

October 2002 • No.10

BSAS Annual Meeting, 24-26 March 2003, York

As you can see the Annual Meeting is a little earlier than last year so please get your summaries in on time. We will be very strict about the date of receipt, but will as before be operating the inclusive approach to the assessment of summaries. If you have a paper presentation in mind then please send it in. We need your final version by Friday, 25 October. Summaries should be sent electronically, preferably by email or disc. Please refrain from sending more than one version as this causes our electronic sorter (Bridget) to overheat! Please see enclosed or visit bsas.org.uk for sample summary.

Friday 25 October 2002 - deadline for receipt of summaries for the 2003 Annual Meeting

Your chance to get involved!

Below is an outline of topics for invited sessions for the Annual Meeting 2003. As you will see there is a very wide range of topics. Following on from the success of last year's sessions which accommodated submitted and invited papers, we are keen to encourage submitted papers that might fit into invited sessions as theatre or poster discussion papers. Indeed the organisers of invited sessions would be very pleased to hear from anyone you know (BSAS member or not) who has an offering or good idea relating to a specific topic. If you feel any of the topics below are of interest to you please contact the BSAS Office who will put you in touch with the organiser. Details of speakers for these topic areas will shortly be on the bsas website.

Hammond Lecture - Global v local research

Presidential theme - Globalisation

Monday satellite: morning to mid-afternoon

Companion Animals

Fish - including disease prevention, welfare, breeding, husbandry, and nutrition

Welfare implications of breeding and genetics

Disease Management: PMWS in pigs

Nutrition for pro-active health

Functional Foods

Nutritional and environmental impact
animal/nutrient dynamics, modelling, ecology.

What does the public want from Agriculture?
Issues to do with communication, Curry report, DEFRA and supermarket perspectives.

Farmers session- Organic Livestock Production

Integrated approach to functional traits: combining physiology and genetics

Presenting Scientific papers

A workshop for students on writing and presenting scientific papers. *Please note places for this workshop will be limited.*

WPSA AND ISAE

For 2003 our good friends in WPSA and ISAE are once again holding their meetings in York to overlap with ours. Discussions are also on going with the British Grassland Society to see if a satellite meeting can be held that would be of interest to farmers and scientists.

Subs due January 2003

There is to be a slight increase in subscriptions for 2003

- Ordinary membership including the on-line version of the journal £57.50 annually
- Ordinary membership including the on-line version of the journal and the hardcopy £77.50 annually
- Retired members and postgraduates will continue to get half price membership
- Students continue to get free membership but no access to the journal.

The increase in membership fees reflects the Council's policy of a small regular movement in fees rather than large sporadic changes.

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MEXICO 12-15 November

Responding to the increasing demand for global products

Please register NOW

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BSAS SCHOLARSHIPS 2002/3

It's time to apply for BSAS Scholarships! Applications to be received by 31 October 2002

T&E Committee will be accessing applications for the 2002/3 BSAS scholarships which are outlined below. Full details are also available on the website at www.bsas.org.uk. Not all scholarships are restricted to BSAS members so please pass information to your colleagues. Young scientists can also apply for BSAS membership prior to sending in their scholarship application form. Please contact the BSAS Office for application forms or visit the BSAS website.

The Sir Kenneth Blaxter Award

This scholarship is for travel in the UK or overseas or for a specified study tour or to fund a specific short research programme. It may also be used to part-fund projects. *There are no specific categories this year so you may apply for the funds to undertake any relevant animal science tour, study or research programme.* The sum of £1500 is available.

The Alan Robertson Fund

The scholarship is open to anyone who is involved or interested in animal genetics or breeding. Non BSAS members can apply. The sum of £1400 is available.

The Murray Black Award

This award aims to provide travel and research opportunities for younger members of BSAS. Up to £2000 available in the areas that include animal welfare, sheep nutrition, husbandry, farm management, animal science aspects of conservation and the public understanding of animal science. Innovative ideas outside of these areas will also be considered.

