



NEWS

MAY 2015, VOLUME 49, ISSUE 3



SASKATCHEWAN
VETERINARY MEDICAL
ASSOCIATION

THE VETERINARY
SOCIAL WORK
CONNECTION

**THE HUMAN-ANIMAL
BOND & OUR MUTUAL
HEALTH & WELLNESS**

**WE'RE ALMOST AT THE
FINISH LINE, SO WHY
ARE WE TAKING OUR
FOOT OFF THE GAS?**

**CONNECTING WITH CLIENTS
IN THE NEW MARKETPLACE**



president's perspective

DR CHERYL BELLAMY

I have been a member of the Saskatchewan Veterinary Medical Association (SVMA) for almost 25 years. For years someone from the SVMA office would periodically ask me to be on one committee or another.

"I am too busy building a practice", or "when my kids are grown", or "if we hire a veterinarian" I would say. The day came when the kids were in university, we had associate veterinarians and I was out of excuses. When the phone call came I agreed to serve on a committee. To my chagrin, they put me on the Discipline Committee. The Discipline Committee and the Professional Conduct Committee are two of the legislated committees involved in the disciplinary process.

To tell you the truth, I was apprehensive. I took solace in the fact that I had many years of mixed animal practice experience to draw from, was determined to advocate for the veterinarian, and would do my best to be fair and compassionate. In addition, I felt an obligation to serve my Association. It didn't take long to find out I was taking on a serious and important commitment. When hearing a complaint, it all boils down to striking a balance between what a veterinarian with similar experience would do in that situation and the standards that veterinarians are held to by our profession.

I realized that most veterinarians are unfamiliar with the disciplinary process unless they had a complaint or they are placed on a legislated committee. Luckily I was the latter, however there were times when cases of mine could have easily ended with a complaint and landed me in the disciplinary process. I appreciate how devastating it can be to be taken to task by your Association.

What I know for certain is that it is a privilege to be self-regulating and better to be judged by your peers. Who can understand more than a fellow veterinarian the difficult and varied situations we find ourselves in? I also know that going through the discipline process can be one of the most mortifying experiences a person can have.

Some might believe that veterinarians are competitive and hard on each other. Actually, veterinarians tend to act more favorably towards other veterinarians than does the general public. (There are public members on the legislated committees to represent society at large, but otherwise, the committees are comprised of veterinarians.)

Legislated committee members are committed to doing the best job they can do. They volunteer countless hours discussing the cases and writing up reports. Believe me, it is stressful to have the life of a colleague in your hands and there are anguished, sleepless nights involved in the decision making.

Ultimately, decisions rest on a majority vote, a testament to the fairness of the process. It is imperative to have a pool of veterinarians with varied expertise to draw from for these committees in order to have the most fair

and just results. Integrity and common sense from committee members goes a long way in the decision process.

There are a number of non-legislated committees in the SVMA. These committees are also made up of hard working volunteers who give up their time for the betterment of the association.

Who do you think the SVMA is? Well, it is you and me my friends. If you think there are problems with certain aspects of the Association, then you need to contribute to the solutions. There are a few policies that I would like to see changed and I will continue to address them at council meetings.

As with most democratic processes, it is much more productive to participate and vote than to simply complain. Please become involved with committees and council. Please support events put on by your Association. It is up to all of us to work together to make the SVMA an Association to be proud of. 🐾



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MAY 2015

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Publications Mail Agreement No. 40016569
Return undeliverable Canadian addresses to:
Saskatchewan Veterinary Medical Association
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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

COMMERCIAL FOUR-COLOUR ADVERTISING RATES

Outside back cover \$1208; inside back/front cover \$1091; full page \$1029; half page \$511; quarter page \$254; business card \$71

ADVERTISING INSERTIONS

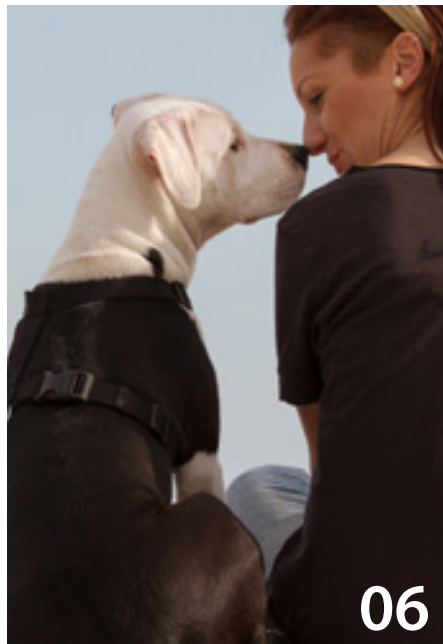
8.5" x 11" (copies provided) \$180

All advertising rates are subject to GST

ISSUE	DEADLINE
February	January 6
May	April 3
August	July 3
November	October 3

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Cover photo: Shutterstock



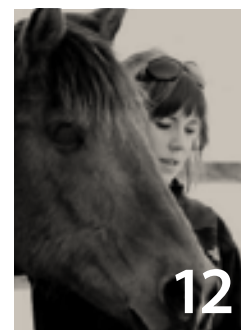
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beef biosecurity program supports farm veterinary visits

