



NEWS

Paul Gilchrist has relinquished the position as Special Veterinary Officer (Poultry Health) to become Chief of the Division of Animal Production in the N.S.W. Department of Agriculture. New telephone number is 217-5233.

David Kingston has left Upjohn to go to an intensive pig operation in South Australia.

Tom Grimes has left the Queensland Department of Primary Industries to take a position with A.A. Tegel Pty. Ltd. in Sydney.

Lionel Hemsley is no longer located in Western Australia but is with the Victorian section of the N.B. Love organisation.

Mike Hindmarsh is working for Hazletts in Sydney.

Colin Mills has left Diamond Poultry in Western Australia to a Senior Position in the Golden Poultry organisation located in Sydney.

28 members have already paid their 1981 subscription.

C. Leach & Sons have paid their \$50 Sustaining Membership subscription and Elanco Products have paid \$100. C.S.L. has withdrawn from Sustaining Membership.

TAPES OF MEETINGS HELD BY THE AVPA

Richard Bevan, C/- Arthur Websters Pty. Ltd. Post Office Box 218, Parramatta NSW 2150, has copies of tapes of scientific sessions of meetings.

TAPES OF IMMUNITY MEETING IN EDINBURGH

Trevor Bagust (CSIRO, Division of Animal Health, Parkville, Victoria) who spoke at the last scientific session in the Melbourne meeting has copies of tapes taken of the papers presented at the Avian Immunology Conference which he attended. He is prepared to make copies from his tapes onto yours if you send them to him.

PSITTACOSIS AGAIN

Following earlier reports on Psittacosis Roy Mason who is the Senior Veterinary Pathologist at the Department of Agriculture, Mt. Pleasant Laboratories, P.O. Box 46. Launceston, Tas. 7250, has sent a photocopy of an abstract in the Veterinary Record of March 1, 1980 which refers to an article in a German journal. Beri Sinkovic has had a look at the German paper and suggests that it does not add much more information than that supplied in the following summary.

"Laboratory and field studies were carried out using coloured millet and oats medicated with chlortetracycline at about 2,400 parts per million and fed to lovebirds and various parakeets for 45 days. Blood levels exceeded 1 ug of chlortetracycline per ml of blood. Good therapeutic and prophylactic control of psittacosis was achieved".

PSITTACOSIS IS SERIOUS

I recently had a phone call from a bird fancier friend who had taken parrots to two laboratories for diagnosis. Each laboratory diagnosed psittacosis, fortunately, but the private laboratory warned him of the human and avian dangers of the disease, recommended chlortetracycline for 21 days while the government laboratory is said to have minimised the dangers ("laughed at the suggestion") and said that it is very common; chlortetracycline was recommended for 45 days.

For consistency, we should all recognise that whether widespread or rare, psittacosis (chlamydiosis ornithosis) is a serious human and avian health problem, inadequately controlled by our medical colleagues.

The disease in birds responds to 45 days (and not shorter periods) of chlortetracycline in water or feed. Shorter controls the disease but 45 days is needed to prevent spread of the organism and is of course not an absolutely effective procedure.

PSITTACOSIS IN PIGEONS

A report in the New Zealand Ministry's publication "Surveillance" that pigeons with ill-thrift and mortality apparently associated with "colds", and showing mild to moderate chronic rhinitis were shown to be positive to psittacosis. There were no signs of acute disease in any birds or their owners. Isolation of the organism was also made from some parrots from an aviary which had lost five out of 50 birds. Another isolate was made from a Rosella from another aviary. Sudden death was the only clinical sign reported.

PROCEEDINGS OF SYMPOSIUM NOW AVAILABLE

The Proceedings of the 2nd International Symposium on Veterinary Epidemiology and Economics is now available from -

Mail Order Sales, Australian Government Publishing Service,
Post Office Box 84, Canberra A.C.T. 2601. Australia

The price is \$A23.50 per copy which includes postage and packing.

The proceedings contain 82 papers in the following categories:

Information Gathering; The Analysis and Interpretation of Epidemiological Data: Definition of the Disease Status of Countries and Regions: Education in Veterinary Epidemiology and Economics: Influencing Producer Attitudes to Disease Control: The Evaluation of Production and Economic Effects of Disease: The Decision Making Process: Planning and Implementation of Disease Control Programmes.

VETERINARY NOTES - Poultry Issue

The latest edition of Veterinary Notes which is a quarterly publication of the NSW Department of Agriculture is a poultry issue and may be useful for some members.

It can be obtained by writing to the Principal Veterinary Officer (Extension), Department of Agriculture, Box K220, Haymarket NSW 2000.

