

Australian Veterinary Poultry Association

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DISEASE PREVENTION AND CONTROL IN POULTRY PRODUCTION

The Manly Conference is now almost upon us and at the time of writing only 39 members have registered. I presume that this will have changed by the time the Newsletter is published but my earlier pleas for early registration have clearly fallen on a large number of deaf ears.

I do not think that we could have put together a much better Scientific Programme for this Conference and considerable thought has gone into the Social Programme, so please ensure that you take part and help to make it a roaring success.

We can continue to take bookings for the Opera House until a few days before the event and for the Banquet until the day before, so please re-consider if you were proposing to give it a miss; the very attractive rates that we have negotiated do depend upon numbers.

The Conference Registration desk will be open on the afternoon and early evening on Tuesday 30 August and again on Wednesday morning. Our Registration Secretary (Jean Aked (02) 606 5068) will be in attendance right through the Conference and will take or relay messages, organise the use of telex machines, make local travel arrangements, check flights and generally mollycoddle you.

Please get those registrations in. See you in Manly.

Colin Mills Chairman Co-ordinating Committee (02) 606 5068

*P.S. REGISTRATIONS V. GOOD 8.8.83. G.CROSS.

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Contributors to this issue: Trevor Bagust, Garry Cross, Jeff Fairbrother, Roy Mason, Colin Mills, Patricia Macwhirter, Ross Perry, Percy Prewett, David Schultz, Graham Wilcox - to whom many thanks. Contributions are welcome.

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Sustaining Members contribute funds to help defray running costs of the AVPA.

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* These Companies are also major sponsors of our International Meeting.

MAJOR SPONSORS OF THE AVPA INTERNATIONAL MEETING

The following organizations have generously supported our International Meeting with contributions in excess of \$1,000. The AVPA thank these organizations for their support of a meeting of vital interest to Australian poultrymen.

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 Australian Chicken Meat Research Committee
 Australian Development Assistance Bureau
 Cyanamid (Australia) Pty Ltd
 Elanco Company Products
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 Pfizer Agricare Pty Ltd
 Poultry Research and Advisory Committee

Therapy in Caged and Aviary Birds was the theme of a highly successful scientific AVPA meeting attended by 41 registrants on Saturday 25 and Sunday 26 June 1983 at the Veterinary Research Station, Glenfield. The meeting was convened for the AVPA by the secretary, Garry Cross, and the convener of the caged and aviary birds sub-committee, Ross Perry. The opening address by Peter Mylrea, Director of Animal Health Research, DA NSW, was followed by an address by the vice-president of the AVPA, Colin Mills.

Kevin Cooper spoke on isolation procedures and antibiotic sensitivities of common bacteria of caged and aviary birds. Emphasis was placed on the traps and pitfalls of attempting to culture and identify particular species of bacteria and on the interpretation of their significance with respect to disease in birds. The title of Graeme Brown's presentation - Problems Pertaining to Percy's Prosthesis - gave little clue to the remarkable story which followed, a story describing repeated attempts to repair the lower bill and pouch of a pelican and to attach a prosthesis to the stump of the upper bill. The pelican was then trained to use its prosthesis and has been released from captivity. Jim Gill spoke on preventive medicine in aviculture with emphasis placed on aviary design and husbandry.

Garry Reddacliff reviewed the species, health status and fates of the many wild birds presented to Taronga Park Zoo during the previous year. Louie Filippich's presentation on first aid in native birds applied equally to individual caged and aviary birds. Emphasis was placed on providing warmth and minimising stress. Louie also spoke on fracture repair and stabilisation. Harry Cooper discussed respiratory diseases in caged and aviary birds and the problems of treating and controlling mycoplasmal infections in racing pigeons. John Merrall contributed his experiences with mycoplasmosis in racing pigeons.

David Madill, with the help of Kevin Cooper, attempted to exhibit a convulsive film of an 'epileptic' *Agapornis* sp. Although the projector was supposedly domesticated, hundreds of feet of David's magnum opus were torn, screwed up and fused! We all hope for a repeat performance next year. A series of practical demonstrations on surgical sexing of birds (Jim Gill), restraint and gavage (Ross Perry) and basic laboratory techniques (Kevin Cooper) was followed by a barbecue where much informal discussion of the day's events, as well as other matters of common interest, occurred.

