

SVMA NEWS



**Antimicrobial
Stewardship:**
A New World Order

2015
Economic Forecast

6 MOST COMMON practice inspection issues

SVMA's gone "Social"



SASKATCHEWAN VETERINARY MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

Membership Changes

GENERAL

MONTEITH, Catherine.....	Jan 1
SEBASTIAN, Thomas.....	Jan 1
SWEKLA, Kurtis.....	Nov 3

SHORT TERM TO T-GENERAL

CHAUDHARI, Prakashkumar.....	Jan 1
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T-GENERAL

MCCALLUM, Kellie.....	Dec 1
PHILIP, Jabina.....	Jan 1
SIDDIQUE, Muhammad.....	Jan 14
VAN DONKERSGOED, Joyce.....	Aug 15 2014

T-LIMITED TO GENERAL

RUDER, Franziska.....	Nov 17
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SHORT TERM TO GENERAL

ALLEN, Robert W.....	Jan 1
BEGG, Ashley.....	Jan 1
HALTER, Kirsten.....	Jan 1
MCLAREN, Amy.....	Jul 1
MITCHELL-ROBERT, Krista.....	Jan 1
SOUCY, Jocelyn Cecilia.....	Jan 1
ULMER, Andrea.....	Jan 1
WOHLGEMUTH, Nadine.....	Jan 1

SABBATICAL TO GENERAL

JENKINS, Emily J.....	Jul 1
MAYER, Monique N.....	Aug 1

EDUCATIONAL TO GENERAL

BALL, Katherine.....	Jan 1
LUNDQUIST, Bobbie Lynn.....	Jan 1
SCOTT, Steven.....	Aug 1 2014

GENERAL TO SHORT TERM

FERGUSON, Gerald H.....	Jan 1
GIBSON, Lisa.....	60 day, Jan 1
KRUZENISKI, Steven.....	30 day, Jan 1

MCLAREN, Amy.....	30 day, Jan 1
POTTER JAMIESON, Heidi.....	30 day, Jan 1
RIDGWAY, Ryan.....	Jan 1 - 31
SMART, Lynn M.....	Jan 1 - 31

SHORT TERM

ADAMS, William M. III.....	Jan 19 - 30
.....	Feb 23 - Mar 6
.....	Jun 1 - 12
ANTHONY, James.....	30 day, Jan 1
BROWN, Lawrence.....	Jan 5 - Jan 16
HERING, Adam.....	30 day, Jan 1
JANZEN, Alisha.....	30 day, Jan 1
MCINNES, Laura Joan.....	90 day, Jan 1
NYKAMP, Stephanie.....	Feb 2 - 13
OSINCHUK, Stephanie.....	Oct 1 to Dec 31
WENKOFF, Martin S.....	Sep to Nov 2015
WIKS, Joanne M.....	60 day, Jan 1

LIFE PRACTISING TO SHORT TERM

MITCHELL, Terry W.A.....	30 day, Jan 1
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GENERAL TO SABBATICAL

GRIER-LOWE, Candace K.D.....	Jan 1
JENKINS, Emily J.....	Jan 1
MACDONALD-DICKINSON, Valerie.....	Jan 1
PARKER, Dennilyn L.....	Jan 1
TRYON, Kimberly.....	Jan 1
STEWART, Jane.....	Jul 1
WARKENTIN, Cara L.....	Jul 1

LIMITED GENERAL TO SABBATICAL

LOHMANN, Katharina L.....	Jul 1
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T-EDUCATIONAL

DI CONCETTO, Stefano.....	was originally approved July 1, 2014, he was unable to come to Canada - membership cancelled
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LIFE PRACTISING TO LIFE NON-PRACTISING

ALLEN, Douglas A.....	Jan 1
HOPE, Robert M.....	Jan 1
LEIGHTON, Frederick A.....	Jan 1
MAPLETOFT, Reuben J.....	Jan 1
POST, Klaas.....	Jan 1
THEEDE, D. Al.....	Jan 1

GENERAL TO SOCIAL

DYCK, James P.....	Jan 1
HOLMAN, Stacey Jean.....	Jan 1
NORTHCOTE, Margaret J.....	Jan 1
QUAIL, Vera L.....	Jan 1
RANDALL, James W.....	Jan 1
WARD, Kim L.....	Jan 1

RESIGNED

ARORA, Ravinder.....	Dec 31
BRINK, Maria.....	Dec 31
FINLAY, Donald R.....	Dec 31
HABERMEHL, Norman L.....	Dec 31
JACKSON, Melissa A.....	Dec 31
JACOBI, Jennifer.....	Dec 31
MACMILLAN, Nicole.....	Dec 31
MALIN, Cheryl.....	Dec 31
MCGUIRK, Ashlee.....	Dec 31
MCLEOD, Robert B.....	Dec 31
MELLETT, Sinead.....	Oct 14
NEW, Dallas.....	Dec 31
PETZ, Magdalena.....	Dec 31
ROGOWSKY, Joseph G.....	Dec 31
SZAJCZ, Magda.....	Dec 31
SILVER, Tawni.....	Oct 1
STEWART, Rebecca.....	Dec 31
TEMPLETON, Roberta.....	Dec 31
WATSON, Jared.....	Dec 31
WEIR, Laura.....	Dec 31
WENSLEY, Fiona.....	Dec 31

DECEASED

WEIR, Walter C.....	Sep 22
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Keep up-to-date with decisions made on your behalf by council. Visit the members' side of the website for council minutes.

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SVMA MISSION

We are an organization dedicated to the protection of the public by ensuring the proficiency, competency and ethical behaviour of its members in the practice of veterinary medicine. Our association promotes veterinarians and veterinary medicine. We support the physical, personal, financial and professional well-being of our members through continuing education and professional interaction. We regulate our profession through the licensing of veterinarians, approval of practices and disciplining of members as required.

THE SVMA BELIEVES IN

- the personal responsibility of veterinarians to develop and maintain competency in their chosen area of veterinary medicine
- fostering our profession by involvement in education of future and present veterinarians
- quality veterinary practice, humane animal care and compassionate treatment of the client
- providing for public protection and confidence through the fair and unbiased administration of The Veterinarians Act
- enhancing the public's awareness of veterinary medicine and its contribution to society
- the unbiased treatment of members and we expect members to treat each other fairly
- supporting members by providing guidance and information

2015 COMMERCIAL ADVERTISING RATES

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Quarter page	275	1000
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May	April 3
August	July 3
November	October 2

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Photo by: Lindsay Chapman



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PRESIDENT'S *PERSPECTIVE*



Dr Cheryl Bellamy

The SVMA council has some important issues to tackle this year. We will strive to make positive contributions towards solutions to problems facing veterinarians in Saskatchewan and across the country.

Antimicrobial resistance is a serious public health threat which is growing globally. As microbes continue to develop resistance, few new antimicrobials are being brought to market. This is a critical situation for both human and animal health. The term "antimicrobial" refers not only to antibiotics, but to antifungals and

antiparasitics as well.

Veterinarians are being held accountable for antimicrobial use (and misuse). Health Canada is

“Being on the opposite side of the counter gave me an interesting perspective.

calling for provincial veterinary associations, provincial medical associations as well as the animal agriculture industry to collaborate toward developing effective antimicrobial stewardship within all areas of human and animal health.

In December, 2013 Schedule F of the **Food and Drug Act and Regulations** was repealed. Over-the-counter veterinary drugs, many of which are antimicrobials, were formerly listed in Schedule F part II drugs and were affected by the repeal. Essentially, OTC drugs are currently not regulated in Saskatchewan. Other provinces have provincial legislation around the sale of OTC veterinary drugs, while in Saskatchewan virtually anyone can sell them. The SVMA council is concerned that this could add to the antimicrobial resistance problem.

In 2014, Saskatchewan fell miserably short of meeting the BSE submission quota set down by the World Health Organization. Meeting this quota is required to maintain our "controlled risk" status for beef export. In fact, the quota has not been met for the past two years.

Perhaps many producers are not aware that their beef export market is in jeopardy? Who better to educate the producer on this issue than the veterinarian? Loss of the export market would be devastating to veterinarians as well as producers. The province of Alberta has made a concerted effort to increase BSE surveillance numbers in their province and Canada wide. The Alberta BSE Communications Strategy is currently integrating several media tools and informational meetings aimed at educating producers and clearing up misconceptions surrounding BSE in an effort to increase submissions. They have produced an excellent video which they have happily shared with us for adaptation to use in Saskatchewan. (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AtD_rS6Fdyk.)

What can we do to support this initiative and promote BSE surveillance in Saskatchewan?

Recently we made a diagnosis of primary hyperparathyroidism in our own Border Collie, Dill. In December we took her to the veterinary college for treatment. I have to say the experience was excellent. Dill had the best of care from the assigned student, the resident and the surgeon. Being on the opposite side of the counter gave me an interesting perspective. Fortunately, once the parathyroid gland with the adenoma was surgically removed, Dill's calcium levels dropped slowly back to normal without any complications. Our family pet has made a complete recovery. We arrived at the WCVM early on the morning of Dill's appointment, so we sat down in the reception area to wait. My husband Bob visited with each of the other waiting pet owners and their pets. Being a veterinarian he would naturally get a history and establish a diagnosis, but I became concerned when he could not help himself from sharing it with each individual. He proceeded to provide information and console each worried person about the condition of their beloved pet. I was relieved when they escorted Bob, Dill and I to the examination room before he had us kicked out of the clinic!

While we were at the WCVM, Bob and a cameraman from WOW Factor Media were able to get some great video footage which will be used in two new videos. One video will inform clients about referrals to a specialty veterinary practice for the **Just Like You series**. The second video will be a documentary for the SVMA social media campaign about how far veterinary medicine has come in Saskatchewan over the past 100 years. If anyone is interested in being involved in this video, please call the SVMA office. We are looking for ideas, stories, historical information or pictures - even actors for the starring roles!

