

BSAS Newsletter

May 1999, No 2

Annual Meeting Report Continuing Professional Development (page 4)

Annual Meeting 1999

Howard Simmins, Chairman of Programme Committee has a summary of good and bad points about the Annual Meeting. Please read his piece as it has implications for future presentations.

What can help? Here's what to do - it doesn't look too tough, does it?

- Write clearly and simply
- Clarify the objective of the experiment in the introduction
- Do not skimp on materials and methods - this paragraph is the only chance we have to evaluate the quality of the experiment.
- Indicate replication - if the animals were individually housed, say so!
- State statistical analysis used at end of materials and methods - this is a crucial sentence.
- Give the most important data, if space is at a premium.
- Conclude what the results mean in terms of the objectives
- Give only a maximum of 3 references.
- Format the page and script according to instructions send out with the call for summaries and also according to those for Animal Science papers (which includes the tables, p values, format and references).
- Do not shrink graphs to microscopic size - the object is not how much you can get on to a single sheet, but to ascertain that your message is passed to your reader.
- Stick to significant levels in script (eg $p < 0.05$) and don't use $p > 0.05$. There has been a tendency to allow "tendencies" in recent years but that means a maximum of $p < 0.10$ and no greater.
- Give measures of variance (eg standard errors) in script, tables and graphs
- Proof read the summaries, then again and again - and don't forget the tenses.

We will return to this checklist before the next call for summaries. Please remember the summary should be a final and complete document. We have not the time to request or oversee adequately any changes. Next year we may only let those eight perfect summaries into the conference!

*Howard Simmins
Programme Committee Chairman*

1999 Annual Meeting - Successes and Gripes

Did you read the excellent reporting of our conference in the April 2nd edition of Farmer's Weekly? Nearly 10 pages were given over to the conference and the editorial was also impressed by "...several speakers who skilfully identified what their research meant to farmers...". This is a tribute to the hard work of Harry Hope and our Press Officer Janice Harland - long may it continue. The conference also went without a hitch, which is, of course, thanks to the sterling efforts of our secretariat in Edinburgh. Some 510 people attended which is similar to last year.

So, everything's rosy? Not quite, there was disappointment expressed in several quarters over the quality of some of the invited sessions and aspects of the ways species were too segregated during conference sessions. We continually strive to improve your conference and will be looking very carefully at the overall conference format at our next Programme Committee meeting in May. All ideas from any member will be seriously looked at. Please send them to Mike Steele.

There is another important area which has failed to live up to expectations. This is the quality of summaries which arrived on the Programme Committee's desks at the beginning of November. Out of 284 summaries received, 225 were accepted and 58 rejected. Only 8 summaries were accepted without revision. These, please remember, should have been your final versions and what you would have been happy to see published! Most alterations could have been avoided, such as spelling and grammatical mistakes and not following the format instructions. Too many are written at the last minute (I know, I've done it too!) and were not checked by the senior authors. Certainly, the standard of English was variable, which was extremely disappointing if there was an English-as-first-language speaker as co-author. As a consequence your Programme Committee spent too much time on aspects of presentation and not enough on technical content. We need your help to redress the balance.

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Powerpoint works well

Aside from a few local difficulties the Powerpoint presentations were as good as the slides this year. There was a tendency for some authors to over elaborate but in general the presentations complemented the talks. Well done to everybody who tried!!

We shall now have Powerpoint available for all future theatre sessions. Programme Committee has some useful suggestions for guidance notes for authors who insist on "all singing all dancing presentations". These will be issued in August.

Posters up for longer

This year all poster presenters were able to leave their displays up for half of the meeting. This gave everyone ample opportunity to view. Unfortunately not all authors attended the period designated for questions!!.

The postgraduate presentation - questioning

As everyone will remember giving your first public presentation at BSAS is a stressful experience. It is always difficult for a balance to be struck between questioning the science rather than publicly embarrassing our young scientists. The role of the chairperson and more specifically the postgraduate's supervisor is very important. We would encourage all supervisors to attend their postgraduate student's presentation in order to assist, if required, in the answering of questions. There is no question that scientific findings must be challenged and questioned, but increasingly delegates need to consider the manner in which this is done if they are not to frighten off our future scientists. Equally supervisors must be prepared to shoulder the responsibility for the work that they oversee. This may mean they have to defend their student's work in public.