On Sunday, Steve McOrist gave a very informative review of the causes of death of canaries and finches and noted the low incidence of urogenital disease in canaries. Ross Perry exhibited a series of slides on diseases of the avian integument with emphasis on Psittacine Beak and Feather Dystrophy. Garry Cross informed the meeting of the recommendations of the AVPA working party on chlamydiosis.

David Schultz and Brian Rich gave a joint presentation on the indications, pitfalls, applications and interpretations of biochemistry in avian medicine. They also presented the results of a detailed investigation of the blood levels and half life of tetracycline and concomitant serum enzyme levels in crested pigeons. The antibiotic was administered both in drinking water and directly per os and in short- and long-acting formulations. These studies showed significant serum enzyme changes following the administration of this antibiotic.

A series of short presentations and discussions throughout the meeting included nematodes in finches (Graeme Brown and Michael Cannon), a survey of avian health as reported by aviculturists (Patricia Macwhirter), the value of autopsies (Michael Cannon), trichomoniasis and some contra-indicated drugs and avian therapy regimens (Ross Perry), do-it-yourself bacteriology and hypocalcaemia in an African Grey (Jim Gill) and a very well received wake-up-and-laugh session on avian radiography and unrelated topics.

Throughout the meeting many questions were asked but many remained unanswered. A constant dilemma concerned the administration of drugs at safe and yet effective dose rates in a wide variety of avian species without the benefit of even basic studies concerning their safety and efficacy. Only by acquiring such knowledge can we hope to advance the art of caged and aviary bird medicine from the realms of sorcery to the halls of science. After an exchange of ideas and suggestions for the next meeting on caged and aviary birds, a vote of thanks to all who made the meeting possible was expressed by acclamation. - reported by Ross Perry.

Cage and Aviary Bird Meeting, June 1984 The Secretary writes that following the successful inaugural meeting at Glenfield (see the above report from Ross Perry), it was decided to make it an annual event. The next meeting will be held at Glenfield on 2 & 3 June, 1984 (note the altered dates - an earlier intention to hold it on 26 & 27 May proved impossible).

For the 1984 meeting, the following topics were suggested:

(a) Theory: anaesthesia, surgical techniques, microsurgery, nutrition and nutritional problems.

(b) Practical workshops: laboratory and surgical techniques and anaesthesia.

The short contributions of 5 - 10 minutes duration (Members' Forum) which were highly appreciated this year will continue next year.

A call for contributions will be made in January and the proceedings will be published.

A Proposed Avian Veterinary Conference, May 1985 Patricia Macwhinter writes that following discussion at the caged and aviary birds meeting at Glenfield in June, it was proposed that the AVPA sponsor scientific sessions to follow the May 1985 Aviculture Convention in Melbourne.

The Aviculture Convention is held every second year and is generally well attended by aviculturists from around Australia. Papers are given on various aspects of bird care and husbandry and on the natural history of species kept in aviaries. Usually several series of lectures on various species groups are given simultaneously in different venues. In the past excellent international speakers have been invited to talk at these conventions. The convention will run from Saturday to Monday; the actual weekend in May is yet to be finalised. It is expected to be held at the Dallas Brooks Hall or some other convention centre in Melbourne.

It has been suggested that the avian veterinary conference could be organised for the Monday and Tuesday. The Sir Colin McKenzie Fauna Park at Healesville is the most likely of several possible venues that are being discussed. The number of participants would need to be limited to less than 80.

It is hoped that an international speaker could be invited to both the aviculture convention and the veterinary conference to follow. In this way the cost of the speaker could be shared by the two groups. Several names have been put forward as being suitable. It is possible that other overseas veterinarians with an interest in aviary birds will be interested in attending the convention and conference and might be willing to present short papers while they are here.

It has also been suggested that avian practitioners should present a series of papers on the Sunday for aviculturists on topics related to bird health.

At the present time, a number of veterinarians are writing chapters for a book on 'Keeping Birds Healthy in Australian Aviaries'. It is planned that this book will be ready in time for the convention and that authors contributing chapters will speak on their topics at the convention. Veterinarians who are beginning to work with birds should find these sessions a useful introduction to the field.