The SVMA social media campaign is doing very well, however we are realizing only a fraction of its potential. The power of social media lies in its capacity to reach many people directly and simultaneously, but there must be users actively liking and sharing the posts and videos. Please like and share any posts that speak to you. Done as a group, the relevant messages will be spread to all corners of the province. Other veterinary associations as well as the CVMA have similar campaigns which have been very successful.

Spring is just around the corner. Best wishes to you and your family for a healthy and rewarding 2015!

From the Registrar's Desk



Dr Judy Currie

Antimicrobial resistance has become a global problem. Many organisms have become resistant to the "old" antibiotics, more recently developed drugs are already proving to be less useful because of evolving resistance, and little research is currently being done in search of medications for future use. Antimicrobial resistance (AMR) may well be the leading health issue of this century.

Health organizations worldwide are concerned about AMR. Last summer the focus of discussion at the CVMA Summit of Veterinary Leaders was "Antimicrobial Stewardship: a New World Order". At virtually every meeting I have attended since then (and there have been several) the topic of antimicrobial stewardship has been on the agenda in one form or another. At some meetings the discussion revolves around AMR and prudent use of antimicrobials by veterinarians; at others the focus is on what can and should be done about this global public health issue.

Antimicrobial stewardship has been an ongoing topic of discussion within our profession for several years. Go to www.antimicrobialcanada.com and read the material presented at a conference held in Toronto in 2011. Also have a look at the position statement released by the CVMA in June of 2009 entitled *Antimicrobial Use in Animals*. It can be accessed on the CVMA website under Position Statements. Veterinarians have been leaders in discussions on antimicrobial resistance for years; current concerns and discussions are virtually identical to those I participated in fifteen years ago when I sat on council.

Recently published by the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) is a document entitled *Antimicrobial Resistance and Use in Canada, A Federal Framework for Action* with a message from the Honourable Rona Ambrose, Minister of Health, stating, "We know that resistance is largely due to inappropriate use of antimicrobial treatment, patients not finishing

prescription regimens and improper use in livestock or crops." This document can be accessed on the SVMA website in the 'Breaking News' section.

This past fall, the Ad Hoc Committee on Antimicrobial Stewardship contacted all of the veterinary regulatory groups in Canada

encouraging development of stewardship policies and procedures. In their letter, committee members John Prescott and Jean Szkotnicki state, "It is clear that registered veterinarians are absolutely central to addressing this critical issue," and have asked the provincial VMAs to update their requirements in order to align with the newest international guidelines and standards.

The Canadian Council of Veterinary Registrars has discussed various approaches to stewardship, among them the need for education. Quebec has developed online CE specific to antimicrobial use that is now **required** for licensing in that province. The SVMA is looking at instituting similar CE requirements aimed at helping members to keep prudent use of antimicrobials in mind every time they prescribe.

The causes of resistance continue to be hotly debated amongst the various branches of health care—with no concrete conclusion having thus far been reached. It is likely no one medical profession, group or type of application of antimicrobial medications can be blamed: this is a shared problem that will require all users of antimicrobials to take responsibility and action in the effort to reduce the problematic effects of their use. In order to preserve the efficacy of our remaining antimicrobials, veterinarians must be ready to play a significant role in managing the antimicrobial resistance challenge.

“It is clear that registered veterinarians are absolutely central to addressing this critical issue.



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Antimicrobial Stewardship: A New World Order

Kristin McEvoy, *Canadian Veterinary Medical Association*

The first antibiotic, penicillin, was discovered by bacteriologist, Dr. Alexander Fleming in 1928. Dr. Fleming accidentally developed a mold compound and noticed that it could inhibit certain types of bacteria.

“Currently, Canada is not meeting international standards or national recommendations.

Over a decade later, two scientists, Dr. Howard Florey and Dr. Ernst Chain, furthered Dr. Fleming's discovery by isolating the antibacterial element from the mold. In

the 1940's, penicillin was being mass produced for use in human medicine.

The discovery of penicillin's power to kill or inhibit the growth of different disease causing microorganisms changed medical care dramatically. Suddenly bacterial infections could be cured. An infection resulting from a simple laceration or burn no longer resulted in a fatality.

Further antibiotics were discovered over the next few decades and their use in human medicine was soon followed by therapeutic use in animals. During the 1950s, scientists in the United States discovered that antibiotics administered at low (subtherapeutic) doses could increase the growth rate of livestock and poultry. Adding antimicrobial products to animal feed or water in low doses would also prevent or reduce the incidence of disease.

The golden age of antibiotics was short lived. During his 1945 Nobel Prize speech, Dr. Fleming had predicted there would be misuse of penicillin and he warned that under-dosing would lead to the development of resistant bacteria. He was correct: evidence of resistance reportedly emerged as early as the 1950s. At first, the issue of infections caused by resistant bacteria was largely overlooked. If one antibiotic didn't treat the infection, another one was usually available.

Fast forward to today: decades of use, misuse, improper dosing, ineffective legislation and other related issues have led to an increase in bacterial resistance—the ability of microorganisms to withstand the effect of an antimicrobial agent. Many antimicrobials are now ineffective and very few new antimicrobials are being developed and introduced on the market. In May of 2014, the World Health Organization declared antimicrobial resistance a major global threat to public health. Citing resistance data from 114 countries, WHO warned that without urgent coordinated action, the world is headed for a post-antibiotic era where common infections could be fatal.

The epidemiology associated with antimicrobial resistance is complex. Hospitals, farms, aquaculture, industrial and household antibacterial chemicals and decades of improper use of antimicrobials have all contributed to resistance.

“Resistance anywhere is potentially resistance everywhere,” said Dr. John Prescott, a veterinary bacteriologist at the Ontario Veterinary College and a member of the Ad-Hoc Committee for Antimicrobial Stewardship in Canadian Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine.

The **Ad-Hoc Committee for Antimicrobial Stewardship in Canadian Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine**, which was formed in 2011 to provide a forum for antimicrobial stewardship dialogue, includes representatives from veterinary academia and associations, animal health diagnosis and industry, human medicine and environmental science. During the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association's Summit of Veterinary Leaders in July 2014, Dr. Prescott presented a report from the committee that provided an assessment of how Canada is doing when it comes to stewardship of antimicrobials. The report assigned Canada an overall ranking of C- for antimicrobial stewardship.

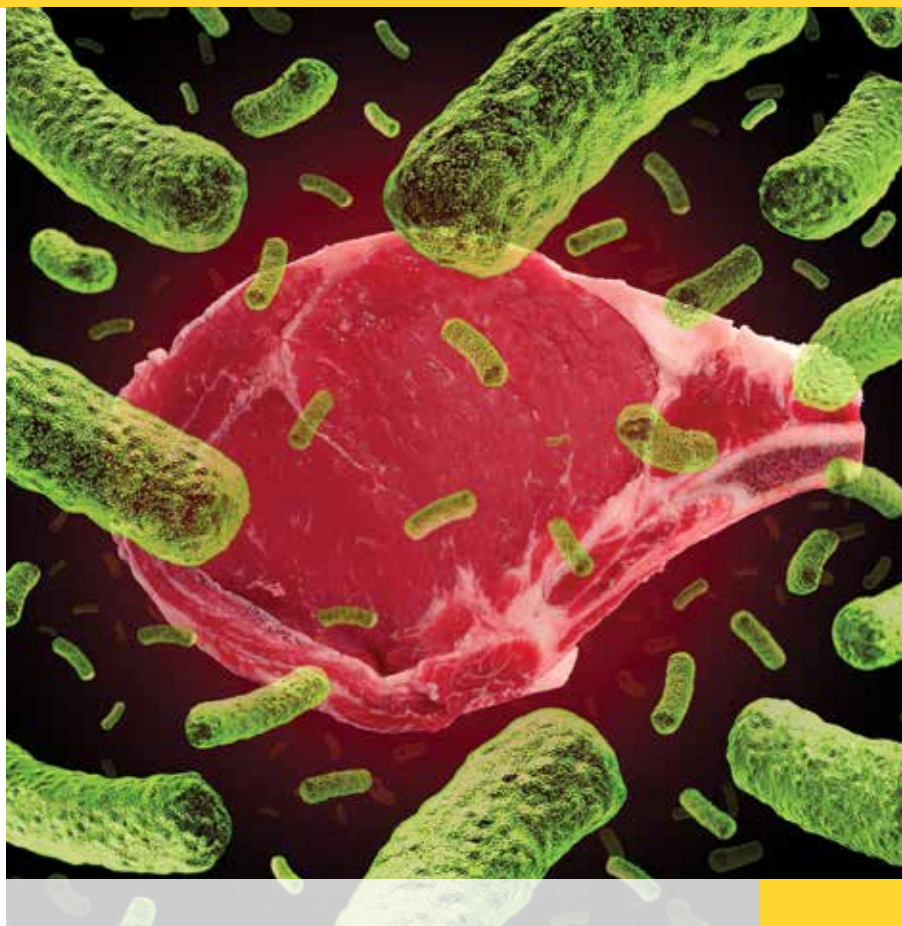
“Currently, Canada is not meeting international standards or national recommendations,” said Dr. Prescott. “And there are a variety of contributing factors, most notably the complex regulatory issues that stand in the way of change.”

Canada does not have a national regulatory system in place to monitor the use of antimicrobial products. The Canadian Integrated Program for Antimicrobial Resistance Surveillance (CIPARS), operated by the Public Health Agency of Canada, was established in 2003 to monitor trends in antimicrobial use and resistance. However, CIPARS cannot monitor or control the use of antimicrobials, since federal authorities regulate the sale of antimicrobials and provincial authorities regulate the use of these products.

In April 2014, Health Canada announced its intention to work towards the removal of growth promotion claims of medically important antimicrobial drugs and develop options to strengthen the veterinary oversight of antimicrobial use in food animals. It's a step in the right direction, but two major issues have still not been addressed by Health Canada.

One of those issues involves active pharmaceutical ingredients, which are not intended to be administered directly to animals. These pharmaceutically active substances are not subject to Health Canada's market authorization requirements. This gap in legislation allows animal owners to purchase APIs and administer them to their animals at their own discretion with no veterinary oversight.