DR BETTY ALTHOUSE

CHIEF VETERINARY OFFICER,
SK MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE


Verified Beef Production (VBP) Saskatchewan has received Growing Forward 2 funding for veterinary consultation visits to conduct biosecurity assessments and to develop biosecurity protocols to better manage disease risks. Eligible beef producers may receive reimbursement for 50% of costs, up to a total of \$1000, for veterinary visits related to herd health plan development and/or biosecurity risk assessments. Producers must first attend a VBP biosecurity workshop to be eligible for the program. The Canadian On-Farm Beef Cattle Biosecurity Standard and Implementation Manual will be utilized in the program to help guide beef producers and their veterinarians in identifying biosecurity risks and methods of managing those risks.

We want to be sure that veterinarians are aware that this program is in place so that you can encourage your clients to access this funding. These biosecurity vet consultation visits can occur along with other routine calls out to the farm; the stipulation for the program is that biosecurity assessment/protocol development must be a portion of the visit, and that must be made clear on the invoice made out to the producer.

Herd health plans are a major component of The Canadian On-Farm Beef Cattle Biosecurity Standard <http://www.cattle.ca/assets/CB-CattleStandard-Eng-web.pdf>, therefore development of a written herd

health plan, vaccination program or written treatment protocols would also be covered under this program, as these are opportunities to focus on disease prevention. Other areas that would be covered would be walking through the operation with the producer, utilizing the biosecurity checklist in the Implementation Manual (pg. 13 <http://www.cattle.ca/assets/Uploads/BeefImplementationManual-eng-Final.pdf>). This checklist is helpful in determining areas for improvement and provides an opportunity for veterinarians to familiarize themselves with The Canadian On-Farm Beef Cattle Biosecurity Standard.

Veterinarians are herd health and disease prevention experts and this program is designed to provide producers with the opportunity to have a veterinarian on farm to discuss biosecurity. Producers can contact VBP for more information at 306-859-9110 or office@saskvbp.ca.

Veterinarians can get more information from VBP or by contacting the Animal Health Unit at 306-787-5547. 

**IF YOU CAN'T
SHIP IT,
TEST IT**



**Protecting your
investment is as
easy as testing
one animal for
BSE each year.**

LOOKING

for a veterinarian? An RVT? A new practice? Professional events?

Our Web-Classifieds are updated continuously on the SVMA website, www.svma.sk.ca, where members can post free ads of up to 100 words for three months.

DR JUDY CURRIE

Regulator, advocate... or both?

Legal authority for self-regulation is delegated by the provincial government to a profession's regulatory body. In our case, the extent of this legal authority is specified in The Veterinarians Act, 1987 and fleshed out by the SVMA bylaws, which must be passed by the members. This legal authority allows us to set standards of practice, standards for who may enter our profession and to create rules for when and how members may be removed from practising our profession rather than having those standards imposed on us by the government or another profession. As members, it is expected that we accept ethical and legal responsibility for our work and hold as paramount both the interests of our clients and society in general.

Our association is a publicly mandated governing body with the authority to licence those individuals who have met specific requirements to enter the veterinary profession in Saskatchewan. Those entry requirements include achieving well-defined educational conditions and completion of the SVMA licensing exam. Holding an SVMA licence attests to our ability and degree of competency to practise.

As 'licensed' professionals we have progressed passed the levels of registration, accreditation and certification into the realm of accountability. That accountability is to our clients, our profession and to society. Mechanisms are put in place to ensure accountability which include the bylaws, practice inspection system, requirement for CE credits and appointment of public members to sit on both council and the discipline committee.

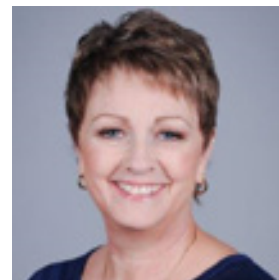
The ability to licence is one of the most restrictive forms of professional regulation allowing veterinarians a monopoly control over who can practice in the province. The regulatory model used by the SVMA provides title protection for its members because the Act clearly defines who may use the word veterinary, veterinarian or the initials DVM after his name thus allowing the public to identify which individuals possess which skills.

Self-regulation requires significant resources since the cost of regulation has been shifted from the government to the profession itself. In order to function properly, a group must be of sufficient size to populate committees and provide adequate financing to run programs. Managing the affairs of our association requires the commitment of the members, all of whom have the opportunity to effect change within the association simply by becoming involved. For the SVMA to continue to regulate the affairs of our profession in Saskatchewan there must be participation by the members.

