blends and oregano whole herb on the growth performance of weaner pigs*, whilst Sian Ilsley discussed her paper on *Quillaja saponin supplementation to pregnant sows and its effects on litter characteristics*. Michael Lee covered *duodenal flow of chlorophyll metabolites in beef steers* and Shanmugavelu Sithambaram showed *fermentation patterns of wheat samples that differ in their chemical characteristics, using ileal microflora from chicks*. Sian Ilsley won the student award for best poster for which she received a prize of book vouchers.

The afternoon session started with a lecture by John Wallace, *on the possibility for PSM to manipulate rumen fermentation*, which was followed by a paper *on the antiparasitic properties of PSM*, presented by Spiridoula Athanasiadou. After tea, Andrew Chesson discussed the *expected possibilities and problems of considering PSM as feed additives* in the final paper of the day. All speakers then joined in the general discussion, which included items like *the role of PSM in self-medication* and *how to tackle the vast amount of PSM that might be suitable for further studies*.

All papers and posters presented will appear in the Proceedings of the Nutrition Society, with keynote papers likely to appear in the 2004 November issue.

Jos Houdijk and Mauvis Gore (local organizers)

BSAS Publications, published by Nottingham University Press

Dairying - Using science to meet consumers' needs - Publication 29

Discussing how the milk and milk products industry can meet the needs of today's consumer, this title look at cows for lifetime production, feeds and feeding, opportunities and the impact and the future of dairying.

Farm Animal Genetic Resources - Publication 30

The papers in this volume have been written to create awareness of, and to discuss key issues in this field, such as policy, the genetic basis for conservation, new opportunities for rare breeds, molecular and reproductive techniques to support conservation and conservation in action.

Appliance of Pig Science - Publication 31

Discusses how the industry, as a whole, can close the loop and meet the needs of today's researcher, processor, producer and consumer.

Responding to the Livestock Revolution - Publication 33

The role of globalisation and implications for poverty alleviation. Discusses the livestock revolution which is occurring in some developing countries and is foreseen to become a wider phenomenon over the next 20 years, due to increases in population, urbanization and incomes.

Coming soon - Emerging Equine Science - Publication 32

Contact Simon Robinson at Nottingham University Press - www.nup.com or telephone 0115 9831011 if you are interested in obtaining a copy

BSAS Meetings 2004/2005

- 23 September 2004** **The challenge facing Animal Science Education** Royal Agricultural College, Cirencester (leaflet enclosed/linked)
- 14-15 October 2004** **Meat Quality - pigs and poultry** University of Krakow, Poland (leaflet enclosed/linked)
- 4-6 April 2005** **BSAS Annual Meeting**
University of York - see page 4
Summaries to be received by 22 October 2004. Call for papers on the website and in the August Newsletter.
- 15 – 18 November 2005** **Livestock-crop systems - Integrating farming systems to meet the challenge of globalisation**
The British Society of Animal Science, and the Animal Husbandry Association of Thailand are pleased to announce a jointly organized conference to be held in Khon Kaen, Thailand in November 2005.
- The overall theme of the conference is **Integrating livestock-crop systems to meet the challenges of globalization** and will be considering all animal species (non-ruminant and ruminant) and all production systems (commercial and village). It is anticipated that specific sessions will address a number of important topical issues including the following :
- Crop-livestock systems
 - Organic livestock production
 - Food safety and traceability
 - GATT, world trade and marketing
 - Medicinal plants
 - Animal welfare
 - Environmental aspects of Animal Wastes
 - Nutrient Balances
- The conference will include key note invited papers, offered papers (both linked to the above sessions and free communications), posters, field visits, trade stands and a full social programme. Future details will be available shortly.

Other Meetings

- 5-9 September 2004** **EAAP - 55th Annual Meeting of the European Association for Animal Production**
Bled, Slovenia - visit <http://www.bfro.uni-lj.si/eaap2004/default.asp>
- 15-17 September 2004** **The Nottingham Feed Conference - always inspiring**
For details email: Feed-man-conf@nottingham.ac.uk
or visit website <http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/feedconf>