James Hugh Bray OAM The Association congratulates Hugh Bray of Rosstrevor, South Australia, who has been awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia for services to the poultry industry. Hugh is Senior Veterinary Officer (Poultry) with the Department of Agriculture, South Australia, with which department he has worked since 1955. Hugh is a member of the Australian College of Veterinary Scientists and has served with distinction on the committees of the Australian Veterinary Association and the World Poultry Science Association. He has a long association with the United Nations Association of Australia, South Australia Division, including two periods as president of that division. In recognition of thorough work and unstinting service, a most worthy veterinarian is honoured.

ACTION FOREPLAY Some of the continuing and new research programmes which were recommended by the Australian Chicken Meat Research Committee and by the Poultry Research Advisory Committee and which have been approved by the Minister for Primary Industry are listed. Some titles are abridged but some were already tersely uninformative. Specific source of the funds (whether ACMRC &/or PRAC) is omitted. Date after dollars is the completion date of the project. Dr Jeff Fairbrother, Executive Director of the Australian Poultry Industries Association, Sydney, has kindly provided the information for this list.

Continuing Projects

R Chubb, U New England \$5568 June 84. Evaluation of ELISA and FAT for screening and diagnosis of poultry pathogens.

R Chubb, U New England \$16314 June 84. Induction and evaluation of cellular response to IB nephritis.

R Cumming, U New England \$37728 June 84. IB.

T Bagust, CSIRO Melb. \$31382 June 84. ILT - immunity and infection.

G Simmons, DPI Qld \$25700 June 84. Development of vaccine against infectious coryza.

B Sinkovic, U Sydney \$14456 June 84. RE virus and RED virus infections of chickens.

P Steele, DA WA \$27810 August 84. Acute death syndrome in broiler chickens.

G Tannock, U Newcastle \$17587 June 85. AE viruses.

P Spradbrow, U Qld \$40889 June 84. Australian strains of ND virus.

P Spradbrow, U Qld \$21715 June 84. ILT and pox viruses.

New Projects

T Bagust, CSIRO Melb. \$26331 June 85. Development and application of new technologies in the control of infectious bursal disease.

T Bagust, CSIRO Melb. \$21494 June 86. Avian leukosis viruses (LLV & REV) - field and laboratory studies.

G Wilcox, U Murdoch \$22119 June 86. Characterisation and immunological control of reovirus infections.

G Cross, DA NSW \$26372 June 85. Administration of ND virus V4 vaccine to chickens.

D Barr, DA Vic \$33959 June 86. Aetiology, epidemiology and control of the runting/stunting syndrome.

H Ward, U Monash \$4000 June 84. Associations between the chicken's major histocompatibility complex and disease resistance.

K Whithear, U Melb. \$16995 June 85. Strain identification of Mycoplasma gallisepticum.

H Westbury, DA Vic \$7600 June 86. Evaluation of mass immunisation techniques for ND.

Total New Projects	\$129 940
Total All Projects	348 406
Administration	49 300

TOTAL \$397 706

The President's Para's It's now the 25th of July and that International Meeting on Disease Prevention and Control in Sydney, August 31 to September 1-2, is probably less than 2 weeks away by the time you receive this in the mail.

I've been lucky enough to have some previews of the papers submitted by our guest speakers from overseas. Almost without exception, they contain absolutely outstanding contemporary reviews and research findings of interest across the broad spectrum of our membership. Having the speakers there in person to present their papers and to mix and mingle with socially is of course another great plus.

So, without further ado, please register pronto for your own good (or I'll get Tom Hungerford on to you loafers!). Do hope you can all make it to AVPA Sydney in August - it'll be very quiet for the rest of the year I'll guarantee.

Best Wishes

Trevor Bagust

Lebensraum for chooks Few data support proposed floor space allowances for caged fowls. BM Freeman (1983) Vet Rec 112: 562-3 of the Houghton Poultry Research Station determined by a photographic technique the maximal cross-sectional area, the length and the width of 48 HPRS pure bred hens weighing between 1 and 4 Kg. The typical 2.4 Kg fowl occupied 637 cm sq but this value was much affected by the degree of feathering. The same bird was 21.3 cm wide and 41 cm long. While length is the overriding determinant of cage size when the individual is considered, width is of increasing importance when groups of birds are caged together. It is common in the United Kingdom for birds to be housed in groups of five. Since birds tend to feed together, the shape of the cage should be rectangular and its minimal dimensions determined by the length and combined width of the birds. Thus a cage for five HPRS pure bred birds as used here, each weighing 2.4 Kg, would be 41 cm deep x 106.5 cm (21.3 x 5) long. (This is equivalent to 27.5 Kg/m sq, whereas maximum stocking density recommended in the SCA AHC Draft Australian Code of Animal Welfare Practice. 2 The Domestic Fowl for three or more laying or breeding fowls per cage is 48 Kg/m sq). Freeman concluded that application of the principles set out in his paper to commercial stock should establish objectively appropriate floor space allowances. His conclusion merits urgent attention and serious study in this country.