Nutritional Standards - update Sept 2002

A good deal of progress has been made since this time last year. The DEFRA funded study covering five main species dairy, beef, sheep, pigs and poultry concluded with reports which were presented at the Annual Meeting in April. The reports are also on our website and free to all.

One of the groups is now making further progress on producing practical nutrient tables for use by mixers and farmers in the pig production field. Led by Professor Colin Whittemore, the team hopes to have the tables available for use early next year. This initiative is likely to be funded by MLC and DEFRA as part of their commitment to Transfer Technology and will include a consultation exercise with dissemination for industry, which are also supporting the venture.

Pubmed

BSAS has submitted *Animal Science* to the Medline/Pubmed organisation in the US requesting that it be included in the inventory of journals that can be reached online through Pubmed. A committee will review the request in October with, we hope, a positive outcome.

Discussions with other societies

During the Dairying meeting at Reading in September, BSAS and British Grassland Society (BGS) officers took the opportunity to discuss areas of mutual interest. One of the more practical areas identified was a joint meeting to be held as part of the BSAS Annual Meeting at York next March. BGS and BSAS also talked with the Society of Applied Biologists and Professor Richard Ellis who is head of the Agricultural Professors Group, which organise an annual congress. Richard was interested in taking part in one of the sessions at York on *What does the public want from agriculture.*

All of those present recognised the need for future collaboration, so that sister societies could make the best use of their resources in what is a contracting market for delegates and members. In the future societies may have to consider models such as those in the USA, where a federation of animal science services individual societies.

What price cheap food? Prince Charles agrees with us!

The joint SCAWS/BSAS Workshop, 7/8 April held at York University, has produced a series of summaries by the major authors (see website). We sent these to a variety of influential people, government ministers and organisations. One respondent, Prince Charles, sent a very positive letter supporting the views expressed at the satellite in York and wished us well - *What Price Cheap Food?* is in good company.

Office staff changes advert

We are sorry to say that Joyce Darling, the BSAS Finance Officer, has decided to retire next April. Therefore the society will be looking for a new member to join the secretariat towards the end of the year/early 2003. An advert will shortly appear on the BSAS web site and in the Edinburgh press. BSAS will also restructure the secretariat in line with the skills now needed to run a modern office including upgrading the accounts and database packages.

Bridget Hilton will become the new office manager and take on some of the activities of the secretary as well as more responsibility for managing the website.

Thoughts from Council

Web site changes

The BSAS Technical and Ethical committee currently has the task of producing a blueprint to develop the BSAS Web site. Led by Alan Duncan, Macaulay Institute, they have produced a remit for upgrading the Website and obtained a number of quotes from professional companies to undertake the work. None are cheap!

Council recently debated the need to invest in both a substantial upgrade and the employment of more resources to maintain an interactive website. They recognised the need for an improved shop-window on the society where those surfing the site can find relevant information on animal science or links to sites where such data could be found. They felt that by providing an interactive forum and a better library of information on animal science, BSAS would both better serve its current members and perhaps attract new ones, especially younger scientists.

They debated the need for adequate resources and agreed that whilst the society could well afford annual running costs from revenue a good web site would probably require a substantial initial investment which would have to come from reserves. Fortunately this would not mean selling any investments at this very difficult time for the shares market.

Council have asked for a subgroup of T&E, led by Alan to report back with a detailed plan that they can discuss early in 2003 and that could be presented to the AGM next March. In the meantime the site will be *refreshed* in terms of how current information is presented. We hope you like the changes that will soon appear. Comments from members on how they would like to see the Web site develop would be most welcome. If you have favorite sites we can view please tell us.

Proposed constitutional changes

The recent meeting of the President's Committee included a fresh look at the BSAS constitution. Last year the post of Junior vice-President was discontinued and the size of Council reduced.