The second issue is that Health Canada's Food and Drugs Act contains an “own use” importation loophole, which allows animal owners to import antibiotics for their own use. Through these regulatory loopholes, unknown quantities of unapproved antimicrobials are



“ In May of 2014, the World Health Organization declared antimicrobial resistance a major global threat to public health. Citing resistance data from 114 countries, WHO warned that without urgent coordinated action, the world is headed for a post-antibiotic era where common infections could be fatal.

brought into Canada and used on animals, including those raised for human consumption.

Extra-label drug use (ELDU) of antimicrobials can be an important strategy for veterinarians when treating diseases where an approved product is not available or suitable. Veterinarians can be faced with circumstances where there is a lack of label claims for some species or disease conditions. There can also be instances when the ELDU of an antimicrobial may be the most prudent use.

Some antimicrobials used by veterinarians are also used in human medicine and are essential for the treatment of serious life-threatening infections in humans (Veterinary Drug Directorate Category I antimicrobials). ELDU of VDD Category I antimicrobials should not be prescribed by veterinarians unless their use has been carefully considered and justified to avoid the development of resistance.

...continued

There is no regulatory oversight that prevents animal owners from using drugs in an extra-label manner. Owners who use drugs extra-label without veterinary oversight are doing so with risks to animal health, public health and food safety.

Veterinarians must strike a balance between maximizing animal health and welfare, while preserving the effectiveness of antibiotic products and protecting public health. The continued use of antibiotics in veterinary medicine is dependent on veterinarians' ability to manage their use responsibly.

Educational efforts have been undertaken to ensure that veterinarians can implement good stewardship practices. Dr. Nigel Gumley, an Ottawa companion animal practitioner, Chair of CVMA's Working Group

on Prudent Use Guidelines for Companion Animals and CVMA's representative on the American Veterinary Medical Association's Task Force on Antimicrobial Resistance, recently led the

development of **CVMA's Antimicrobial SmartVet**, a smartphone application that assists veterinarians with working through the process of selecting appropriate antimicrobial therapy for specific bacterial diseases of dogs and cats. (CVMA's livestock and poultry prudent use guidelines are currently available in print to guide large animal practitioners in making responsible decisions about antimicrobial therapy, but for the companion animal project, the working group wanted to provide a more convenient method of accessing the information.)

"We know that 51% of prescriptions for companion animals are antimicrobials," said Dr. Gumley. "With the **SmartVet app**, we're giving companion animal practitioners access to a mobile tool that is easy to use and enables a veterinarian to quickly make a prudent decision around the use of an appropriate antimicrobial."

Concerns have been raised regarding the issue of veterinarians prescribing and dispensing antimicrobials, and the need for the profession to consider separating or 'decoupling' these activities. Veterinarians both prescribing and dispensing is perceived by some as a conflict of interest that may be contributing to the growth of antimicrobial resistance, as veterinary practices rely on drug sales as a source of income.

For large animal veterinarians who are often on the road, decoupling could be detrimental not only to their business, but also to the health of their patients, as medications would no longer be immediately available for animals on farms. With the loss of convenience to the producer, there is potential for delayed treatment, which could have a negative impact on animal welfare. There may actually be some benefits to decoupling



for companion animal practices who would no longer need to incur the cost of maintaining a supply of medications, but a risk lies in leaving the dispensing to others who may not be knowledgeable about animal health. Ultimately, would decoupling have any impact on reducing antimicrobial resistance? That issue is currently under debate.

What has finally become well-recognized and is gaining acceptance is that reducing antimicrobial resistance will require involvement from all sectors.

"A coordinated national and provincial framework is needed to counter resistance," said Dr. Prescott. "This must involve chief veterinary officers and chief medical officers working together, closing regulatory loopholes and implementing a comprehensive national surveillance system that will accurately track the use of antibiotic products."

Dr. Prescott says he believes Canada is in a "golden moment" to improve antibiotic stewardship.

"Let's fix the problems," said Dr. Prescott. "Bacteria can change, but so can we."

This article originally appeared in the Winter 2014 issue of West Coast Veterinarian magazine.

“We know that 51% of prescriptions for companion animals are antimicrobials.

DEAN'S UPDATE



Dr Douglas Freeman
Western College of Veterinary Medicine

Renovations in the WCVM Veterinary Library are nearly complete, and our students are looking forward to having 24-hour access to the converted space. Once completed, the library will better meet the needs of the WCVM community and other on-campus users.

Here are other recent news highlights from the Western College of Veterinary Medicine:

- “Winter school” for One Health: In early November, I travelled with some WCVM faculty to the Guru Angad Dev Veterinary and Animal Sciences University (GADVASU) in Ludhiana, India, for a week-long “winter school” that focused on One Health. GADVASU and the University of Saskatchewan’s Integrated Training Program in Infectious Diseases, Food Safety and Public Policy (ITraP) jointly organized the event.

About 50 students from GADVASU attended the school that featured some WCVM faculty including Drs. Baljit Singh, Hugh Townsend, Vikram Misra and Emily Jenkins. ITraP is a graduate training program that is funded by Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC). The program trains students in multi-disciplinary approaches to infectious diseases and food safety through integrated input from collaborators.

- 2015 SCVMA Symposium: More than 250 veterinary students from across Canada travelled to Saskatoon in early January for Symposium – the annual veterinary student conference that’s supported by the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association (CVMA). As the 2015 hosts, WCVM students organized activities, wet labs and social events as well as billets for the out-of-province students.
- Return of tilt table: In October, clinicians, staff and students regained the use of the bovine tilt table that was recently refurbished and re-installed in the WCVM Veterinary Medical Centre. The hydraulic table is an indispensable tool that’s used for bovine treatment and examination. The original device was developed in the mid-1970s, but when the table developed mechanical issues in 2013, the U of S contracted a Saskatchewan engineering company to upgrade the device. After the installation was

completed, clinicians began using the table for clinical cases in mid-October.

- Stookey receives bovine welfare award: WCVM professor Dr. Joe Stookey is the 2014 recipient of the Metacam® 20 Bovine Welfare Award that’s presented by the Canadian Association of Bovine Veterinarians (CABV) in partnership with Boehringer Ingelheim.

Stookey is an expert in livestock behaviour, animal welfare and animal well being who has spent more than 25 years promoting cattle welfare through his teaching, research and involvement in professional associations and producer committees.

- Leighton receives honorary degree: During the University of Guelph’s fall convocation on Oct. 18, President and Vice-Chancellor Franco Vaccarino conferred an honorary Doctor of Science degree on Dr. Ted Leighton, a 1979 WCVM graduate and professor of veterinary pathology.

Leighton co-founded the Canadian Wildlife Health Cooperative (CWHC) in 1992 and served as its co-director and executive director for many years. In addition to his efforts with the CWHC and his roles as a teacher and researcher, Leighton was commended for his work with the World Organisation for Animal Health (Office International des Epizooties or OIE) to build a stronger leadership structure for wildlife health management in other countries.

- SETAC fellowship for Giesy: Finally, congratulations to Dr. John Giesy, a professor in the WCVM’s Department of Veterinary Biomedical Sciences and U of S Canada Research Chair in Environmental Toxicology. In November, Dr. Giesy was conferred the title of Fellow of SETAC (Society of Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry) during the society’s annual meeting in Vancouver, B.C.

For more WCVM news, visit www.wcvmtoday.com or follow @WCVMToday on Twitter. You can always contact me (306-966-7448; douglas.freeman@usask.ca) anytime if you have questions.



Rabies Case In Saskatchewan

Dr Betty Althouse

A puppy was presented to a Saskatchewan veterinary practice in mid-December with clinical signs that could be indicative of rabies or distemper.

The puppy had wandered into a work camp in Nunavut with his tail

frozen to his leg about a week before a Saskatchewan resident began his work period there in early December. Two workers from Nova Scotia were nursing it back to health, and the Saskatchewan resident helped and “adopted” the puppy, flying it back with him. The

“ Contact investigations were hampered by people being in multiple provinces and territories.

puppy’s health changed on the day of the flights from Kugluktuk to Edmonton via Yellowknife. They thought it was affected by the plane ride. After arriving in Edmonton late afternoon, they drove to Saskatchewan the same day. During transport the dog reportedly exhibited nervous symptoms (seizing, throwing head back, eyes glazed, salivating, dysphoric, crying). The puppy was seen by a Saskatchewan veterinarian the next day. As the puppy had bitten a family member, it was euthanized, and submitted for rabies testing. Positive rabies results were received December 19.

Contact investigations were hampered by people being in multiple provinces and territories, lack of veterinary infrastructure in Nunavut and lack of interprovincial communications for public health established between jurisdictions now that rabies is no longer managed federally. Sask Health will take the lead in writing this up, to help improve interprovincial communications systems.

On the animal control side, one other dog was exposed to the Nunavut puppy. This dog was previously rabies vaccinated, and revaccinated when rabies was suspected in the Nunavut dog. A 45 day observation period has been placed. Two exposed people in Saskatchewan are undergoing post-exposure treatment—the person bitten and a veterinary clinic employee who was cut while removing the head.

Proper PPE was worn, reducing exposures at the veterinary clinic. Not all veterinary practice members had current rabies titers, so samples were submitted to ensure protective titers.

CANADIAN VETERINARY MEDICAL ASSOCIATION (CVMA)

One Profession. One Strong Voice.

The CVMA strives to address issues of relevance to veterinarians across the country. We're pleased to provide you with an overview of what the CVMA has recently been working on for you, our valued members in Saskatchewan.

CVMA has reviewed and provided feedback to the Honourable Rona Ambrose, Minister of Health regarding the recently released plan "Antimicrobial Resistance and Use in Canada: A Federal Framework for Action." While CVMA supports the three pillars of the Framework—surveillance of resistance and use in humans and animals, stewardship and innovation—the Framework should not state that Canada's actions on antimicrobial resistance and use are aligned with international organizations and partners. Until Canada addresses antimicrobial regulatory voids (e.g., 'Own Use Importation' and importation as active pharmaceutical ingredients) that do not allow for effective control over antimicrobial use such claims cannot be made. CVMA has also urged the government to include veterinary stakeholders in the development of the Framework's Action Plan that will provide details on how the specific antimicrobial issues within the three pillars will be addressed.