Justification for self-regulation has evolved over time, and is largely due to the assumption a profession holds a specialized body of knowledge making that group expert in its field. It is believed this specialized

knowledge makes it difficult for the government to establish and oversee standards for a profession. As a result, the setting of standards and evaluation of their having been met is considered best done by those who work with those standards every day. There is however, potential for conflict between the two functions performed by the SVMA. The primary role of the association is public protection with a secondary purpose to promote veterinarians and the profession. In a few provinces it has been decided that advocacy and regulation of a profession's members could not be done simultaneously. In those provinces there is a separate college that considers the public good while an association looks out for the welfare of the profession. Because the SVMA is a small association, we continue to be allowed to perform the dual roles of regulator and advocate. As long as the public interest takes precedence when decisions related to regulation are made we will hopefully be allowed to continue in this dual role.

It's easy to lose sight of the purpose of a governing body when the policies directing that purpose are extensive and complex. Remaining mindful of the distinction between member advocacy and regulation should allow us to continue as a self-regulated profession with the priceless ability to exercise some degree of control over the future of our profession. 🐾



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THE HUMAN–ANIMAL BOND & OUR MUTUAL HEALTH & WELLNESS

Reprinted from Veterinary Team Brief, Jan/Feb 2014

Robin Downing, DVM, CVPP, CCRP, DAAPM
The Downing Center for Animal Pain Management
Windsor, Colorado



Advances in preventive (eg, disease prevention, better nutrition, protected lifestyles) and interventional (eg, advanced diagnostics, safer anesthesia, better pain management) care are helping animals live longer and better. Pets have migrated from the backyard to the bedroom, from the kennel to the couch. More clients describe themselves as “pet parents,” and the bond now extends far beyond mere companionship. Canine evolution and intentional breeding has increased the quality of neoteny, meaning dogs possess infantile physical characteristics that add to their perceived “cuteness” and reinforce our impulse to take care of them. The human–animal bond is a positive, mutually beneficial relationship—good for us and our pets.

As Dr. Leo Bustad reminds us, the human–animal bond is the core of our being as veterinary healthcare teams. Our purpose is to facilitate, enhance, lengthen, and strengthen the family–pet relationship. Veterinary teams must understand and

appreciate all the good derived from relationships with animals. Pets offer effective therapy for multiple ills: they can lower blood pressure and anxiety; they are nonjudgmental and give unconditional love; they listen; they contribute to our physical health and well-being by encouraging us to move more; and finally, by adding joy and happiness, pets can inspire our interactions with other people, decreasing loneliness.

The veterinary healthcare team is in a unique position to communicate the critical nature of the human–animal bond, reinforce the pet owner’s commitment, and keep the bond strong and healthy.



“The bond between people and animals is the primary basis for our professional existence.”

—Leo K. Bustad, DVM

ENHANCING WELLNESS VIA THE BOND

1 Engage Clients By Encouraging Them To Share Stories. It is usually easy to elicit an amusing anecdote accompanied by pictures on a phone. A client of mine, for example, has 2 sons with Duchenne muscular dystrophy, and one son requires a mechanical ventilator to breathe. The family dachshunds give these boys a reason to wake up; they frequently climb onto the bed or into a lap in a motorized wheelchair, simply to be with the boys. Another client needed open-heart surgery, and her Pomeranian was her lifeline en route to recovery. Your clients all have stories to tell—all you have to do is ask.

2 Encourage Team Members To Discuss Why Their Own Pets Are Important To Them. At team meetings or during client interactions, sharing these stories forges relationships and helps communicate and reinforce the importance of the human-animal bond.

3 Treat every patient as though he or she is the most important thing in the client's world—which is often true. How team members behave toward a patient communicates volumes about the value ascribed to the human-animal bond. The client and patient should receive team members' full attention in the examination room, as focus and engagement are the most effective ways to demonstrate how much teams value the bond clients share with their pets.

4 Build the team's connection to clients and patients by appreciating their bond. Edna, a 90-year-old, widowed breast cancer survivor diagnosed with depression, was introduced to Pip, a 14-year-old terrier that needed a new home. The veterinary team was committed to Edna, Pip, and their bond. Every day, Edna and Pip walked a mile together. Edna soon no longer needed her antidepressant medication, and the pair enjoyed 5 years together. Despite her devastation over losing Pip, Edna lived to 97, still living on her own. Clearly the bond with Pip added both life to Edna's years and years to her life.

A PART OF OUR HUMANITY

An unknown author wrote, “It came to me that every time I lose a dog they take a piece of my heart with them. And every new dog who comes into my life gifts me with a piece of their heart. If I live long enough, all the components of my heart will be dog, and I will become as generous and loving as they are.”

A part of our humanity is defined by our relationships with animals. By recognizing and communicating the value of the human-animal bond, veterinary teams can make life better for pets and the people who love them. 🐾





**WE'RE ALMOST
AT THE FINISH LINE,
SO WHY ARE WE
TAKING OUR FOOT OFF THE GAS?**

DR HENRY MCCARTHY



“I prefer to call myself an optimistic pessimist because I have chased enough cows down the road without checking for open gates along the way. Now, there is a gate open on the industry and we need to help shut it.”



When I graduated from Vet school in 1999, I signed a contract with my boss that paid me a whopping base salary of \$48 000 a year. So, now that I was living the highlife, I felt that maybe I should think of my future and start investing some of my wealth.