This time Council agreed a number of amendments that they would like to take to the AGM in March. These included

- 1) striking out the bar on corporate membership
- 2) making it easier for new members to join the society by substituting the rule that they require two sponsoring members, for an alternative procedure that empowers the secretary/non-voting chief executive to check applications.
- 3) The role of secretary be replaced by a non voting chief executive. This change would be in line with the Charities Commission guidelines which state that paid officials of a charity like BSAS cannot also be involved in the decision-making process. The commission recently visited BGS and pointed out the conflict of interest in having a paid secretary with voting powers on Council.

These suggested changes will not affect the way BSAS is run but it would mean that the title of Secretary would become Chief Executive with no voting rights at Council.

Link with Nottingham University Press

Publications are joining up with Nottingham University Press to produce future Proceedings from the BSAS Occasional Meetings. This arrangement starts with the Dairying Meeting recently held at Reading. We hope it will see a wider distribution and increase in sales of BSAS Publications.

Committees place advert - Like to join in?

From time to time the various committees of BSAS has vacancies for members. The three standing committees T&E, Publications and Programme are always interested in gaining fresh (new or old) blood. Most members serve for 3-4 years. Half of each committee is from Council and the others are ordinary members. Most committees have a couple of one day meetings a year (often in London) plus some telephone conferences and communication via e-mail.

Publications Committee concentrates on the journal Animal Science and oversees all publications matters (see other articles in this newsletter).

Programme Committee has the overview of all conferences but spends much of its time organising the York Meeting including vetting the submitted papers.

Technical & Ethical Committee is the BSAS ideas and initiatives committee but also covers responses to consultation papers, PR, CPD, recruitment, website and has specific representatives for the EAAP, Institute of Biology and Press. If you are at all interested now or in the future please give Mike Steele (01848 331437) or the Chair of the Committee a ring. They will explain what is involved, when vacancies will be coming up and will happily chat informally. It is good fun to be involved and very useful networking.

2002 Summer Meetings

THE FOOD CHAIN: PLANTS, ANIMALS, MAN Nutrition Society Meeting, Leeds, July 2002

Food, Plants, Animals and Man A joint session on Food, Plants, Animal and Man was held at the Nutrition Society Annual Meeting in Leeds in July. Our thanks to Mike Forbes and his team at Leeds who worked very hard to make this venture a success. The joint session was held on the first day and whilst it attracted a good audience of animal oriented delegates not too many human nutritionists appeared. It is a difficult task to persuade busy people to give up their time to listen to scientists who they perceive are peripheral to their main areas of interest. Yet until we get such different professionals together we will not be fulfilling our scientific potential.

DAIRYING: Using science to meet to consumers' needs University of Reading, September 2002

This BSAS conference attracted around 60 participants and was very well received. Hosted by the Department of Agriculture in their spanking new building the delegates enjoy two full days of presentations and discussions. Wes Bluhm kicked off proceedings with his review of the *Holsteinisation of the UK national dairy herd*. This was followed by Jean Margerison who looked at *dairy heifer rearing* and Vicky Taylor who covered *physiological adaptations to milk production*. In the Management session David Swain covered *low input systems*, Chris Reynolds discussed the *metabolic consequence of increasing milk yield* and David Logue entertained us with his vision of *longevity*. The session on Feeds and Feeding saw Johnny Bax covering *crops for milk*, Adam Lock *optimising milk composition* and Jonathan Mills *rationing models*. After this the delegates retired to an excellent dinner and were entertained by after dinner speaker, Malcolm Stansfield of University of Reading.

The second day looked at *bio-technology, organics and the environmental impact of dairying* under the opportunities and impact label with Gary Hartnell from the USA, David Wilson from the Duchy Estates and Steve Jarvis from IGER. Three workshops were then held on animals, human health and the processing industry with reporting back in the final session. Sandwiched in between Anne Minihane looked at *consumer and customer health* and Neil Adams gave an *organic milk suppliers viewpoint* and started a lively debate.

It poured on the first day and everybody was roasted on the second, so the umbrellas that were lent out and deployed on the Monday were thrown into the hedges and waterways on the second day and lost!