The **2013 Provincial Economic Report** and the **2013 of Veterinarians Employed in Government, Industry and Academe** are now available for Saskatchewan. Members can access these report by logging into the CVMA website under the Practice & Economics > Business Management > Reports section.

CVMA's Editorial Committee is looking for **Associate and Assistant Editors** for The Canadian Journal of Veterinary Research. If interested contact the Managing Editor of Journals, Heather Broughton, at hbroughton@cvma-acmv.org.

To promote the value of veterinary healthcare and increase the understanding of the many roles of veterinarians, throughout 2015, CVMA is running an awareness campaign that targets our public audiences on Facebook and Twitter. In consultation with the CVMA Communication's Advisory Group, a series of veterinary healthcare statements have been developed to draw attention to a variety of topics such as companion and large animal health, public health, antimicrobial stewardship, the human-

animal bond, preventive healthcare options and more. Watch for this on CVMA's Facebook and Twitter feeds so you can share these important messages with your own networks throughout 2015. You can find the CVMA on Facebook at www.facebook.com/CanadianVeterinaryMedicalAssociation and on Twitter in English @CanVetMedAssoc and in French @Assoccanmedvet.

Get into the Western spirit from **July 16 to 19, 2015** when CVMA holds its annual convention in Calgary, Alberta. In partnership with the Alberta Veterinary Medical Association, and in collaboration with the Canadian

Association of Animal Health Technologists and Technicians (CAAHTT), this unique four-day convention features 118 hours of potential CE sessions and speakers from Canada, the United States and Europe.

With sessions focusing on small animal, equine, bovine and ruminant medicine, in addition to animal welfare and business management issues, there is something of interest for everyone. And for the first time, table topics will be presented at the University of Calgary's Faculty of Veterinary Medicine Showcase. Find out more about these sessions on the CVMA's website (www.canadianveterinarians.net). Online registration for the 2015 CVMA Convention opens in mid-February.

“Get into the Western spirit from July 16 to 19, 2015 when CVMA holds its annual convention in Calgary, Alberta.”

Questions or Suggestions?

Contact your CVMA National Office: Tel: 1-800-567-2862, or e-mail at admin@cvma-acmv.org.



CANADIAN VETERINARY
MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

L'ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE
DES MÉDECINS VÉTÉRINAIRES

Keep informed

of the decisions council is making and actions being taken on your behalf. The minutes from council meetings are posted on the Members' Side of the SVMA website www.svma.sk.ca.

Council welcomes comments and suggestions from all members. Email your comments or questions to a councillor (addresses are on the website) or to the office and they will be passed on to council.

WCVM Student Update



Lindsay Chapman

On behalf of the student body of the WCVM, I would like to extend a Happy New Year to the members of the SVMA and their families.

As a third year veterinary student, I am excited to be taking many interesting elective courses this year.

“When you hear hoof beats, think horses, but beware, lest you get trampled by zebras.

With over forty classes being offered, it is tempting to want to enroll in everything!

The Western College of Veterinary Medicine

hosted the 2015 Students of the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association (SCVMA) Symposium during the second week in January. This three day event,

provided veterinary students from across Canada with the opportunity to listen to fascinating and progressive lectures, partake in unique wet labs and have the opportunity for networking and socializing. This year's theme was, "Prairie Zebras" adapted from the saying, "When you hear hoof beats, think horses, but beware, lest you get trampled by zebras." Many of the presentations focused on unique veterinary medical mysteries and cases. This event provided a great opportunity to showcase our school and would not have been possible without the help of many student volunteers as well as those professors and veterinarians who instructed labs or provided lecturers. Many thanks to all!

**Get with the
program...**

Sharing **SaskVets** posts with your clients on your practice website or Facebook page has proven financial returns! Informational and promotional posts travel furthest and return the greatest financial benefit to your practice when you retweet, like and share them. Try it for yourself!

JOIN US!
**50 YEARS WCVM
1965–2015**



conference
JUNE 12-13, 2015

homecoming
JUNE 13-14, 2015

Join us for three days of learning, reminiscing and renewing ties with your classmates and *alma mater*!





Animal Health Perspectives

PDS Recruits New Talent for its Leadership Team

By: Marilyn Jonas, CEO, Prairie Diagnostic Services

PDS has recently strengthened its leadership team with the addition of two critical positions, Director of Finance and Administration (CFO) and Director of Clients Services and Marketing. The additional resources will add significant value to the organization and to our clients.



Director of Finance and Administration, CFO:

Veronika Bencze was hired as Director of Finance and Administration (CFO) effective mid-November 2014. Veronika is responsible for finance, human resources, information technology and administration.

Veronika brings a unique skill set and broad and varied background to her role. She is originally from Hungary and has the equivalent of a Bachelor Degree in Business Administration, a Master Degree in Business Administration and a Ph.D. in the same field. She taught for six years at the University of Pecs in Hungary before immigrating to Canada. Veronika has held positions of increasing seniority and authority within the finance field since she came to Canada (Alberta) as she concurrently completed her CMA designation in 2010. Her last four positions have been in senior finance roles in government, a not-for-profit organization, a community college and most recently in a large First Nations community close to Calgary.

Veronika is married with 3 children. She and her family have relocated to Saskatoon.



Director of Client Services and Marketing:

Brian Zwaan joined PDS as the Director of Client Services and Marketing effective December 1, 2014. Brian has taken responsibility for client services, outreach, marketing and sales. He will play a key role in interfacing with our diverse client groups and other key stakeholders and facilitating the information flow between PDS and our clients.

Brian brings 25 + years of relationship management, sales and marketing experience to PDS. After graduating from the University of Saskatchewan with a Bachelors of Agriculture Degree (Animal Science), he spent 13 years within the veterinary pharmaceutical industry in sales and program development and management. He then spent 5 years as CEO of an automobile parts and supplies business and another nine years in sales for an agriculture seed distributor. Most recently he has worked as a program development manager for Farmers of North America in both sales and program development.

He and his wife, Dr. Trish Dowling (WCVN), live on an acreage out by St. Denis with their two children.



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Opportunity for free testing of samples to be used in Bovine and Porcine Enteric Diseases Study

Prairie Diagnostic Services has an ongoing research project to determine the **detection rate of significant enteric pathogens of cattle and pigs**. The **project is funded by Agriculture Development Fund (ADF) and Alberta Livestock and Meat Agency (ALMA)**. The objective is to compare the presence of enteric pathogens in both clinically-affected (diarrheic) and unaffected animals (negative controls).

Transportation and laboratory testing costs related to the project will be covered by PDS through the project funding. In addition, **PDS will provide a \$50.00 credit per submission of negative control samples**, which could be applied to any other testing. Any testing on these cases, which is **not included in the project** (for example full necropsy, serology, etc ;) will be billed at PDS regular fees.

Samples Needed:

1. Samples from Clinically Affected Animals: Fresh/unfixed small and large intestines (ileum and spiral colon) from calves (newborn to 3 month-old) or pigs (newborn to 2 month-old) euthanized or dead less than 6 hours with clinical signs of diarrhea. Submit a portion (~20 cm each) of fresh ileum and spiral colon on ice for bacteriology, virology and parasitology tests and another portion of ileum and spiral colon in formalin, for histopathology examination.
2. Samples from Negative Controls: Submit similar samples (ileum and spiral colon) from calves (newborn to 3 month-

old) or pigs (newborn to 2 month-old) euthanized or dead less than 6 hours from causes other than diarrhea (e.g. lameness, pneumonia, etc.)

or

Fecal sample (10 grams) from healthy calves (newborn to 3 month-old) or pigs (newborn to 2 month-old) could also be submitted as negative controls for this study. Please make sure that samples arrive at the laboratory within 48 hours after collection.

Submission Forms:

Please ensure that the PDS bovine or porcine submission form is completed (located on our web-site, **www.pdsinc.ca**), including the age of the animal and time of euthanasia or death. Please specify that the samples are for the **ADF-ALMA Enteric study** in the History section.

Ensuring You Receive Payment for Transport Costs:

In order to ensure that your transportation costs for your samples are covered please check the "Payment Receiver Account" box on your Purolator waybill and put PDS account number – Saskatoon (6093759) in the receiver account box. If you are using the bus, please ask for the COLLECT way bill.

Please contact the PDS Diagnostic Services Office (DSO) if you have any questions (306-966-7316). Thank you for your collaboration on this project.

PDS Fundraising Campaigns in 2014

In October 2014, PDS raised a total of \$1,772.00 for the C95 Breast Cancer Marathon through a Silent Auction, the sale of curry powder and butter chicken seasoning prepared by Anju Tumber (Head Technologist, PDS Molecular Diagnostics Laboratory) and the sale of cupcakes and cookies made by Monique Darke (Technologist, PDS Bacteriology Laboratory) and her family.

Our 2014 "Movember" campaign raised a total of \$1,785.00 through web and anonymous donations; an auction for a dinner prepared by Dr. Bruce Grahn (Veterinary Ophthalmologist, Small Animal Clinical Sciences and Associate Dean [Academic], WCVI); the sale of decorative pens crafted by Brent Wagner (Department Assistant, Veterinary Microbiology, WCVI) and the sale of curry powder and butter

chicken seasoning prepared by Anju Tumber (Head Technologist, PDS Molecular Diagnostics Laboratory). The funds raised are directed to programs run by Movember and their men's health partner, Prostate Cancer Canada.

PDS also collected Christmas baking and a variety of art supplies for Eagles Nest Youth Ranch.



Saskatchewan Sheep Abortion Surveillance Program

By: Dr. Wendy Wilkins, Disease Surveillance Veterinarian, Ministry of Agriculture

Veterinarians are reminded that the Saskatchewan Sheep Abortion Surveillance Program runs until June 30, 2015.