Immunization of Adult Birds with Inactivated Oil Adjuvant Vaccines

The International Association of Biological Standardization has devoted a second symposium to avian pathology and immunology, a field actively contributing to the modification and improvement of vaccines. Most recently, investigations into diseases affecting bird populations have produced important findings concerning inactivated oil adjuvant vaccines, showing that they are often an indispensable complement to live vaccines in vaccination programmes.

The papers presented at this symposium which was held in Lyon in June 1981 covered the laboratory control of these vaccines, their use in prevention of diseases affecting egg production and of diseases of progeny by the induction of parental immunity, and the role for combined vaccines. These studies describe a new era in immunoprophylaxis and support in full the necessity for standardization of biological products.

The proceedings of the symposium have been published as *Developments in Biological Standardization, Volume 51, Immunization of Adult Birds with Inactivated Oil Adjuvant Vaccines*. Edit. Y Moreau & W Hennesen. X + 336p. 1982. Karger, Bern. US\$51.00

An Invitation to Dinner in Perth The World Poultry Association invites all delegates to the World Veterinary Congress to meet together on Thursday 25 August and enjoy a Seafood Harvest Dinner at the renowned Barnacles Seafood Restaurant, Wanamba Arcade, Perth City. The cost is \$28, inclusive of pre-dinner drinks, three course meal and wine. To accept this invitation, please send a cheque, payable to the AVPA, asap to Dr Graham E Wilcox, School of Veterinary Studies, Murdoch University, Murdoch WA 6150.

Eradication of LLV in UK flocks Collaborative studies by the Houghton Poultry Research Station and Ross Breeders Ltd. have been completed on the epizootiology of lymphoid leukosis virus infection in a commercial strain of chicken, and on tests for identifying and eliminating hens which congenitally transmit the infection to their progeny (LN Payne et alia 1982 Avian Pathology 11: 145-162). By the use of these tests it was found possible to eliminate LLV from the flock in two generations. It was also shown that infected hens tended to lay fewer eggs than uninfected hens, performance being particularly poor in tolerant viraemic hens which, on average, laid 30 eggs fewer than uninfected hens on a hen-housed basis to 440 days. The commercial application of these eradication methods is now underway.

Good Antimicrobial Prescribing In the 27 years since LP Garrud surveyed the antibiotic scene and found it "exceedingly complex", the complexity has increased while much has been written about the abuse of antibiotics and the dire effects that can result. Last year, the Lancet commissioned a series of eleven articles with the aim of stimulating interest in good antimicrobial prescribing and providing up-to-date information on existing drugs. The series is drug-based rather than disease-based and, although the emphasis is on hospital practice, the articles contain much solid information and sound good sense that is useful to veterinarians. The articles were published weekly commencing 10 July 1982 (Lancet 1982 ii: 82).

Avian Solution to the Funnel Web Problem A Mona Vale medico wrote to the Med. J. Aust. in 1980 :

Sir: One festive occasion, David Jones gave our two children day-old chicks. We let these chicks run loose in the garden and, in a matter of two weeks, they had cleared it of funnel web spiders. I think that the "chook" method is much better for this purpose than insecticides.

His offspring now run a thriving business hiring out their spider chomping chooks. They are listed in the 'phone book under Rentokillers.

Another Breakthrough? "Anti-oxidants were widely used by stock feed manufacturers up to the late 1960s, mainly on account of the problem of crazy chick disease and oxidation of vitamin E. Following vaccination for avian encephalomyelitis, vitamin E deficiency is now rare and the use of anti-oxidants has declined." EA Campbell (1983) Animal Health in Australia Volume 3 Nutritional Deficiencies and Diseases of Livestock, page 16. Australian Bureau of Animal Health, Canberra.

ADIX 6 will be held on Thursday 8 September at 4pm at CSIRO Animal Health, Parkville. Dr RC Jones (Liverpool University) will discuss Reoviruses and Adenoviruses: Pathogens or Pests?