In that first year I put \$10 000 in the stock market and promptly turned it into \$2000. Three years later I was married with two children and a third on the way (Catholics). Things were going well, but the grass looked greener in southeastern Saskatchewan as an owner of a single person, predominantly large animal practice. Once again there was

a substantial increase in my salary and I felt I should reexamine my wealth building. I already had the stock market T-shirt and didn't think I needed another. This time I was going to invest in something I knew and could control, so my wife and I bought fifty-seven Angus cross pairs.

It was the end of May 2003 and a BSE cow had been found in Alberta. I wasn't too worried. The last time BSE had been found in Canada the market was disrupted for a couple of months. I told my wife that by the time we sold the calves everything would be back to normal. By 2008 I wished I had put my money in the stock market.

Continues Page 10



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The people I worked for stopped doing a lot of the basics like preg checking and semen testing. They also figured out where the drugs were cheaper and numerous other ways to cut me out of the equation. I was ready to take a page out of the Yorkton area management handbook and start leaving a nut in the odd cat so I had some work in the future. It was a rough time and I know I wasn't the Lone Ranger. Fast forward to spring of 2015. Things have never looked better. The cow herd we have been too stubborn to sell is now worth 2 ½ times what it was 14 months ago. Producers are preg checking and semen testing again and even buying some of my expensive drugs. Things look pretty rosy ... on the surface.

Now my wife thinks I am somewhat of a "Debbie Downer". I prefer to call myself an optimistic pessimist because I have chased enough cows down the road without checking for open gates along the way. More than once I have had to gather my cows out of someone's tramped out canola all the while wondering what that had just cost me.

There is a gate open on the industry and we need to help shut it. For the last few years Alberta and Saskatchewan haven't met their targets for BSE submissions. I suppose one could argue that things have improved even without meeting our targets and I don't disagree. This has largely been due to the diminishing supply of cattle and the efforts of industry groups who have worked very hard to open markets, as well as the other provinces topping up the sample numbers.

The latest positive cow has shed a light on our complacency towards the eradication program. The great conditions that have created a "status quo" producers are all enjoying are in real jeopardy at the hands of our now deficient BSE testing record and worse, our apathy about correcting it.

Maybe this will be okay with the OIE when it comes time to review our status. I wonder though, since the part of the country with the largest number of cattle (and where BSE was found) isn't pulling their weight, how understanding can we expect the OIE to be?

As I talk to producers at Saskatchewan Stock Growers Association and Saskatchewan Cattlemen's Association meetings, one reason producers say they haven't been submitting samples is their veterinarians won't come out to take them. The veterinarians I have talked to who have stopped collecting samples have done so because the powers that be have repeatedly defecated in their corn flakes. Whether it is not allowing heads to be dropped off at the clinic, not paying for autolyzed samples or hiring inspectors to do them when a veterinarian was available, I can't argue with that. Bureaucracy puts the BS in BSE and that is just the way things are.

Ideally we would also get paid more, but what is it going to cost us and the industry to lose the ground we have already gained?



There are a few reasons why we should be part of the solution to attain our submission targets. If we can move our status from controlled to negligible we will be able to export more products that are currently being sold as lower value cuts or being rendered. We are trying to remove COOL and also gain access to the European market in 2016. Do we want to give those that would like to see these goals go unmet more ammunition?

The latest positive cow has given us another five years of dealing with this problem. As I see it, we can do one of two things: continue on with our testing program or abandon it altogether. The latter may result in us going back to "unknown" status. Maybe the drought down south won't end and the US slaughter plants will keep running at 60% capacity and these high prices will last forever. The reality is US cow numbers won't stay down forever. It will start raining, the US cow numbers will grow, and they will become less dependent on our cattle. What will things look like then?

At the end of the day, supporting initiatives like BSE testing will put money in the pockets of the producers we work for. We all know what it was like trying to get at some of their money when they had none. I am pretty sure I don't want to go back to that. We have run a pretty good race so far, so let's not take our foot off the gas until we cross the finish line. 🏁



The cost of NOT BSE testing is **too high**... for all of us.

Beef producers
CAN'T AFFORD
to miss the BSE
testing target
again!!

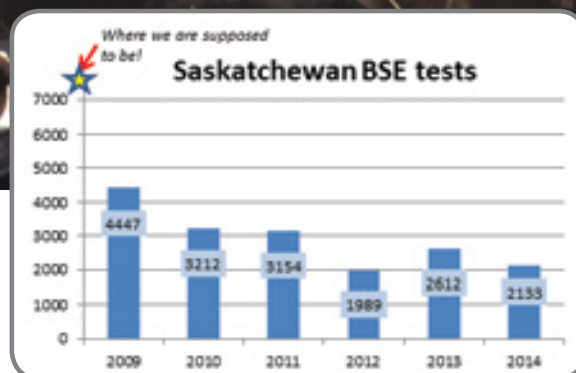
Canadian beef producers missed the BSE surveillance quota again last year!

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.