NEXT MEETING OF AVPA

The next meeting of this Association is to be held in Sydney after the Poultry Diseases Sub-committee meeting. Our meeting will be on Thursday and Friday 12 & 13 March 1981. A tentative invitation has been sent to Dr. Bill Allen, the Newcastle Disease vaccine expert from the UK Ministry located at Weighbridge. Dr. L. Van der Heide located at the University of Connecticut, Storrs Connecticut was also invited but is unable to attend. Dr. L.B. Crittenden, Research Geneticist of East Lansing USA may be in Australia at the time and will probably attend.

Dr. Allen is an expert in Newcastle Disease vaccine virus selection and characterisation, while Dr. Van der Heide is a recognised authority on Avian Reovirus.

VIBRIO ISOLATION IN CHICKENS IN AUSTRALIA

Some veterinarians diagnose vibriotic hepatitis in laying birds based on the appearance of lesions and the isolation of the organism from the bile. It would be useful if somebody could determine the significance of Vibrio in Australia. Are there any diagnosticians looking for a small project?

MALDIGESTION PROGRAMME

The presence of approximately 10% runting in broiler chickens, which becomes visible at approximately 12 days of age leads to that proportion of chickens being runted throughout life has been described by a large organisation in New South Wales. The presence of apparently undigested feed in the faeces led to the chemical examination of both food and faeces and it was found that the faeces were chemically almost unchanged in passing through the digestive tract. No cause is known and it would be interesting to know whether others have seen the same thing.

CORYZA TREATMENTS

The injection of stryptomycin is probably still the most desirable treatment for coryza but this is frequently difficult, is certainly expensive on labour and in the case of breeding birds on the floor it is impractical. Everything has been used in the drinking water or feed in an attempt to control the disease and some of these treatments, such as chloramphenicol, are certainly not recommended because of the resistance problems that it may create for humans when the drug is used in them. A recent, unconfirmed report suggests that amoxycillin used at the rate of 15 to 20 mg per kg of body-weight for four hours in drinking water is successful. The drinking water system must be cleaned thoroughly beforehand to remove algae which will accumulate and inactivates the drug. The chickens must be deprived of water for some hours before administration. Experience of people using this drug would be appreciated as it is very difficult to evaluate in the field because of the vagaries of coryza.

VIRUS TITRATIONS IN VACCINES

On a recent visit to CSIRO Animal Health Laboratories, Parkville, Victoria, I was impressed by a project in progress by Jennifer York, in which attempts are being made to purify ILT virus for use in immunological studies which require the virus to be purified - free from all cell debris. This may seem easy but is in fact quite difficult.

Electron microphotographs show pieces of cell debris with a dozen or more virus particles trapped within. This is disappointing for Jennifer, but it also highlights two problems for vaccine users.

First, it is hard to purify vaccines because cloning techniques such as plaque purification or terminal dilution methods, even when they include cell shattering procedures such as sonication or freeze-thaw regimes, still may leave each "infectious unit" as a clump of viruses in a piece of cell debris. It is important, therefore, to ensure that vaccine seeds are subject to as few multiplication steps as possible during manufacture of vaccines.

Secondly, while it is not possible to count viruses which are not present, and thus titration methods probably underestimate the vaccine titre, there still remains another problem.

When a vaccine is developed, a test batch of vaccine is prepared and is subjected to an in-vitro, in-viro comparison. In other words it is titrated in birds and in eggs or tissue cultures. This comparison normally stands for all time. If one egg infective dose is equal to one bird protective dose then a titre of 10^6 EID in eggs equals a titre of 10^6 CPD₅₀ in chickens (EID = Embryo infective dose; CPD = Chick protective dose.)

However, later technological improvements may release more virus particles from amongst the cellular debris and a vaccine tested by old methods with a titre of 10^6 EID₅₀ may produce a result of 10^7 EID₅₀. If the manufacturer is pleased to have this bonus virus included as an extra safeguard, then no harm is done.

If, however, the manufacturer or the user dilutes the vaccine back to the old "proven" effective dose trouble might ensue.

The lesson is that vaccines are tricky and the small part they play in the cost of production should be treated as good insurance and the company purchasing officers should be instructed to stop bargaining for price advantages and vaccinators must be prevented from diluting vaccines.

ADENOVIRUS INFECTIONS IN CHICKENS

Bring yourself up to date by reading an article by E. Vieltiz in Poultry International, July 1980, page 36.

DIAZINON POISONING

The New Zealand Ministry publication "Surveillance" reports that 12 out of 40 aviary budgerigars died after they were fed from a recently purchased pack of commercial seed. The seed was contaminated with small blue-green insecticide granules containing diazinon. Analysis of crop contents proved positive for diazinon (14.4 mg per kg).