Whilst the scientific conference finished in Reading on the Tuesday night, several of the key speakers joined the BSAS 'knowledge transfer roadshow' and departed for Devon to repeat their presentations to a farming audience at the very well attended Seale Hayne Campus, University of Plymouth. The audience not only contained farmers but also a sprinkling of vets, advisers, commercial suppliers and interestingly two very participative employees of Sainsbury's. The 80 who attended were entertained in terms of presentations and had ample opportunity to interact, discuss and in some cases object to the information put across. In that sense everybody enjoyed themselves and left saying they would all return again next year. The weather and food were good too.

Jean Margerison and her team put in a tremendous amount of work for this part of the BSAS 'knowledge transfer exercise' and it was very gratifying to see science reaching those parts that it should. The BSAS secretary drove 1150 miles during the week and vows to fly next time. He didn't realise Devon was so populated, coming from a very remote part of Britain!

The BSAS will lose money on the Reading part of the week and it raises the issue of how we finance good scientific meetings in the future, if small audiences are to become the norm. It is difficult to balance the books without charging an excessively high conference fee, if we still wish to have face-to-face good quality specialised conferences. Either we have to look for substantial sponsorship or investigate the possibility of using virtual conferences for at least part of such meetings.

BSAS forthcoming Conferences 2002

Responding to the Increasing Global Demand for Animal Products UADY, Merida, Mexico 12-15 November 2002

We have some 115 submitted papers for this meeting from all over the world and are anticipating a full and lively conference which comes just after the World Summit in South Africa. So timing could not be better. Sponsorship for the meeting however has so far been disappointingly poor. NRInternational, who manage the DFID Animal Production Research Programme, and IFS (International Foundation for Science) are supporting a good number of delegates. We are also getting some help from CTA in Holland but it's proving very difficult to get aid agencies, including DFID themselves and multi-national organisations to part with their cash. They plead poverty! See website for updated leaflet and information on the programme, hotels and travel.

Farm Animal Genetic Resources Pollock Halls, University of Edinburgh, 26/27 November 2002.

The subject area covered in the sessions will be policy, genetic basis for conservation, other roles of rare breeds, molecular and reproductive techniques to support conservation, conservation in action. To date there has been a lot of interest in this meeting which we anticipate will be well attended. Eminent speakers from France, Italy, Poland, Spain and New Zealand have been invited. For further information please contact BSAS. See programme enclosed or visit the bsas website for details. **Summaries by 15 October please.**

July 2003

Pigs - The Appliance of Science - proposed programme

University of Nottingham

This is a Knowledge Transfer orientated conference that is likely to include the following sessions and papers aimed at those in the industry and research. Comments would be welcome.

Science into practice

Science and knowledge transfer – what the industry needs

Theories, successes and lessons

The Danish Experience

Funding & facilitation - DEFRA's vision of future British pig science and technology transfer

Who matters? The changing consumer/market

A multiple retailers view

A direct marketeers view

A return to competitiveness

Where are the gaps?

Can genetics deliver?

Regaining a high health status:

In the pink? An overview of the current challenges in pig health

The American Dream? How it's being done in The States

Light at the end of the tunnel...

Feeding for the future - IMS

40 piglets per sow per year?

Dealing with the inevitable

An EU perspective on the challenges of legislative regulation that is, and that yet to come...

An overview of current developments in pig welfare legislation

Environmental sustainability – legislation and policy drivers

Safe food – Why it matters for the British Pig Industry

Globalisation and integration

SE Asia – a good story!

Biotechnology - a lost opportunity?