The **VETERINARY SOCIAL WORK** Connection

AN INTERVIEW WITH ERIN WASSON
DR MELISSA SMITH

While collaboration between social work and veterinary medicine has been going on for some time in the United States, it is a relatively new to Canada. We are extremely fortunate in Saskatchewan to have this collaboration within a Canadian context for the first time as a service offered through the WCVN.

As part of the professional wellness committee, I had the pleasure of attending the recent wellness “Night Out” at Boffins Public House in Saskatoon, where Erin Wasson (BSW, MSW) was the speaker. Erin has just completed a Masters of Social Work, which included a practicum placement at the WCVN. She is now working as a part-time veterinary social worker. A few days after the wellness “Night Out” I spoke with Erin about the surprising similarities between our fields.

Erin was born and grew up in Saskatoon having a great amount of contact with both small and large animals. It does not take long in conversation to realize she has a passion for helping others. For Erin, four years of undergraduate study that simultaneously included human service work was followed by five years of

employment as a registered social worker, and then finally, a Master's degree. During all of this, diverse and numerous practicums, employment and volunteer experiences prepared her for work in the wide field of social work.

I was interested to learn that social work, like veterinary medicine, is a regulated profession with national and provincial governing bodies. They are similarly guided by an established Code of Ethics and the requirement for lifelong learning. Social workers perform an astounding number of functions, all the while uniquely concerned for the context in which individuals live their lives.

Social workers can be found working in hospitals, in long-term care facilities, and providing addictions and clinical mental health support, in crisis centres, working in research and academia, amongst a number of other places. Most of the time, an individual seeking counselling is referred to a social worker. A social work degree, like a veterinary degree, opens up many different avenues. Just like us, they can be found assisting their clients from 'womb to tomb' and are often on the front lines of what is happening in families. Interestingly, the frontiers of our two professions have some new developments in store.

A united Veterinary- Social Work program was first professionalized at the University of Tennessee-Knoxville (UTK) by Dr. Elizabeth Strand PhD, LCSW. The professionalization of the VSW field by UTK has led to the identification of four subcategories of practice. These include: human/animal violence, grief and loss, animal assisted therapy, and compassion/empathy fatigue.

At the WCVI, Erin has been busy building relationships and lending support assistance in a way that complements the veterinary world of staff and students. There have been on-campus seminars, participation in the wellness rotation and a well-received talk at the Western Association of Bovine Practitioners. In a clinical context, Erin has given support around issues of farm stress, quality of life, end of life decision making, grief and support for staff and students, (all seeming indicators of a VSW program in development at the WCVI). Notably, Erin has also discovered a need for her services within the Large Animal community, something that has not been the focus of veterinary social work elsewhere.

Social workers are grounded in the community, do research quickly, and navigate systems and their own connections to find the best support for each situation. Erin says the most challenging part of her work also happens to be her favorite part. Not unlike our work in veterinary medicine, her day to day work is so varied and unpredictable she is constantly drawing on both prior experience and continued learning.

Another commonality between the veterinary and social work professions: it turns out that social workers are also prone to empathy fatigue and burnout.

"It's not a question of if, it's a question of when and how bad will it be" is one of Erin's go-to adages. In conversation, we touched on the suicides of some widely known veterinarians over the past year. Erin is sadly well acquainted with (in her words) the veterinary profession's "terrifyingly high suicide rate". She shared that she believes that contributing to the high suicide rates are feelings of isolation and a lack of emphasis on how to manage the emotionally taxing work of being a veterinarian.


An important cue to be taken by veterinarians, built into the study of social work, is an emphasis on self-care. It is not viewed as selfish, but a necessary investment if longevity in your career is desired. Erin believes that self-care should be viewed as a part of professionalism and each of us should develop our own individual self-care plan.

In her "Night Out" presentation, Erin revealed that veterinarians secretly do love people (perhaps even as much as they love animals!) In order to do

"The idea that social workers and veterinarians can learn a lot from each other about how to build better relationships really stuck out in my mind."

good work and be good to others, be they two or four legged, we need to develop a life outside of work that brings us joy. This means getting back to basics and includes things like eating and sleeping well and setting healthy boundaries, both at home and at work. Erin's own self-care plan includes riding horses, because "you can't be anywhere else when you're on the back of a horse". A good place for anyone to start on the self-care journey is finding out about sleep hygiene, daily debriefing to disengage from work, and building awareness of how we balance the physical, mental, spiritual and emotional parts of our lives.

Veterinary medicine is a small profession and often physically and psychologically isolating. When asked what she hoped for in terms of the future of our field, she would like to see a cultural shift toward collegial support, so that we can continue to be responsive doctors, but in a way where we look after each other and ourselves. She would like the veterinarians of Saskatchewan to know we are smart and capable, that our work can be very emotionally taxing, and that we should acknowledge this to others and ourselves when we feel pressure to justify making our own health a priority. Self-care isn't just a crutch to put in place when our "doing it all for others" mindset kicks in. It is an essential part of maintaining healthy and functional boundaries in all things.

I would encourage anyone who gets a chance to hear Erin speak to grab the opportunity. As we ended our interview, Erin was off to do a talk about death and dying and I was back to practise for the day, with some interesting information to digest. The idea that social workers and veterinarians can learn a lot from each other about how to build better relationships really stuck out in my mind. After all, building relationships is what our businesses and lives are really about. 