RSPCA Award

Dr Sandra Edwards, University of Aberdeen was delighted to receive the RSPCA/BSAS Award for innovative developments in animal welfare at the Annual Conference Dinner. Mike Tomlinson, the RSPCA Chairman, presented the crystal bowl and cheque to Sandra, for her "outstanding contribution to scientific research in animal welfare, particularly her multi-disciplinary approach to improving the well-being of pigs".

Animal Welfare Course

For the sixth year, a course on Animal Welfare will be held in St Catharine's College, Cambridge and Birmingham University, UK in three modules: 20-24 September 1999, 6-8 December 1999 and 10-12 January 2000. The course was designed for those taking the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons Certificate or Diploma in Animal Welfare Science, Ethics and Law but is open to persons from any country with appropriate biological knowledge. All current R.C.V.S. Certificate holders have taken the course. For details please contact one of the organisers: Professor D M Broom, Department of Clinical Veterinary Medicine, University of Cambridge, Madingley Road Cambridge CB3 0ES. Telephone: 01223 337697 Fax: 01223 337610 e-mail: ga207@cam.ac.uk, or Professor D B Morton, Centre for Biomedical Ethics, University of Birmingham, The Medical School, Birmingham B15 2TT. Telephone: 0121 414 3616 Fax: 0121 414 6979.

Scholarships

Summer placement 1999

BSAS currently has two summer placements available for 1999. The aim is to enable our undergraduate students to experience a 6-8 week period of research work. A sum of £500 is available for each placement. This is normally matched by a similar amount from a commercial organisation or institute. BSAS would like to hear from interested students, universities, colleges and commercial companies. Placements can be arranged in the UK or abroad. Last year we had two placements in Holland and this year we already have one planned for Portugal.

Studying or researching with Third World Projects

Opportunities still exist for graduate students to contribute to the Department for International Development's (DFID) research activities by undertaking all or part of their field work on one of the Livestock Production Programme's projects. These projects are aimed at improving the livelihoods of poor people. Students are expected to find their own funding.

If you are interested in more details contact Wyn Richards, LPP Manager, NR International, PO Box 258, Chatham, Kent MP4 4PU or e-mail BSAS and we will pass on your request.

BSAS and ASAS

The President-Elect of ASAS, Don Beermann, and Bob Zimelman Ex-Executive Vice President of the FASS, both came to Scarborough. They gave an enormous amount of their time in both formal and informal discussions with BSAS members, talking about what was going on in the USA and how BSAS and ASAS might work more closely together. They have expertise in areas of publication, web site development and conference organisation that they are prepared to share.

As a consequence, BSAS Council is sending a formal letter to the ASAS Board requesting closer collaboration. ASAS already has good informal links with EAAP. BSAS would be looking towards collaboration on a more practical basis. The Americans are very interested in our proposed meeting in Mexico in 2002 and look towards working together to exchange information and speakers on a more regular basis.

Chris Reynolds from our International Group will be going to the ASAS Annual Meeting in Indianapolis this July. He will represent BSAS and continue the discussions that started in Scarborough.

COMMITTEES

Publications Committee

Neil Cameron, Secretary of Publications Committee, visited the American Society of Animal Science earlier this year. He talked with them about electronic publications; an avenue that BSAS hopes to pursue shortly.

He also discussed their editorial structure as BSAS is in the process of restructuring Animal Science's editorial team. This will be in place in time for the retirement, later this year, of our Senior Editor Dr. Tony Lawrence. The plan is to have five Section Editors and an Executive Editor. The Section Editors are likely to cover the following broad areas:

- ◆ Genetics and breeding
- ◆ Non ruminants, behaviour, fish
- ◆ Ruminant nutrition
- ◆ Reproductive physiology, endocrinology
- ◆ Carcass & meat, metabolism & growth

The number of editors will be increased to reduce individual loads and it is intended that they will have a wider international spread. Hilary Davies, the current Senior Technical Editor, will become the Executive Editor. Carol Woolliams will be the Technical Editor. The journal will be directed by an Editorial Board that will consist of the Section Editors, Executive Editor, BSAS Honorary Treasurer together with Chairman and Secretary of the Publications Committee. They will have their first meeting in mid-June 1999.

New Council Members

Your new President for the forthcoming year is Professor Bill Hill from Edinburgh University. Bill is a world authority on breeding and genetics and will become the Dean of Science at Edinburgh. He also finds time to run the family farm in Hertfordshire.

Professor Jeff Wood from the University of Bristol at Langford is now our Senior Vice-President. Jeff is an expert and enthusiast on meat and the food industry.