Abortion in the lamb industry has been a problem for many years and some producers have come to accept abortions as normal. This program will help the Saskatchewan sheep industry determine the prevalence and type of abortion occurring on farms and to assess the severity of the problem.

This is the second and final year of this program. In the first year, spring 2014, there were 44 submissions to PDS under this project, from 18 different producers. Although the program was underutilized, it did reveal some important information about the causes of sheep abortions in Saskatchewan. Fifty percent of the abortions were found to be due *Chlamydophila abortus*, or enzootic abortion of ewes (EAE). Also, 50% of the farms submitting fetuses had at least one *chlamydophilus* abortion, making this pathogen the number one cause of ovine abortion in the province.

Producers are eligible to participate in this program if they have at least 10 ewes and their flock has experienced at least two abortions or stillbirths in the current lambing season. The program covers the costs of pathology and laboratory testing at PDS, and covers the costs of shipping the fetus providing they are shipped C.O.D to the



Photo by: Dr Curt Hagele

laboratory. All fetuses will be tested for EAE, and routine bacteriology. Other tests may be done based on necropsy/ bacteriology results.

For more information on this program, please contact the Saskatchewan Sheep Development Board at 306-933-5582.

This program is funded by Growing Forward 2 and supported by in-kind contributions by the Large Animal Clinic at the University of Saskatchewan and the Saskatchewan Sheep Development Board.



World Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians Conference June 15-18, 2015 • Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada • www.wavld2015.com

The World Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians Conference (WAVLD) will be held in Saskatoon, Canada in June 2015. It is being hosted by the Canadian Animal Health Laboratorians Network (CAHLN) with PDS as the lead laboratory. Other partners include Saskatoon Tourism, the Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture, the WCVM, CFIA and a host of industry partners.

This is the first time that the World Congress has been held in North America since 1999 (Texas). It presents a unique opportunity for the Canadian and U.S. veterinary diagnostic community to share ideas, network and be exposed to world class international expertise.

The 2015 conference will be held from June 15th to June 18th and will feature two and a half days of themed presentations and poster sessions as well, an exhibition featuring products and services for the veterinary diagnostic sector. The conference themes include management of endemic disease, new and emerging disease, new technologies, turning lab data into intelligence, and wildlife and one health.

The call for abstracts has just been released and will end February 15th. Registration opens January 15th.

Partners involved in the conference include The World Organisation of Health (OIE) which will hold a one day diagnostic conference as

one of the program options. The Canadian Animal Health Laboratorians Network (CAHLN) and the Canadian Association of Veterinary Pathologists (CAVP) conferences and annual meetings will also be integrated into the program as will the annual meeting of the Canadian Animal Health Surveillance Network (CAHSN). In addition to the information sessions, we will offer scientific and community tours, as well as formal and informal networking opportunities.

For more information on the conference check our web-site at www.wavld2015.com or contact Dr. Dale Godson, Chair, Scientific Committee dale.godson@pds.usask.ca or Marilyn Jonas, Chair WAVLD 2015 marilyn.jonas@pds.usask.ca.

2014 Testing Results for Equine West Nile Virus Infections

By: Dale Godson, Microbiology Laboratory (Immunology/Virology), PDS

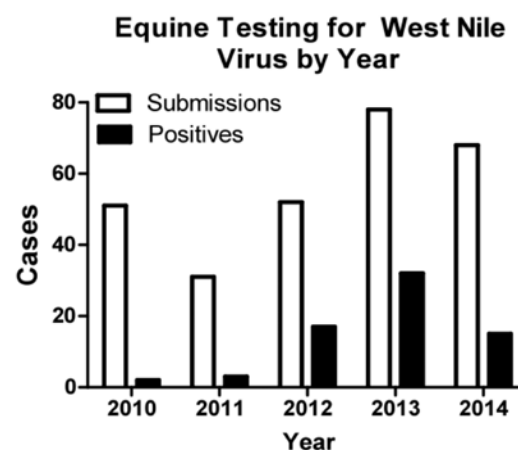
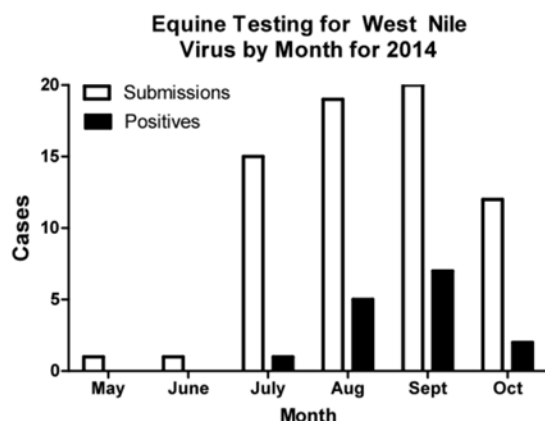
West Nile virus (WNV) is a flavivirus that is spread by mosquitoes and can infect and cause neurologic disease in horses. Detection of IgM antibodies to WNV (indicating a recent infection) in a horse with neurologic signs is considered diagnostic for West Nile virus disease in horses.

In 2014, the number of submissions declined slightly (from 78 in 2013 to 68 this year) as well as the number of positive results. There were 15 cases (22% positive rate), compared to the previous year with 32 positive cases (41% positive rate). The first positive case occurred in the last week of July, but cases were most prevalent in September with the last two cases of the year detected in the first week of October.

West Nile virus infection is a notifiable disease and PDS reports positive results to the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA). The Public Health Agency of Canada maintains a summary of surveillance data for West Nile virus infections on their website (<http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/wnv-vwn/index-eng.php>).

Table 1.
WNV Submissions
and Results by Province

Prov	Neg	Pos	Total
AB	15	6	21
MB	6	0	6
SK	24	9	33
BC	8	0	8
Total	53	15	68



READERS' FEEDBACK

The **Animal Health Perspectives** editorial team (Dr. Moira Kerr, Crystal Wagner and Kathryn Tonita) invite readers' comment on any material published in the newsletter or questions on material submitted by contributors.

Submit your comments or concerns to Dr. Moira Kerr (email: moira.kerr@pds.usask.ca) and they will be forwarded appropriately.

To be added to the distribution list for the electronic link, email: crystal.wagner@gov.sk.ca



COMMUNICATIONS CORNER

Sue Gauthier

I have heard many of our Saskatchewan veterinarians say that they are continually learning. Professional development is always important, and fortunately there are opportunities to cultivate your career popping up like crocuses at this time of year.

It's a truism that having a mentor is a great benefit as you cultivate any career. An experienced advisor can steer you along a career trajectory, navigating around professional obstacles and helping you strategically augment your skillset. They can also assist you in better understanding the industry.

Mentorship happens every day and doesn't require a formal program—just the accessible, listening ear of a more experienced practitioner who understands that skill and confidence take support and time to build. Our province is filled with excellent, supportive veterinarians whose wisdom and experience provide a wellspring of benefit to their colleagues (not to mention the animals!)

For those interested in a structured approach, the **Summer Mentorship Program** offers a great opportunity for students and practices to collaborate and share knowledge. This annual program, funded by the Ministry of Agriculture and the SVMA, puts ten second- and third- year Saskatchewan quota students to work in mixed and large animal practices each summer. The mentorship they receive and large animal experience they gain is invaluable, both for these future veterinarians and for the mentoring practices.

Interested? Practitioners can contact Paige Links at the WCVM (paige.links@ususk.ca) to connect with an applicant. Student applications for the 2015 mentorship program must be received by the SVMA office by February 28.

Another great professional development opportunity is the CVMA **Emerging Leaders Program**, a full-day workshop held each July during the CVMA Convention.

The ELP workshop is open to recent graduates and experienced professionals alike, and offers a unique opportunity to develop leadership skills, explore your approach to personal and professional accomplishment, and understand how you work with colleagues and health care teammates. DVMs and RVTs who have graduated within the last ten years can apply for sponsorships through the SVMA and the CVMA.

Check out the CVMA Emerging Leaders Program Facebook page, or contact Sarah Cunningham scunningham@cvma-acmv.org for application information.

The arrival of spring also heralds a new round of spring regional continuing education. This year, WCVM-VMC dermatology specialist Dr Allison Foster will deliver Dinner & CE sessions in May in various Saskatchewan locales. Information about dates and venues will be posted on the Events page at www.svma.sk.ca as it becomes available.

Finally, preparations are in the works for the **2015 SVMA Conference, September 17-19 in Regina**, where a full year's CE quota will be delivered by specialists from across Canada and the USA. 2015 topics will include companion animal surgeries and emergency care, equine nutrition, field anaesthesia, ophthalmology, planning for disease outbreaks and much, much more. Stay posted for details and online registration.

“There are opportunities to cultivate your career popping up like crocuses at this time of year.”

2015 FEE GUIDES are on their way!



The 2015 Large Animal and Companion Animal Fee Guides are on their way: practice owners may have already received theirs in the mail. The fee guides provide the most accurate data about current service fees in the veterinary profession. They are an invaluable, one of a kind resource for pricing throughout your practice.

Past and current fee guides are also be available at **www.svma.sk.ca** on the Members' Side.

Take a look through your new fee guide when it arrives and stay in the know on the “going rates”.

Provincial Veterinarian Update

DISEASE SUMMARY 2014



Betty Althouse,
Chief Veterinary Officer

Happy 2015 to everyone. I am providing an update on provincially notifiable and federally reportable disease occurrences and program highlights in Saskatchewan for 2014.

Currently, provincially notifiable diseases include rabies, anthrax, anaplasmosis and porcine epidemic diarrhea (PED). We are in the final steps of implementing a comprehensive list encompassing livestock diseases of importance to the Province and to industry, following stakeholder consultations this fall. More details on the expanded list will be provided, once it is in effect.

Provincially notifiable diseases must be reported to the office of the Chief Veterinary Officer (CVO) when **laboratory confirmation** occurs. In contrast, federally reportable diseases must be reported to a CFIA district veterinarian when an owner or a veterinarian **suspects** the disease.