Your Association, as a collective of its members, has a dual identity: it has two principal functions, two roles to play: regulation and advocacy.

Like most other provinces, Saskatchewan continues to organize its veterinary profession in this way. A few Canadian provinces have divided their associations into two separate functional organizations, one for regulation and the other to provide advocacy through members' services. This functional separation was undertaken in some cases because it was seen as a conflict to both regulate and advocate out of a single organization.

Interestingly, despite growing populations, the regulatory and members' services sides in the majority of the provinces still operate within the same association. It seems that there's an important benefit to keeping advocacy and regulation tied together: where protection of the public's interests through regulation and member advocacy programs operate concurrently, there are unique opportunities for cohesion, partnership and greater consciousness of the relationship between rights and responsibilities.

Members make up all the working parts of the Association. Since understanding any one issue affecting SK veterinary practice gives insight into other issues, the parts work better as a team.

The SVMA has two types of committees: legislated and non-legislated. Legislated committees include Practice Standards (PSC), Professional Conduct (PC) and Discipline (DC) committees. They are comprised of appointed members and are required by the Veterinarian's Act to perform vital roles in the exercise of regulating veterinary practice in our province. Two other elements in the regulation process are SVMA Council and the Registrar.

The SVMA Council is the agent of the Membership in all Association matters. The Council is made up of members voted in for two-year terms at the AGM. Council members meet a minimum of eight times annually to hear, discuss and make decisions on regular operations of the Association. A two-year Council appointment was put in place to maximize widespread member participation and hopefully keep council representative of the greatest possible array of viewpoints. (I have heard it said more than once that it is hoped that each SVMA member will take a turn on council at some point during their veterinary career.)

Where the agent of the Membership is the Council, the agent of the Council in all regulatory matters is the Registrar. The Registrar is appointed (hired) by council on a five year basis. The Registrar oversees the legal operation of veterinary practice in the province.

Regardless of the size or composition of a VMA, a boundary between the functions of regulation and advocacy must be defined somewhere. In the SVMA, the Registrar, whose role it is to administer the practice inspection and complaints process on behalf of the PSC, PCC and DC, cannot act either as defender or advocate for those who have been objects of complaint.

Advocacy support on the regulatory side comes through information and consultation about the guiding policies, the Veterinarian's Act and the SVMA bylaws, which outline all the requirements to be licensed to practice veterinary medicine in the province of Saskatchewan. Contact can take place at events like licensing seminars or directly with the SVMA office. Members must be knowledgeable about the Act, Bylaws and Practice Standards, as they are required to abide by them. The Registrar is available to discuss, clarify and explain the Act to any and all SVMA members and to the public.

With the assistance of the staff, your Council along with the many SVMA committees (community relations, continuing education, practice economics,

animal welfare, professional wellness and more) have the latitude and resources to advocate for SVMA members in many diverse ways. What we call "Members' Services" are in fact, for the most part, member advocacy programs and initiatives, such as:

- Promoting the value of the SK veterinary profession to the public. SaskVets.ca was created as a public face and promotional vehicle for the SK veterinary profession. Your Association is leading the nation in successful application of social media messaging in the promotion of the veterinary profession. Look for regional 'Social Media 101' workshops in May to learn about messaging strategies for your practice.
- Lobbying and public education- for example, with the awareness that adequate BSE testing is essential for the protection of beef export markets (and the LA practitioners who serve them) your Council lobbies for provincial and national support for improving compensation for BSE testing. Education about the importance of BSE testing is currently a high priority as well.
- Working in cooperation with the larger educational community: the SVMA is represented on the Senates of the Universities of Saskatchewan and Regina, WCVMA Advisory council and student selection committees, as well as with the Ministry of Agriculture, the CVMA and the SAVT.
- Animal Welfare- your Association represents you in this important area by working with provincial animal welfare groups and animal protection services.
- The Practice Economics Committee undertakes to keep up to date economic data available to you in the form of fee guides and wage reports. This vital data, gathered through the annual economic survey (which must be completed in adequate numbers to be meaningful), helps the entire SK Membership sustain itself economically.
- A full supply of approved scientific CE provided at the annual conference and through regional presentations to advance your professional development and ensure the required continuing education credits

are available to you.

- Wellness support delivered by the Professional Wellness Committee and SVMA office through healthy living events, articles and member counselling support via the Professional Psychologists and Counsellors network.
- Mentorship- we support the transition to practice and take mentorship seriously from beginning to end. SVMA partners with the Ministry of Agriculture in funding summer mentorship for WCVm students annually. SVMA is also represented on the WCVm Mentorship Review Committee.
- SVMA Website – a resource database with all regulatory policies, requirements and guidelines for practising veterinary medicine in Saskatchewan, links to pertinent government offices and policies, classified ads (free for members) and up-to-date events listings, news and information. Finally, SVMA News quarterly newsletter comes right to your door to help keep you informed about current issues affecting your practice.