Dr John Milne from MLURI, Aberdeen is now the Junior Vice-President. MLURI, specialises in land use and environmental issues as applied to animal production.

Council members elected at the Scarborough AGM are:

- Dr Rosemary Agnew, ARINI, Hillsborough
- Dr Kevin Sinclair, SAC Aberdeen
- Professor Mike Lomax, Aberdeen University
- Mr Mike Lemmey, a farmer and journalist from Somerset.

Other committee changes

Dr Bruce Cottrill, Chairman of Technical and Ethical will be stepping down later this year from the committee. His replacement will be Dr Geoff Simm from SAC Edinburgh.

Dr Jess Scaife from Aberdeen University has joined the Publications Committee; Steve Bishop (Roslin Institute) and Dr Caroline Rymer (ADAS, Stratford) have both joined Programme Committee. Mr Mike Coffey from SAC Edinburgh has joined the PR Group.

NEW BOOKS

UFAW

will be publishing the special issue on 'Genetics and Animal Welfare' in November 1999 (see website : <http://www.ufaw3.dircon.co.uk> for details).

Proceedings of the Society of Nutrition Physiology.

The proceedings of the meeting held in Germany in March 1999 are now available price 46 Deutschmarks. ISDN 3769040920. Papers include Nutrient flow across the liver in Dairy cows. Calcium metabolism in a ruminants- physiological aspects and effects of anion rich diets. With 115 abstracts covering nitrogen metabolism, feed evaluation, digestion and metabolism, feed additives, fat metabolism, vitamins, macro and trace elements, undesirable feed ingredients. Contact DLG-Verlag, Eschborner Landstrabe 122, D 60489 Frankfurt am Main, Germany

Occasional Publications

Available from the Office are the latest publications from the BSAS Occasional Meetings :

No 21, Foods Lands & Livelihoods - setting research agendas for animal science. ISBN 0 906562 24 4
£18 + £4.50 airmail.

No 22, In vitro techniques for measuring nutrient supply to ruminants. ISBN 0 906562 26 0
£22 + £5.00 airmail

No 23 Farm animal welfare - who writes the rules?
ISBN 0 906562 26 7
£20 + £4.50 airmail

Continuing Professional Development

BSAS is setting up a small team to consider whether the society might have a role in a CPD scheme for livestock consultants. An increasing number of members have been concerned that assurance schemes and EU legislation will demand that consultants have a qualification that certifies them competent to provide services. Schemes already exist for plant herbicides/pesticides (BASIS) and for veterinary medicines, however, no such scheme exists for livestock consultants whose advice can have an impact on the welfare of animals, compliance with legislation and the ability of procedures to adhere to quality assurance schemes.

Any qualification would have to be awarded by a recognised industry body, accredited by an independent recognised body and supported by a defined scheme of continuous professional development.

Any scheme would give animal scientists a recognised status in providing expert advice in legal matters, competence in providing advice in relation to feedstuff regulations, a quality assured status which would enable clients to meet the needs of QA schemes and a recognised method of professional development.

The team will include representatives of BSAS, UKASTA, and BIAC. It will report back to Council in September 1999.

President's Prizes 1999

BSAS is always extremely pleased to be able to give awards to young scientists at Scarborough for their presentations. This year the judges awarded the best theatre presentation to Melissa Royal, University of Nottingham (paper No. 1) 'Trends in the fertility of dairy cows in the United Kingdom', and for the best poster to Ian Bland, SAC Aberdeen (No 189) 'The acquisition of IgG from colostrum by piglets'. The winners received £100 each and a certificate which will be presented at the conference dinner at the 2000 Annual Meeting.

The judges also commended other presenters in the theatre section, Marta Rivera Ferre, University of Aberdeen, (No 26) 'Estimation of voluntary intake and digestibility of grass by outdoor sows using the n-alkanes technique', and Richard Kirkland (No 33), ARINI, 'Metabolisable energy requirements of lactating dairy cows offered a straw/concentrate ration'.

In the poster section, Sara Morrow, SAC Edinburgh (No. 106) 'Growth and body composition of two breeds of sheep, and their cross, at similar proportions of mature size when given highly digestible or bulky feeds ad libitum'

Water buffaloes

Martin Steel is now working in China on a water buffaloes project. He would be interested to hear from anybody who has expertise in this area or is interested in what he's doing. Please use his e-mail and contact him direct.