The US giants

A British Point of View

Knowledge transfer: principles & practice

KT in principle

KT in practice

17-19 Sept 2003 Horses

A conference on all aspects of science relating to horses, Royal College, Cirencester. Details to go on the website shortly but please join in the discussions on session titles and papers by contacting John Alliston at john.alliston@royagcol.ac.uk

Other Meetings

25-28 May 2003 The impact of new biology

Sea World Nara Resort, Gold Coast, Queensland, Australia, The inaugural Horizons in Livestock Sciences Conference is proudly hosted by CSIRO and will bring together eminent international speakers, leading Australian researchers and participants from across the region. If you would like additional information about the conference, please visit website www.livestockhorizons.com

1-3 Sept 2003 7th BGS Research Conference, University of Wales, Aberystwyth

New technologies, environmental aspects, alternative uses of forage, research tools, grazing systems, technology transfer, equine studies, nutritional studies. Call for offered papers. For further details please contact bgs@patrol.i-way.co.uk or telephone 01189 318189

DEFRA - NEW COMPETITION

If you are not already aware, the tenders for research under the Sustainable Systems for Pig Weaner Management programme have been advertised on the DEFRA Website.

The following has just been advertised on DEFRA's website <http://www.defra.gov.uk/research/RRD>

Project Number: CTB 0201 Sustainable systems for Pig Weaner Management
Package 1: Effect of weaning age on sustainable production

AND

Project Number: CTB 0202 Sustainable systems for Pig Weaner Management
Package 2: Nutritional Management
Towards Sustainable Production

Applications for the above project must reach the Science Directorate no later than 6.00 p.m. on Monday 14 October 2002. Late applications will be returned unopened. Applications by FAX or e-mail are not acceptable.

If you decide to bid, you must adhere to the instructions given on the website, so please read these very carefully. Please also note, bidders will bear their own costs of bidding, which will not be reimbursed in any circumstances, including a decision by DEFRA not to continue with the bidding process.

If you have difficulty obtaining access to the website, please contact webmaster@defra.gsi.gov.uk

Livestock in Tropical Farming Systems **Educational resource materials available on CD-ROM**

Cornell University offers to students, instructors and professionals in developed and developing countries a portfolio of educational materials about *Livestock in Tropical Farming Systems* on a set of 3 CD-ROMs. Resource materials are thematically organized and richly photographically illustrated in a web-style format. Users are helped to explore hierarchies of binding constraints on productivity and economic returns in complex tropical systems with livestock. For more information about content see <http://www.ansci.cornell.edu/courses/as400/main.html>

Livestock are the *crops-that-walk* in farming systems around the world, where nutrients are scarce or limiting. These land use systems can integrate livestock, crops and trees for improved productivity while promoting crop yield, nutrient cycling and the accumulation of nutrient stocks, biodiversity, and environmental conservation. Constraints on livestock production in the tropics are considered, including economic objectives, risk, and assessing production methods.

Content of each CD-ROM and pricing (excluding shipping) are as follows:

1. *Livestock in Tropical Farming Systems: A course and resource materials* Copyright©2001

This CD-ROM contains original text, examples of field research questionnaires, selected full-text research reports, other literature citations, animated figures and photographs, video graphic citations, and audio-video clips of interviews and scripted field observations. Included is a Multimedia Library that is also available in stand-alone format on CD #2. Prices are 59USD for students and 175USD for instructors, other professionals and institutions in Less Developed Countries (LDC); and 79USD for students and 295USD for others in developed countries (DC).

2. *Livestock in Tropical Farming Systems: Multimedia Library* Copyright©2001

This CD-ROM contains a stand-alone library of 10 multimedia modules. These modules integrate original text with hyperlinks to supporting literature, animated figures and photographs, audio-video clips of interviews and scripted field observations, and video graphic citations. Prices are 39USD for students and 145USD for instructors, other professionals and institutions in LDCs; and 59USD for students and 245USD for others in DCs.

3. *Livestock in Tropical Farming Systems: Video Clip Library* Copyright©2001

This CD-ROM contains thematically organized vignettes constituting a virtual field trip on a highlands-to-lowlands transect in Ethiopia. The primary objective is to facilitate discussion and analysis of the hierarchies of binding constraints on productivity and economic returns in agricultural systems. Prices are 39USD for students and 145USD for instructors, other professionals and institutions in LDCs; and 59USD for students and 205USD for others in DCs.

Interested parties should contact Prof. Robert W. Blake,
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