Enteric Coccidiosis in Budgerigars Roy Mason of Mt Pleasant Laboratories, Launceston, writes that over about a month 7 of 12 budgies, which were caged with quail in an aviary with floor dimensions 8 feet by 5 feet, died. Affected budgies were found either sitting on the floor with ruffled feathers or dead on the floor. One dead female was submitted for examination. The bird had faecal soiling of feathers around the vent and an obvious enteritis. Large numbers of oocysts (36 x 25.5µm) were present in the intestinal content. Sporulation was poor, perhaps because of autolytic changes prior to attempted external sporulation, but some oocysts developed 4 even sized bodies. These did not develop sufficiently to be certain of the numbers of sporozoites. Based on oocyst size, it is suggested that the coccidian parasite was probably an Eimerian coccidium. The aviary was relatively new with an earthen floor and was sited in a semi-shaded area. Feed and water were provided in vessels on the floor. Each day, the residual water and feed were tipped onto the aviary floor and the vessels refilled. This practice resulted in the floor becoming damp and littered with discarded food amongst which the budgies fossicked. It would seem likely that fossicking amongst the discarded seed on the damp floor facilitated the build-up to pathological proportions of a coccidian parasite of budgerigars. No medication was administered. Disposal of residual feed and water was changed to tipping into a bucket. The floor was cleaned and dry litter provided. When last heard, the situation had resolved. The quail remained healthy at all times.

For bird fanciers

"What do you get if you kiss a budgerigar?"

"Cherpes - a canareal disease, and untweetable."

Blood Transfusions in Cage Birds David Schultz writes that before deciding whether to transfuse blood, it is most important to assess the erythrocyte regeneration capacity of the bird. It may be critically sick, so that handling must be kept to a minimum. If you see plenty of reticulocytes in a blood smear, hold off. If there is no regenerative response, then you must transfuse.

Give at least 10% of the total blood volume of the bird - for example if a bird weighs 200 g, it has about 20 ml of blood (10% of body weight). You can therefore transfuse at least 2 ml of blood at the maximum rate of 1 ml per minute. Use 12% citrate in the blood.

AVIAN IMMUNOLOGY was the title of the 1982 British Veterinary Poultry Association Symposium and is the title of the Proceedings, edited by PC Powell and published by the BVPA. This paperback of 90 pages contains 16 papers which are well written, well illustrated with informative line drawings, graphs and tables, and is well printed. Topics include the immune system- B-cells & T-cells and Macrophages, Monoclonal Antibodies, Immunity to viruses, to bacteria, at mucosal surfaces, to coccidia, to Marek's disease, to infectious bursal disease, to adenoviruses, Vaccines against coccidiosis, Genetic engineering techniques in vaccine production and Vaccination programmes for poultry.

That 10 of the 17 authors are at Houghton underlines the eminence of that laboratory and is a measure of the calibre of all the contributors.

Copies may be obtained from Mr Nigel Lodge, Secretary BVPA, British United Turkeys Limited, Veterinary Laboratory, Platts Lane, Oldmoss, Stapleford, Tarvin, Chester CH3 8HR, England.

At a cost of two pounds sterling for a copy (double that for airmail postage), this must be the buy of the decade.

Recent Advances in the Study of Raptor Diseases, edited by JE Cooper & AG Greenwood. Pp.176. Pounds Sterling 10. Chiron Publications, PO Box 25, Keighley, West Yorkshire, England BD22 7BA. This book contains 31 of the papers presented at a symposium held in London in July 1980. The papers are arranged in three sections: pathology and microbiology, including sections on hand-rearing and behaviour; surgery and anaesthesia; and medicine and therapeutics. An excellent and well-balanced presentation of current knowledge and practice with good illustrations, good bibliography and a good index - specialised but a good buy.

Animal Welfare in Canberra - The chairman of the reformed Senate Standing Committee on National Resources, Senator E.A. Robertson (ALP, NT) said in the Senate on 19 May 1983 that prior to the dissolution of the Parliament on 4 February 1983, the Standing Committee was enquiring into the Plant Variety Rights Bill 1982. Two other matters were referred to the Committee in the previous Parliament and not disposed of by 4 February 1983, namely the importation of live viruses and a number of issues relating to animal welfare in Australia.