Rabies remains a federally reportable disease, but responsibility for responding to suspected animal cases or exposures, along with collection and submission of samples, transferred to the province effective April 1, 2014. Currently, there are 51 veterinary clinics contracted to collect and submit samples under the Provincial Rabies Response Program. The Rabies Risk Assessment Veterinarian, Dr. Clarence Bishop, continues to ably oversee the program and has regular interaction with clinics. For the most part the program has run smoothly, but some issues remain with delays in submission of samples. Please remember that human health decisions are often waiting on the results and it is critical that samples are submitted as quickly as possible.

Anthrax transferred from federal to provincial responsibility in 2013, but cases remain reportable to CFIA for international reporting obligations. The province has developed an Anthrax Response Program supporting producers with access to professional advice from a veterinarian with respect to carcass disposal and disease control. When anthrax is confirmed, a short-term quarantine is placed by a provincial Veterinary Inspector to ensure proper carcass disposal and cleaning and disinfection are carried out. The first case in Saskatchewan since program transfer occurred in December, 2014 in the RM of Hazel Dell. The source is believed to be slough hay contaminated with soil. Carcass-side test kits have been sent to many large and mixed practices. These kits are useful in ruling anthrax in or out on-farm. However, they are not yet approved for commercial use, so every kit that is used has to be validated by submitting the used kit, swab and a blood sample to the Saskatchewan Disease Control Laboratory. Unfortunately, not all used kits have been reported

and submitted. There have also been issues with clinics misplacing either the documentation or the kits themselves, meaning the kits were not available for use when needed. I encourage everyone to review the kit materials to ensure you know how to use them and how to properly submit samples. In some cases, the included bottle of diluent has leaked out. If that has happened, let us know and we can send replacements. Also, the kits distributed last year are labeled as expiring March 2015. It is likely that expiry date will be extended, so please do not discard "expired" kits until informed to do so.

The PED site surveillance program monitors swine co-mingling and high traffic sites in the province for the presence of the PED virus, as well as the related porcine deltacoronavirus. PED has been detected on some transport trailers and porcine deltacoronavirus has been detected at two comingling sites. Tracing back to connected premises has not revealed a source of these viruses here in the province. Many swine facilities transport to sites outside the province, and contamination of trucks and trailers with these porcine coronaviruses remains a high risk. Swine veterinarians have worked closely with the province and SaskPork to design response protocols, assist with tracing and sampling of herds, and in site monitoring.

Two federally reportable diseases continue to be found in concerning numbers in Saskatchewan; namely, Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) and Equine Infectious Anemia (EIA).

A total of five new CWD-positive premises were detected in the province in 2014. Disease control options are being explored including live test development, vaccine research, biosecurity standards and other means to limit spread of this disease within domestic game farms.

EIA was detected in 64 horses on 20 premises in Saskatchewan in 2014, mostly across the northern grain belt/forest fringe area. This follows 102 horses on 15 premises in 2011, 82 horses on 29 premises in 2012 and 89 horses on 27 premises in 2013. We need sustained annual testing in the at-risk population for several years to get this disease under control. Veterinarians are urged to promote EIA testing to clients, and encourage horse owners to be pro-active and insist that events they attend support mandatory EIA testing. Veterinarians are asked to consider working with horse clubs and associations to set up convenient EIA test days to detect cases ahead of vector season this spring.

As veterinarians, we all have a responsibility to be aware of cases of reportable and notifiable diseases in the province so that we can continue to be source of reliable and up-to-date information for clients and the general public.

A hand in a blue medical glove points towards a digital interface. The interface features various medical icons: a heart, a syringe, a stethoscope, a brain, a heart rate monitor, a clipboard, a world map, and a list of medical professions. The background is a dark blue gradient.

6 MOST COMMON Practice Inspection Issues

by the SVMA Practice Standards Committee

A number of issues and deficiencies have been noted as common themes throughout the 2014 round of practice inspections. The 6 most commonly observed are described below in the hopes that practices due for future inspections can experience fewer deficiencies and more efficient onsite visits.

1 Deficiencies repeated from a previous inspection: SVMA Practice Inspectors (PIs) do review previous inspection documentation and may highlight to the Practice Standards Committee (PSC) repeat deficiencies. Repeat deficiencies are not acceptable and may be subject to further scrutiny by the PSC. Please review your past inspection reports and ensure all previous deficiencies have been corrected.

2 Large Animal medical records: As highlighted in the November SVMA newsletter, there have been some significant changes to these standards, particularly regarding drug withdrawals. In addition to pre-submission documentation, PIs will also review records that are selected at random during the on-site inspection. If records were corrected only for the purpose of “passing” the pre-submission, the PIs will take note of this and identify it as a deficiency.

3 Narcotic/Controlled Drugs: Many practices are having difficulty with proper bottle/vial identification and record keeping. Many practices also fail to follow proper procedures for disposal of these drugs. These are critical issues due to abuse potential and are regulated by federal law (Health Canada).

4 Expired drugs: Many practices are deficient in the requirement to identify and segregate expired narcotic and non-narcotic drugs.

5 Scheduling of inspections: For those practices with busy seasons, every effort is made to schedule the on-site inspection during an acceptable time. Unfortunately, some documentation and communication will need to occur during a less convenient time. Practices with concerns of this nature are encouraged to begin gathering the required documentation well in advance of the submission deadline.

6 Biosecurity and general cleanliness: Members are reminded that cleanliness is important not only for client perception but also disease transmission. All direct and indirect contact surfaces need to be cleaned between appointments and farm calls. Of particular note, mixed and large animal practitioners are reminded to ensure their clinic vehicles and boot treads are clean.

The PSC strongly recommends that each SVMA member subject to practice inspection, including associate veterinarians employed at an inspected practice, review all of the Practice Standards well in advance of a scheduled inspection.

Link to complete SVMA Practice Standards: <http://www.svma.sk.ca/lit/practicestandards.pdf>

Additional information is available on the **Member's Side** header page under **Practice Inspection Library**.

Practices with fewer deficiencies take much less time—for the PI and for the clinic.



SVMA'S Gone “Social”

Dr Bob Bellamy

Saying that social media are changing the world would be a severe understatement. Social media formats like Facebook, Twitter and Google+ are literally transmitting messages worldwide in a matter of hours. In fact, the ability to deliver information with social media is rapidly eclipsing traditional forms of communication: print, radio and even conventional television are watching their competitive messaging ability evaporate in the presence of the internet.

“Failure to shape your own message risks that others will do it for you.”

Like all aspects of the internet, social media deliver both information (and misinformation!) at lightning speed. Although there are some downsides to the all-pervasive internet, there are also some very important positives. At no time in history could small organizations communicate with the public more effectively, or as economically, as they can today.

It is imperative for any group with a public presence to embrace this technology. Why? Failure to shape

one's own message risks that others will do it for you. Messages are always flowing, like a river. To shape the perception of the image of veterinarians, it's essential to take some part in creating the messages about the Saskatchewan veterinary profession that are afloat on that current.

With this point in mind the Saskatchewan Veterinary Medical Association has gone “social”. The SVMA, aided by the media company WOW Factor Media, has developed a project aimed at using social media to improve the public stature of Saskatchewan's veterinary profession.

The program is branded under the name **Sask Vets** (www.saskvets.ca) with its landing page linked to the SVMA website. From **Sask Vets** one can view the SVMA's Facebook, Twitter and Google+ feeds, find a clinic, and in the future, access many more public resources as the site develops. The SVMA is also collaborating with the CVMA, ABVMA, and OVMA to share resources and content, to the mutual benefit of our collective profession.

Many practices in the province already have a remarkable social media presence. To assist novices, WOW Factor Media has produced a video on how to set up Facebook, Twitter and Google+ accounts. Even if you're a social media pro, it's worth watching. The video contains lots of tips. **Contact the SVMA and they will send you a password protected link to the webinar.** Grab a coffee, the video is about 30 minutes long – but it's a half hour well spent. You'll be amazed at how simply feeds can be set up, and how effective they can be in getting people in the clinic door.

One of the real advantages associations like the SVMA have is that we can work together to spread a positive message even faster. Members are encouraged to “like” the **Sask Vets** page, share and “like” appropriate **Sask Vets** Facebook posts and/or “retweet” appropriate Twitter feeds. The SVMA office is intending to mass email members when an “on message” post becomes available. It is of course your choice as to what posts you share, but it just make sense to work collectively, because elevating the public's image of the veterinary profession translates to higher business volume.

For the overworked practitioner who may not have the time or the inclination to bother with Facebook, a simpler (but still very potent) choice is to set up a Facebook page for your clinic, then share **Sask Vets** materials which are freely available to all SVMA members, or not, as you choose. In this way, your clients can potentially receive a positive veterinary message several times a week. This is already proving effective at increasing client traffic at clinics across the province.

If you're doubtful about the power of social media, keep this in mind: **Sask Vets** has been operating since mid-September 2014. In just a few months, we already have well over 2000 followers on Facebook alone, with tens of thousands receiving positive messaging weekly through sharing. For the nerds in the group: **Sask Vets** is already scoring at the top of Google's SEO (Search Engine Optimization). To translate—that means when a client searches veterinary or animal information in their web browser, **Sask Vets** appears, and that can lead potential clients to you.



SaskVets.ca is emerging as the public face of the veterinary profession in Saskatchewan. It is a distinct webpage which stands alone from the existing SVMA website, **svma.sk.ca**. As the two websites evolve, you will see their different identities grow and develop.

Where **svma.sk.ca** will remain the professional association site, with information for members about clinics, events, job postings, newsletters, council minutes, inspections, and all regulations, resources and links of concern to practising SK veterinarians, **SaskVets.ca** will pick up all the relevant news, articles, listings and links of interest to the public (a.k.a. your potential clients).