Guanxi Water Buffalo Research Institute:

The WBRI is the only scientific research institute engaging in buffalo research in China. During the past 40 years, scientific and technical workers have been carrying out research on improvements in cross-breeding, selection of new breeds, chromosome-complex types and dairy processing and utilisation in buffalo. Many notable achievements have been made as a result of such scientific research.

Performances in production for the new cross-bred herd of milk-meat dual-purpose buffalo developed at the institute have reached comparable levels with buffaloes in other countries; milk yield in a lactation averages 2100 kg, with good individuals reaching 3800 kg; killing-out percentage of bulls at 24 months is 52%; and net meat percentage is 40%.

Currently, there are 360 buffalo of different breeds in stock on the buffalo breeding farm of the institute, of which 111 Murrah, 95 Nili-Ravi and 156 cross-bred buffaloes. There are over 120 milking buffaloes with an annual milk yield of 248 tonnes. The milk processing plant has a daily processing capacity of 2,500 kg milk and an annual processing output of 642 tonnes of different products. Due to consumer preference for buffalo milk because of its many benefits, demand greatly exceeds supply.

The institute also has an extension programme, based mainly on providing local small farmers with pure bulls for cross-breeding purposes with native buffalo to produce F1 milking buffalo (Chinese swamp buffalo have very low milk production potential, compared to the Indian/Pakistani breeds).

My work at the moment has been limited to planting some improved legumes for the grazing pastures, and also helping the technicians with the database for recording herd information, as well as giving recommendations on animal husbandry management.

Please do not hesitate to contact me. I am interested in research in buffalo and making contacts with people working with buffalo in other parts of the world, especially since the institute does not have many connections with the English-speaking world and I would be interested in setting-up links of this kind. *Martin C. Steel* (E-Mail is martinsteel@yahoo.com)

(If you have a short article about your project and we have space to publish we will try and put it in the Newsletter)

FUTURE MEETINGS - BSAS (Please see enclosed leaflets)

The two meetings in Ireland have been arranged so you can attend both in one trip and have a holiday in the middle!

Milk Composition - Belfast, Northern Ireland 16/17 September 1999

Sessions include consumer requirements, human health, processor requirements, making milk safer, meeting medical concerns, manipulating milk composition, potential economic benefits of altering milk composition and the role of the animal breeder, opportunities for nutritional manipulation, nutritional and non nutritional manipulation, opportunities for non-nutritional manipulation.

Fertility in the High Producing Dairy Cow, Galway, Ireland, 20-22 September 1999

Sessions to include reproductive efficiency, economics, patterns of growth and development, hormone patterns, risk factors, oestrous behaviour and detection, conception, stress, breeding, animal health,

26/27 October 1999 Edinburgh - The Challenge of Genetic Change in Animal Production

This meeting will address how continuing genetic change will impact on other branches of animal science and on management which will have to anticipate or cope with this change. Specific questions will be looked at under the headings of nutrition, health, welfare, economics and marketing and the genetics of animals. Further details in the leaflet and on the website or contact Professor Bill Hill c/o BSAS.

18/19 August 2000 - Gas Production Workshop - Wageningen, Holland

A joint BSAS /Wageningen meeting. This is a follow up to the Reading meeting in 1997. This workshop will run in Wageningen on the Fri/Sat before the EAAP meeting in The Hague in 2000. Sessions will cover the role of gas production for feed evaluation, changes and /or technical details of the technique and other applications. If you are interested in being involved or helping contact Eddie Deaville E-Mail Eddie.Deauville@adas.co.uk

July 2000 - Engineering Livestock Production

A joint BSAS/ Institute of Agricultural Engineering meeting to review recent developments in livestock science and agricultural engineering that promotes sustainable animal production. Topics likely to cover livestock housing, livestock production and livestock handling and transport.

2001 Greece - Organic Meat Production

Discussions are taking place with the Hellenic Society of Animal Science on a joint meeting. If you are interested in getting involved in this meeting or have some thoughts on papers or topics then we would like to hear from you.

2001/2002 - Mexico

Enquiries are being made about a possible tropical agriculture meeting in Mexico to follow up the Nairobi Meeting. Target dates were Nov-Dec 2002 or Jan-Feb 2003. The current aim is to provide a forum in which scientists could exchange knowledge on how to respond to the increasing global demand for animal products.

A number of themes could include: Biotechnology, Systems, Economics/ trade, Environmental impact, Livelihoods Food security and Genetics.