Although time is a precious commodity in the field of veterinary medicine, SVMA members are encouraged to learn as much as they can about current issues as well as about their Association's regulatory and advocacy functions. When knowledge and experience are applied to the many areas of an organization, the results are additive. Council members often sit on one (or two) of the other committees. So long as confidentiality is preserved where applicable, members of legislated committees are free to sit on non-legislated committees and vice versa

In my opinion, the many forms advocacy takes on within the Association make the SVMA as much an advocate for the SK veterinary profession as it is a regulator. The regulatory and advocacy functions of the Association complement each other, just as rights and responsibilities do. In the end, this partnership has one mission: to support veterinary medicine as a key element of a stable, healthy society. 🐾



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VETERINARY TEAM

FAMILY DAY

May 31st 2015

Connor's Park, Moose Jaw



The entire veterinary team (staff, families and dogs!) are invited to join us on Sunday May 31st at Connor's Park in Moose Jaw for a day of furry fun in the park!

5 km FUN RUN through the old Wild Animal Park - 10:00 am

2 km DOG WALK – 10:00 am

Dogs are welcome as long as they are on a leash

Scenic kayaking on the winding Moose Jaw River

Barbeque lunch (noon) rain or shine, under large covered gazebo

Games for kids

Come a day early to take in the Tunnels of Moose Jaw or Temple Gardens Mineral Spa – many hotels and campgrounds are nearby.

Free dog boarding at Bellamy Harrison Animal Hospital available

Please RSVP to the SVMA with:

- Numbers of adults, kids and ages of kids
 - Sign up for kayaks,
 - Sign up for run/ walk

SEE YOU IN MOOSE JAW!

DR. DOUGLAS FREEMAN

Animal welfare is an integral part of the Western College of Veterinary Medicine's (WCVm) makeup, but over the past five decades, it's been one area of research and education that hasn't involved the general public and has kept a relatively low profile.

That profile received a major boost on March 11 when Dr. Temple Grandin helped the WCVm launch its new animal welfare fund at a sold-out evening presentation in Saskatoon, Sask.

Dr. Grandin, a professor of animal science at Colorado State University, is considered the most accomplished and well-known person with autism in the world. Besides supporting the fund's debut, the international expert on livestock handling and design shared her vision of animal behaviour, animal welfare and autism with the 2,000 people who came for her evening talk.

While Dr. Grandin's presentation was the evening's highlight, a wonderful addition to the event was retired Canadian astronaut Colonel Chris Hadfield who introduced Dr. Grandin to the audience in a pre-taped video message. The surprise introduction was arranged by Dr. Joe Stookey, a professor of animal behaviour at our veterinary college and one of Dr. Grandin's longtime friends.

Earlier in the day, Dr. Grandin also spoke to nearly 200 veterinary students at the WCVm about animal welfare and emerging issues. One of her key messages was about the extremely fragile nature of "big agriculture." As one example, Temple pointed to how entire barns of piglets can be wiped out by an infectious disease such as porcine epidemic diarrhea virus (PEDV).

Dr. Grandin also talked about how there are still a number of animal welfare issues that need to be addressed at the farm level — and that's where our new Animal Welfare Fund will be a wonderful support. This new fund's focus includes food animals as well as horses, pets and wildlife. Its activities will help to focus more attention on critical issues in animal welfare and contribute potential solutions through research.

It will also help to advance the field of animal welfare among the WCVm community and the general public through educational materials and events that would bring in speakers such as Dr. Grandin to address this important topic.

Donors — including Boehringer Ingelheim, one of the fund's first supporters — may support research on anything from wound healing and pain control to animal management, housing and protocols for veterinary care.

"So many of the research studies conducted at the WCVm already touch on different aspects of animal welfare," explained Dr. Stookey, whose

own research addresses questions such as measuring the levels of pain and stress associated with common management practices such as castration and dehorning in the cattle industry.

"This fund will only help us to raise the profile of a very important field and connect with other researchers and organizations that are working to enhance animal welfare."

You're welcome to visit the WCVm Animal Welfare Fund (www.usask.ca/wcvm/animalwelfare) for more details about this initiative as well as examples of current and published WCVm research projects that target animal welfare-related questions and issues.

Finally, I want to point out that we're only a few months away from the college's 50th anniversary celebrations in June. If you haven't done so already, visit www.usask.ca/wcvm/fifty-years to register for the June Conference (June 11-13) and for our homecoming activities (June 12-14). 🐾



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

if you have questions.



Animal Health Perspectives

Western Economic Diversification Invests in Prairie Diagnostic Services

Prairie Diagnostic Services Inc. (PDS) is very pleased to announce a \$549,278 investment in laboratory equipment from the Government of Canada through Western Economic Diversification Canada (WD). The investment was announced March 3rd by Brad Trost, Member of Parliament for Saskatoon Humboldt and is a matching contribution agreement for new equipment that will expand and modernize PDS's diagnostic testing capacity.

The new equipment will expand testing capacities, increase efficiencies for the laboratory, as well as improve turnaround time on a number of test results to veterinarians, grain and livestock producers, food processors, and public agencies across Western Canada.