Our leading edge internet messaging strategies are placing us next to the big boys in our country and raising our SK profession's value as modern, relevant and valuable in the eyes of the public. As I said before, this translates into financial returns. The best part is, setting up a Facebook page and getting in on sharing information about your clinic doesn't even require any financial outlay: the SVMA has invested in this strategic growth on all our behalf by producing the social media webinar and a bumper crop of share-able content and messages which are freely available to you.

Get involved! This train has already left the station—but you can still get on any time!

“**SaskVets.ca is emerging as the public face of the veterinary profession in Saskatchewan.**”



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ECONOMIC FORECAST

Darren Osborne, MA

2015

Despite the bleak economic outlook for Saskatchewan, veterinarians can expect steady revenues for 2015. For most of 2014, the provincial economy was strong and this translated into a healthy four per cent increase in gross revenues for mixed and large animal practices and companion animal practices. This growth was even better than total economic growth for the province. With this momentum, veterinary hospitals in the province couldn't be better prepared for 2015.

While OPEC plays 'duck duck goose' with the rest of the world, oil prices plummet and Saskatchewan consumers collectively hold their breath as they wonder how it will affect them. According to Scotiabank, the strong economic handoff from 2014 should help the province through most of 2015. Lower oil prices will put more money in consumer's pockets which may translate into more money to spend on pets, but one fifth of the province runs on oil so there will be a large swath of consumers that will be directly affected and will either be worse off or too worried about their future to spend any money.

prices, the banks are forecasting lower GDP and CPI for Saskatchewan. GDP is expected to fall to 1.1 per cent while inflation hits 1.8 per cent.

In this environment, 2015 will probably not be as good as last year for veterinarians. Revenues are forecasted to increase 3.3 per cent in companion animal practices and 1.9 per cent in mixed and large. While, lower than last year, these forecasts are better than the bankers are expecting for the province. The veterinary forecasts are based on revenue from 2014 along with recommended changes to the fee guides for 2015.

When considering changes to the fee guide for 2015, the SVMA Economic Committee considered anticipated cost increases for veterinary hospitals in the province against changes in the provincial economy (ie. price of oil), future agricultural prices for feed, cattle and crops. On one hand, fees need to cover the projected increased cost of running a practice, but on the other hand, fees need to be palatable to pet owners and producers. The result was a tempered fee increase designed to stay ahead of inflation and remain sensitive to the plight of consumers and producers going into a very difficult 2015.

For many practices, this lower increase provides an opportunity to play catch up by raising fees above the fee guide recommendations. Increasing fees five per cent, would provide a buffer against a potential drop in clients and would only cost the average pet owner six dollars more per transaction. This change would go relatively un-noticed until the end of the year when the average practice would see an additional \$25,000 in revenue.

In the presence of perceived economic hardship, many veterinarians might hold off on fee increases and try to get more clients through the door to get ahead. In the past, when the economy was growing faster this was possible—try a little harder and everything will work out. Going into next year, this strategy will be more difficult because "more clients" will be challenging to find.

Five years ago, the Ontario economy experienced an economic slowdown but pet owners were slow to react so it was two full years before most veterinary hospitals saw and change in clients or revenue. Then veterinary hospitals started seeing fewer clients coming through the door. Some veterinarians tried to hedge their bets by holding fees constant and some even lowered fees in an effort to reach out to those clients affected by the downturn. They thought that lower fees would draw clients back into the practice. Unfortunately, these fee strategies went unnoticed by clients and they were not

Average Annual Percentage Change Saskatchewan	2014	2015f
Gross Domestic Product*	2.4	1.1
Consumer Price Index**	2.5	1.8
Veterinary Gross Revenue ***		
Companion Animal	3.9	3.3
Mixed and Large	3.5	1.9
* Source: Scotiabank		
** Source: TD Bank		
*** Source: Saskatchewan Economic Survey		

Looking back at 2014 and into 2015, veterinary medicine in Saskatchewan outperformed the general economy. In 2014, the province posted a Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of 2.4 per cent that beat the national average and experienced inflation (Consumer Price Index) of 2.5 per cent. Gross revenues in veterinary practices were even higher with 3.9 per cent growth in companion animal practices and 3.5 per cent in mixed and large. This year, in response to lower oil

able to re-attract clients. They found out later those clients were staying away because they had lost their job or feared losing their job and they were determined to stay away regardless of the price. The problem was not with veterinarian's fees, but with pet owner's aversion to spending money so even if the fees decreased 50 per cent, it would not matter—they were not coming back until their financial situation changed. Low fee approaches did not stimulate demand and simply created stagnant and even falling revenues for some Ontario practices.

So what lessons can be learned from Ontario?

Show you care: Pet owners and producers are facing difficult times and now is the time to be empathetic and sympathetic to their plight. Statements like, "I know times are tough, but this is a really important and both you and Fido will be glad you kept up with the treatment," go a long way.

Realistic fees: Veterinary fees are not that high (relatively speaking) so just as clients will not notice decreases in fees, they will not notice increases in fees either. As long as you are providing value for the services, there is room to increase fees. Recommended fee increases for 2015 are low so use this as an opportunity to gain some ground on your expenses by increasing fees a little more than the recommendation.

Control expenses: The years of worrying about growth are behind us and the next few years will require focussed attention on costs. During the BSE years, the only large animal practice that was able to grow their net income was the practice that budgeted their expenses and made changes to their hospital expenses as revenues fell. Every month, they would look at falling revenues and make corresponding changes to expenses to offset the loss. While other practices struggled, the practice that controlled their expense rode the BSE wave and maintained their net income by aggressive costs cutting.

Get intimate with your clients: Over the last few years, many practices have moved to more productive ways to contact clients. You can email and text your whole client list in as much time it takes you to make one phone call. Unfortunately, the more productive

forms of communication are not as personal as a phone call and practices are losing touch. According to the Ontario Annual Survey of Pet Owners, nine out of ten pet owners know they need to bring their pet to the veterinarian once a year. Looking at the data from most practices, only a fraction is actually going to the veterinarian. It is easy to ignore a text or an email but difficult to explain why you are not bringing your pet in this year—especially when you know you should go every year and you know the receptionist personally. Case studies have shown that, while they take more time, phone call reminders are a lot more cost effective than mass email and text.

Show value: The lasting thought for the producer or pet owner should be, "that was good value for my money." As the economy starts to erode, clients will be re-evaluating the value of everything they do. The client who loyally came in every year and did not bat an eye at the fee will start asking, "do we really need to do this?" The procedure is not the problem and the fee is not the problem; the problem is they will find themselves with less money than the previous year and (like the responsible veterinarian) they are looking to control expenses. If it is not essential, then it can be put off. With this in mind, it is important to explain to clients WHY you are doing everything you do. Even if it is a refresher discussion on the annual physical exam, you need to have staff that greet the client with, "You know, this annual physical exam is probably the best thing you can do for your pet." Then the veterinarian needs to re-enforce the value by explaining what they do during the exam. Then, when the client pays the invoice, they need to be congratulated for coming in and rebooked for their next visit.

The last few years have been great for Saskatchewan and veterinary practices have built up a lot of momentum with revenues and clients. Next year will require some effort but there are opportunities to gain some ground on fees and start managing expenses. Focusing attention on either area will help get through the next year.

“Case studies have shown that, while they take more time, phone call reminders are a lot more cost effective than mass email and text.”

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Changing your contact information?**

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Discipline Case Report: 2013-08

Respectfully submitted by the SVMA Discipline Committee

During the months of April and June, 2014, the Discipline Committee of the SVMA conducted a four day hearing to determine the outcome of Case #2013-08: SVMA Professional Conduct Committee vs Dr Wendy Schmaltz in which Dr Schmaltz was charged with four (4) counts of professional incompetence and professional misconduct resulting from a formal complaint made by the SSPCA, in that she:

1. Failed to provide adequate feed, shelter and water for her cattle. Dr Schmaltz was found guilty based on the necropsy reports of 12 dead cattle that showed serous fat atrophy consistent with protein/calorie malnutrition; on photographic evidence of cattle that were pastured long enough that damage was evident on the noses and hooves as a result of attempts to access winter grazing grass below crusted snow; on visual and verbal testimony as to the poor body condition scores of the herd in general; and, on the fact that Dr Schmaltz was the legal co-owner of the cattle and as a veterinarian provided professional services. There was no concrete evidence with regard to the lack of adequate shelter.
2. Failed to provide adequate shelter and exercise for her Jack Russell terriers. Dr Schmaltz was found guilty based on photographic evidence showing dogs housed inside crates unable to stand or sit up or to extend their bodies completely while lying down, and on testimony regarding confinement of the dogs for lengthy periods of time. There was insufficient evidence as to lack of exercise or failure to provide adequate feed.
3. Failed to provide adequate shelter and water for her Border collies. Dr Schmaltz was found not guilty due to insufficient evidence.
4. Conducted herself so as to be in contravention of the

SVMA bylaws and in breach of The Veterinarians Act, 1987. Dr Schmaltz was found guilty in that she contravened the Code of Ethics, harmed or tended to harm the standing of the profession, exhibited conduct which was inimical to the best interest of the public or of the members of the profession, and did or failed to do any act or thing where the Discipline Committee considered that action or failure to be unbecoming, improper, unprofessional or discreditable. As related to counts 1 and 2, it was determined that Dr Schmaltz was not unfit to practice.

It was the opinion of the Discipline Committee that Dr Schmaltz, as co-owner of the livestock and other animals and as the primary veterinarian with training and experience in diseases, nutrition, husbandry and animal welfare, bore both a moral and actual responsibility for the care and welfare of the animals as part of the livestock operation and as personal pets. The discipline committee concluded that Dr Schmaltz had failed to take responsibility or to admit a joint responsibility as co-owner. In addition, it was the view of the DC that Dr Schmaltz failed in her guarantee to the SVMA, which she had provided as a condition of registration, to change her behaviour and to become more involved in the ranching aspects of the Schmaltz farm. Dr Schmaltz had initially provided the guarantee in response to a conviction before an ABVMA tribunal which dealt with similar charges and similar circumstances resulting in a conviction, with Dr Schmaltz receiving a six month suspension and an order for payment of costs.