If you would like to get involved with any of the above meetings please contact the BSAS office.

Two new ideas for meetings in 2000 include.

- 1 The Nutrition and Management of the Post Weaned Piglet (Leeds)**
- 2 Growth & Development (Aberdeen)**

Details in the August Newsletter.

28-30 June '99

Farming with Trees

Greenmount College, County Antrim. Summer meeting of the Agroforestry Forum. Topics will include current technology transfer, a research findings in Agroforestry, wider environmental issues and a keynote address on the policies which affect the development of trees systems on farms. An integrated farmer open day and optional field visits are available Contact Farming with Trees, Greenmount College Antrim, BT41 4PU, Northern Ireland.

28 July 1999

Leading the Way in Sheep & Beef Breed Improvement

Pocklington, Yorkshire. A one day conference and visit to look at the current problems in the British Red Meat industry and how breed improvements might be used in future breeding and management strategies. Organised by MeatLinc and the Beef Improvement Company. Speakers include Richard Fuller, Geoff Simm, Chris Gilbert-Wood and Duncan Pullar. Details from JSR Farming 01377 229264.

- 17-21 August '99 Lillehammer, Norway**
 ISAE International Congress details from IASE 99 Agricultural University of Norway, PO Box 5025, N 1432, As, Norway E-Mail isae99@ihf.nlh.no
- 21-24 August '99 EAAP 2000 The Hague**
 The 51st annual meeting of EAAP. Half price registration fees will be available to the first 100 PhD students submitting an accepted abstract. One week PhD courses will also be organised before the EAAP meeting. Topics will include animal breeding, pig reproduction, quantitative epidemiology and animal nutrition. For more details visit the Web site <http://eaap2000.wau.nl> or fax +31 26 3898777
- 22-26 August '99 EAAP 1999**
 The 50th EAAP meeting is to be held in Zurich, Switzerland. A 4 or 6 night BSAS travel and accommodation package is available. If you are attending any of the satellite meetings use the 6 night package, if not then go for the 4 nights.
 Costs are
 6 nights sharing -£497;
 6 nights single - £599;
 4 nights sharing £418;
 4 nights single £488
 Full details from EYAS 01243 775561
- Two satellite meetings of interest to academics are:
- Saturday 21 August -Teaching Methods in Animal Science,
 - Sunday 22 August. 8.30-16.00."How to prepare and present a scientific paper"
- Details from Dr Phil Garnsworthy, University of Nottingham, Fax: +44 115 951 6060, e-mail: Phil.Garnsworthy@nottingham.ac.uk
- 13-19 Sept '99 Prospering Through Science British Association annual festival of science, Sheffield**
 This meeting has a number of interesting sessions including taking science in to commercial practice, GMOs, agriculture in the 21st century. For an up-to-date programme a look at the Web site on www.britassoc.org.uk
- 30 November '99 Ruminant Nutrition and Human Health and Environment - The risks and benefits for the future.**
 Paris, France. A one-day international conference held Paris, France organised by ADAS and INRA. Papers to include dietary fatty acids and health in man, ruminants as suppliers of fatty acids, nitrates in the human diet, methane production by ruminants, genetically modified organisms, new technology. Details and programme at www.rbet.co.uk/rnhhe or telephone Sandra Smith on UK 01865 845038
- 8-11 Jan 2000 2000 Annual Conference of the International Embryo Transfer Society**
 The MECC, Maastricht, The Netherlands
 Call for abstracts via the web site by 18 August 1999. Alternatively a hard copy must be received by 16 August 1999. Further details from Fran Gardner IETS Headquarters, 1111 North Dunlap Avenue, Savoy IL 61874, USA. Tel: 00 217 356 3182 Fax: 00 217 398 4119 or Email iets@assoqh.org
 Web site <http://www.iets.uiuc.edu>

Subscription Increase

At the 1999 AGM in Scarborough the members unanimously agreed to increase the subscription for members for the first time in three years. The new rates will be:

Full membership	£45.00
Postgraduates/retired	£22.50
Undergraduate students	Free

The members agreed that the increase still meant the subscription was very good value and very competitive alongside similar societies. The Society has undertaken a more proactive role in raising Animal Science issues within and outside of the Society which costs more money. BSAS is also spending more on charitable expenditure such as scholarships, summer placements and running more meetings. As the Society is not in the business of making profits it needs to make sure that it generates sufficient funds to break-even. The increase will take effect 1st January 2000.