He continued: "In relation to the reference on animal welfare the Senate may recall this matter was originally raised by Senator Chipp, Leader of the Australian Democrats, in March 1982, when he proposed that a select committee be established to examine animal welfare in Australia. At that time it was felt that it would be inappropriate to create another select committee so Senator Chipp's reference was divided between the Standing Committee on National Resources and the Standing Committee on Science and the Environment.

"It is the view of the Committee (of) National Resources that the issues raised by Senator Chipp would be more appropriately dealt with by a single Committee and I therefore suggest to the Senate that consideration should be given to the feasibility of establishing a select committee as originally proposed by Senator Chipp."

Senator Chipp (Victoria - Leader of the Australian Democrats) - "I was pleased to hear the speech by Senator Robertson, particularly that part which dealt with the suggestions and requests I made last year for the formation of a select committee to examine animal welfare. I hope that Senator Robertson is expressing not only the view of the Standing Committee on National Resources but also the consensus of his party, from which last year I received a great deal of support when the reference on animal welfare was split between two committees. The Australian Democrats and I are encouraged by Senator Robertson's suggestion to refer immediately to the Senate a request to establish a Senate select committee into animal welfare and animal rights. We are encouraged by his remarks to believe that that suggestion might be received positively by the majority of members of this place." (Extract from Senate Hansard 19 May 1983 Pages 612-613).

On 3 June 1983, Senator Chipp gave notice that, on the next day of sitting (? 23 August - Ed.), he shall move:

1. That a select committee of the Senate be appointed to inquire into and report upon the question of animal welfare in Australia, with particular reference to:

- (a) interstate and overseas commerce in animals;
- (b) wildlife protection and harvesting;
- (c) animal experimentation;
- (d) codes of practice of animal husbandry for all species; and
- (e) the use of animals in sport.

2. That provisions relating to membership, powers and proceedings of the Committee be contained in a subsequent resolution.

(Senate Hansard 3 June 1983, page 1258)

In contrast to this approach is a motion tabled in the British House of Commons on June 23 which urges a Royal Commission to consider all aspects of animal welfare. Hope may spring eternal, but it is unlikely that our local leader will set up another Royal Commission.

The Long March to Tianjin - June 1983 Visit to China

Percy Prewett writes that following the feasibility study visit to China in March 1982, a further mission was sent by the Australian Development Assistance Bureau (ADAB) of the Foreign Affairs Department in June this year. Their specific aim was to assist the Chinese authorities to design a poultry diagnostic laboratory at Tianjin and a specific pathogen free poultry producing facility at Harbin.

The China Poultry Design Mission, as this year's team was described, consisted of Clive Jackson (veterinarian, New South Wales), Gerry Smith (architect, CSIRO), Arthur Jenkins (engineer, ANAHL), and Percy Prewett (veterinarian, Victoria, leader).

In spite of the usual language difficulties of working through interpreters, progress in designing the diagnostic laboratory at Tianjin was remarkably rapid. This was largely due to the preparatory work and experience of the Australian team, but much credit must go to the authorities of the Municipality of Tianjin, north China's largest port.

Recently the city of Tianjin was partly destroyed by a devastating earthquake with a shocking loss of life, but the Municipal authorities have combined rebuilding with slum clearance and developmental projects. One major project is the construction of large modern poultry production units complemented by a new feed mill. Foreseeing the possible disastrous effects of disease outbreaks on this intensive poultry project, the Municipality has placed a high priority on the rapid up-grading of disease diagnosis and the production of high quality vaccines.

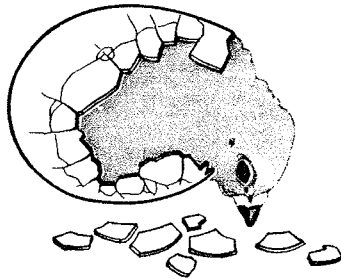
The Australian mission was greeted by the Vice-Mayor of Tianjin, Mr. Liu Jin-feng, who placed at its disposal the Chief Architect of the Municipality and his drafting facilities. Within five days of the arrival of the mission, a schematic design for a three storey laboratory and a teaching facility was drawn up, and detailed laboratory layouts were sketched in ready for the preparation of working drawings. Over the weekend the Municipality team produced 1:100 plans for the building so that copies were available for the departing visitors. None of this was allowed to interfere with the well-known Chinese hospitality which was greatly appreciated by their guests.