Penalty: The Discipline Committee ordered that Dr Wendy Schmaltz be suspended for a period of 12 months, pay a fine in the amount of \$7500.00, and pay seventy-five percent (75%) of the cost of the investigation and hearing into the member's conduct.

The case is currently under appeal.

Discipline Case Report: 2014-01

Respectfully submitted by the SVMA Discipline Committee

The Discipline Committee convened a hearing of case #2014-01 vs Dr Steven Hendrick on October 16, 2014. The report of the Professional Conduct Committee had indicated that there was evidence Dr Hendrick had provided independent veterinary services to the public between October 31, 2013 and December 31, 2013 during a time when he was employed by the WCVMA Department of Large Animal Clinical Sciences.

The PCC report concluded that there was evidence that this practice activity, being outside the bounds of his stated employment, constituting a breach of the Saskatchewan Veterinary Medical Association Practice Standards in that there

had been no practice inspection conducted of Dr Hendrick and there was not professional liability insurance in place to cover this activity. A joint submission was received from council which was modified by the Discipline Committee. Subject to this modified joint submission, a guilty plea was accepted from Dr Hendrick to these practice standards breaches.

The penalty, as imposed by the Discipline Committee, consisted of:

1. A letter of reprimand
2. A fine of \$5000 payable within 30 days of the decision.
3. Dr Hendrick was ordered to pay the costs of the investigation and hearing within 30 days of the decision.

SAVT Update

Lois Ridgway



Hello from the Saskatchewan Association of Veterinary Technologists. We closed out 2014 with our 30th Annual Conference and AGM, in Saskatoon, November 7 - 9. Lectures, social events, awards presentations and an industry sponsored Trade Show were held at the Radisson Hotel; wet labs were hosted by the Veterinary Medical Centre, Western College of Veterinary Medicine. There were 235 Conference registrants and a summary of the events, pictures and Conference proceedings are now available for review on our website.

The SAVT began the New Year, 2015, by launching an updated website—www.savt.ca. It features easier member access, and the latest social media features including Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. The SAVT website has a merchandise cart for payments on line for ease in membership renewals and conference registrations. Additionally, the new website will soon allow members to upload their CE credits directly into their account. We hope that veterinarians will continue to advertise RVT position vacancies thru the website and our “eblast” service to our membership.

The SAVT Board of Directors retreat was held in early January at the Wapiti Valley Ski Resort where atmosphere and ambiance activated plans and Director assignments for the year ahead. I was recently chosen as President Elect and am settling in for a three year term on the SAVT Board, with a transition next year to President and the following year to

Past President. In my view, as the SAVT now enters its fourth decade of existence, it is as important as ever for the organization to support the professional development of our members. RVTs must not only become but also remain well equipped to support Veterinarians and to participate in the effective veterinary care of animals, particularly in the context of new and evolving diseases, advances in technology and economic influences. I am also looking forward to interaction with the SVMA on matters of mutual interest in my service to the SAVT Board and our membership.

“ The SAVT began the New Year, 2015, by launching an updated website.

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in memoriam

Walter Connell Weir (1924 - 2014)

Walter Connel Weir passed away peacefully with family by his side on Monday, September 22, 2014. He was predeceased by his parents, Alex in 1988 and Laura in 1989; a sister Madge in 1924; brothers, Maurice in 1976 and Glen in 2012 (Kelly, 2005); nephew Gavin in 1975; sister-in-law Blanche (Bun) in 1974; and brothers-in-law Keith and Donald Green. Walter is survived by Hazel, his wife of 64 years; daughters, Dr Laura Weir of Kelowna, and Robin (Arnold) Endsins of Lumsden; as well as grandsons, Stefan (Reanne), Matthew (Alison Maddigan), and Alexander Endsins; brother Malcolm; sister-in-law Phyllis; and numerous nieces and nephews.

Walter was born September 25, 1924 at Saskatoon, SK. Walter completed his schooling in Aberdeen



SK. He was an accomplished left-handed pitcher, hockey player and curler. Walter joined the army in 1943 and was seriously wounded in Holland on April 8, 1945, serving with the Regina Rifles. After the war, he farmed at Aberdeen, where he married Hazel Green on July 19, 1950. He was a charter member of the RC Legion and an executive of the Dairy and Poultry Pool in Saskatoon.

Walt left the farm and enrolled in Ontario Veterinary College in 1956. Upon graduation in 1961, he practiced with Dr Fred Judiesch in Swift Current until 1970 when he joined the Saskatchewan Department

of Agriculture, first as veterinary lab supervisor and then as Director of Veterinary Services Branch until his retirement in 1985. Walt was a life member of the Saskatchewan and Canadian Veterinary Medical Associations, the Regina Humane Society; as well as past president of SVMA, a member of the Regina Rotary Club, a director of VIDO, and the Swift Current Public School Board.

The Weirs enjoyed 22 years of swimming, water skiing, gardening, and golfing at their cottage in Mistusinne on Lake Diefenbaker. Walt and Hazel both loved to read, were faithful participants in yoga and aqua-cize classes and were ardent Bridge players. They spent more than 20 winters visiting Oahu, Barbados, Arizona, and Mexico. In retirement, Walt joined the "Boys" in a weekly coffee session. He took great pride in his children and grandchildren. Walt always enjoyed stimulating discussions where he took both sides. He said there were three sides to any issue—yours, mine, and the correct one.

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Feeling overwhelmed?

If you are feeling burned out, at your wits' end or even depressed, you may want to consider taking advantage of the counselling services that are available to you free of charge through your Association.

SVMA funds confidential professional counselling to all active general, life practising and educational members who have been licensed for at least six months. The wellness plan covers four hours of professional mental health services annually. These four hours are enough to ensure those who desire to do so can get started on a counselling program. Additional hours are typically covered by a member's extended health plan, but extensions to the program can be arranged under certain extenuating circumstances.

Professional Psychologists & Counsellors (PPC) provides over 40 therapists across the province by referral. Although PPC has one centralized intake for quality control, counselling services are available in:

- Coronach
- Estevan
- Kindersley
- La Ronge
- Lloydminster
- Moose Jaw
- North Battleford
- Prince Albert
- Regina
- Saskatoon
- Swift Current
- Weyburn
- Yorkton

If you have someone specific you would like to see, PPC can set up the counselling coverage program with them, providing the therapist is registered and insured. The SVMA program will cover up to \$110 per visit. (Please keep in mind that therapists charge differing rates, and therapy costs over and above the \$110 per hour limit will need to be paid by the member.)

This service is absolutely confidential: no identifying information is given back to the SVMA.

For more information or to make a confidential appointment for counselling, call:

Professional Psychologists & Counsellors (PPC) at (306) 664-0000 or visit www.peopleproblems.ca

For more wellness resources, look under Professional Wellness on the LINKS page of the SVMA website.

Wellness Committee Report

Dr Jennifer Jinks, *Professional Wellness Committee Chair*

Thank you to everyone involved with the Professional Wellness Committee in 2014. Due to your time and efforts, additional counselling services are now available to SVMA members throughout the province. In addition, the SVMA wellness committee has partnered with the Veterinary Social Work Initiative (VSWI). The partnership hosted its first event in Regina at Crave Kitchen and Wine Bar giving SVMA members an enjoyable night out. The social evening featured a talk by Dr Darlene Chalmers from the Faculty of Social Work and the VSWI about building resilience in the veterinary profession. Stay posted for news about another 'wellness break' dinner in Saskatoon later this year.

We have seen a lot of interest from SVMA members about learning from the personal experiences of colleagues. The SVMA newsletter will feature articles from veterinarians' personal stories, and future events will address this interest as well.

Finally, welcome to new PWC members, Drs Vivienne Jones, Karen Harasen, Katelyn McIntyre and Melissa Smith.

As always, we welcome your interest and feedback. Warm wishes and may spring find us soon!



Photo by: Jesse Brown

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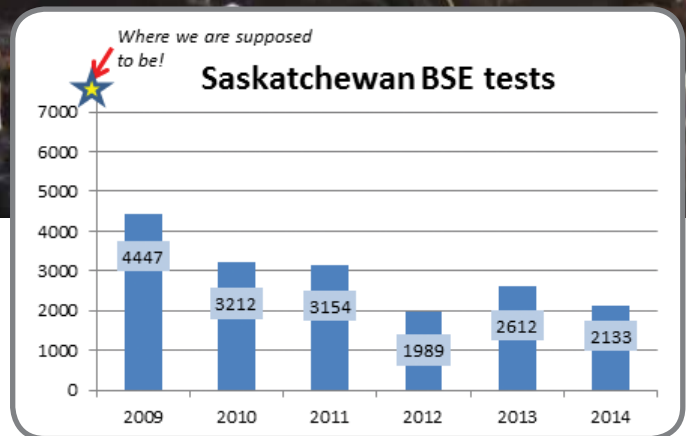
Canadian beef producers missed the BSE surveillance quota again last year!

In 2014, Canada fell short of the 30,000 tests required by the CFIA in order to meet OIE's recommendations for a country with a **"Controlled BSE Risk"** status.

Saskatchewan cattle producers are responsible for at least 7,500 submissions per year until 2016 when it may be possible to be upgraded to **"Negligible BSE Risk"** status." Even though 2014 testing results show Canada continues to be 100% BSE FREE, the minimum of 30,000 tests must still be performed every year (7500 submissions in Saskatchewan).

Cattlemen need to submit more animals for testing in 2015. Failure to meet the BSE testing quota risks beef export markets, and closure of Canadian borders to beef exports would crush the record high cattle prices presently being received by producers.

To learn more watch this informative video. (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AtD_rS6Fdyk.)
Type the foregoing URL into your browser or scan the QR code with your smart phone.



Veterinary practitioners can obtain a supply of the above BSE testing flyers anytime from the SVMA office. Forward the BSE testing email to your clients when you receive it, and LIKE and SHARE Sask Vets posts to broadcast important information about veterinary services and animal health issues throughout Saskatchewan.