Progress was much slower at Harbin in the far north east of China, where construction of the specific pathogen free poultry production facility is projected. Here, four days was found to be insufficient to communicate through interpreters much of the technological intricacy of microbiological containment by the barrier system and poultry isolators. Much more work remains to be done on this part of the project at Harbin.

An essential part of both projects is that Chinese diagnosticians and technicians will be trained in Australia and that Australian experts will work in China for short periods. However, the Diagnostic Centre at Tianjin must first be built and equipped. This will take at least 18 months.

We will keep you informed but do not hesitate to contact the author c/- CSIRO Animal Health, Parkville 3052 (03) 347 2311.

Contributions for the Newsletter The secretary writes that we would like to have input to the newsletter from more members. Although you may not have time to contribute to scientific journals, you could write a note about a clinical case or a surgical technique. You could give practice tips or seek comment on a syndrome about which you are puzzled. Let us hear of a meeting or event which you have been to or which is coming, something interesting which you have read. The newsletter is an excellent forum for exchanging ideas - by communicating with each other we can all learn. Our next newsletter will be published in November. Send your contribution by letter or 'phone to Trevor Faragher or to Gary Cross.



Australian Veterinary Poultry Association

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Secretary/Treasurer: Garry Cross

Vice President: Colin Mills

Veterinary Research Station

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8th August, 1983.

An Ordinary General Meeting of the Australian Veterinary Poultry Association will be held at the Manly Pacific International Hotel, Manly, N.S.W., on Thursday, 1st September, 1983, at 6.30-7.00 a.m.

A G E N D A

1. Importation of avian genetic material.
2. Report by Chairman, Co-ordinating Committee.
3. Education of veterinary undergraduates in poultry health.
4. Funding of avian disease research in Australia - report by convenor of Committee.
5. Distribution and sale of S4 drugs.
6. Workshop on avian bacteriology - August 1984.
7. Any other business.

A Special General Meeting of the Australian Veterinary Poultry Association will be held at the Central Veterinary Laboratory, Glenfield at 4.00 p.m. on 25/8/83, to discuss arrangements for the Manly meeting.

REPORT TO AVPA BY RESEARCH PRIORITIES OFFICER

A report was requested of me during the AGM, March, 1983 in lieu of a verbal report that I had commenced to present. Since then a research committee has been formed to look more deeply into the whole question of research within the poultry industry and I have decided to put some brief comments about the topics I was going to speak about in March, into a broader perspective.

AIM : The aim in establishing research priorities across the industry is to identify those topics which if researched will yield the best return for each research dollar spent. In this exercise we should be concerned with topics with the greatest potential for resolution by research. Once the topics are identified the task should be given to the 'team' best equipped to resolve the problem. We now know that increasingly problems appear to have 'complex' etiologies which will require a 'team' approach to effectively resolve them. My view is that the significance of 'health' or 'husbandry' fields will lessen as we set about developing research teams. This approach may well come into conflict with the current structuring of research groups, and their viability, and the manner of distributing the limited research funds.

IDENTIFYING HIGH PRIORITY RESEARCH AREAS : I believe our present methods leave much to be desired. Accepting the problems associated in doing cost/benefit analyses, more needs to be done, both before projects are funded, and then after, to see how predictive the first analysis was, with explanations for variations. The preliminary analysis should be based on data collected from economically efficient commercial operations who could be expected to be using the best of current knowledge. Such data would best indicate the true economic wastage associated with the problem.

BROAD POTENTIAL AREAS.

1. Factors likely to affect demand for poultry products.
 - 1.1 Those likely to depress demand: affecting public attitude.
 - 1.1.1 Poultry Welfare.
 - 1.1.2 Public health issues. These include potential food poisoning problems such as salmonella or campylobacter contamination, and excessive fat levels, all of which will tend to erode public confidence in our products.
2. Factors likely to increase demand: New product development.
3. Factors which increase the cost of production of products.
 - 3.1 Factors affecting mortality, detectable culls, egg drop
 - 3.2 Factors affecting conversion efficiency
 - 3.3 Factors affecting product quality

CONCLUSION:

We have had our meetings at Christies Beach SA, and recently Terrigal, NSW, but I feel that neither of them has produced the results we need. Perhaps asking somebody removed from the Australian scene to report on the matter, or to make use of the array of overseas talent who will be assembled in Sydney later in the month is another approach. The latter seems to be a useful start.

(J.H. Bray.)

Convenor, AVPA's Reserch Priorities Subcommittee.
10.8.83.