Key pieces of new instrumentation include the following:

- A new **MALDI-TOF MS** (Matrix Assisted Laser Desorption/Ionization –Time of Flight mass spectrometer) introduces a new technique to support the bacteriology service. Rather than using growth or no growth on numerous selective media to identify bacteria, a technique which has been in use for the past 75 plus years, the MALDI-TOF mass spectrometer uses a laser to vaporize bacterial cell components and analyzes the resulting molecular spectra using mass spectrometry to determine the identity of bacteria to the species level. This is a new and rapidly improving technique which PDS has been watching with great interest for the past 5 years (See: <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2832429/>). Its effectiveness for veterinary applications has improved to the point where we needed to add this technology to our Bacteriology

laboratory. The MALDI-TOF improves the accuracy of bacterial identification and decreases reagent costs. Turnaround times for identification will be improved.

- Addition of a new **ICP-MS** (Inductively Coupled Plasma mass spectrometer) to our toxicology service will allow PDS to update older technology for performing mineral analysis. The new equipment has improved detection limits and a Helium collision cell that reduces interferences seen in some of our current applications. It is fitted with an auto sampler that allows for improved utilization of technologist time.
- An additional **LC-MS** (Liquid Chromatography mass spectrometer) instrument and industrial sized **grinding equipment** along with additional support equipment expands our capacity testing for ergot and mycotoxin contamination in grain and forage samples. This will support existing surveillance studies underway to help identify new areas in Western Canada affected by these toxins. PDS will also be expanding our repertoire of organic chemicals we can quantitate. For example, we are currently looking at the development of a new assay for Monensin.
- **VIDAS® rapid automated bacterial analysis equipment** provides the ability to perform rapid testing for Salmonella, Campylobacter and E. coli O157 in food products. The VIDAS uses proprietary bacteriophage based technology to quickly and accurately determine the presence of these organisms in a variety of food products. The equipment is accredited for specific testing by Health Canada. PDS will leverage its ISO/IEC

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17025 status along with this equipment to perform accredited testing for a variety of clients.

- A **hydraulic tilting necropsy table** is being installed in the high containment section of our Necropsy laboratory which is used to segregate testing for a variety of higher risk organisms such as CWD, Rabies and Anthrax. The table will be used to maintain large animals at proper dissection height for the variety of staff, faculty and students working in this laboratory.

This is the second major investment from WD in the laboratory. The WD support is key in furthering PDS's ability to expand and build on specialized testing services to support veterinary diagnostics in Western Canada.

Premise Identification: getting our ducks (and other livestock) in a row

By: *Anatoliy Trokhymchuk (Disease Surveillance Veterinarian, PDS)*

Premise identification (PID) is the process of setting up a unique code for a physical land location where livestock are residing. PID greatly facilitates linking livestock and poultry to geographic locations for planning, addressing animal health issues, and emergency response. **Together with individual animal identification and recording of animal movement, premise identification numbers (PIDs) are becoming a critical part of the national livestock traceability system.** As with any nation-wide endeavour, developing a livestock traceability system takes a significant amount of time, effort, and resources. However, in our complex world of global market economy such a system has become essential.

PID programs are managed by individual provinces and territories and there are some differences between jurisdictions. In Western Canada, Alberta and Manitoba chose to make PID program participation mandatory for all commercial livestock and poultry producers, while Saskatchewan and British Columbia programs are operating on a voluntary basis. Detailed information on each individual jurisdiction situation can be found here: <http://support.canadaid.ca/?p=1949>.

Under the Part XV of the *Health of Animals*

Regulations, all movements of cattle, bison, sheep, and pigs must be reported. This requirement has come into effect gradually. For example, reporting of farmed pig movement became mandatory July 1, 2014 and the same requirement comes into effect for farmed wild boar July 1, 2015. This means that even though it is still not mandatory to have a PID for a farm with these types of animals in Saskatchewan, the owner will need a PID in order to report animal movement in and out of the farm.

All three elements of the national livestock traceability system (animal ID, premise ID, and movement reporting) offer multiple benefits: besides making the CFIA's job of securing access to international markets and safeguarding national animal agriculture from exotic and emerging diseases easier, there are numerous management efficiencies that individual farmers, producer groups, and animal agriculture service industries can utilise.

In order to recognize the changing regulations and to provide a more comprehensive level of service for our clients and stakeholders, **Prairie Diagnostic Services has started to encourage recording of the premise ID for all farmed animal laboratory submissions.** Initially

we are encouraging the use of the "Animal location" field in our existing species-specific submission forms to record premise ID with each submission. New submission forms, including new electronic submission forms slated for future development, will have a specific input for PID.

Besides improving reporting accuracy for all of our users, the inclusion of PID is especially beneficial to larger production units involving numerous animal locations. Use of a PID, within PDS's new Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS) allows the laboratory or practitioners, the opportunity to perform in-depth diagnostic data analysis by location. The system can track inputs and results from each location with a designated premise ID, providing the opportunity to track diagnostic results, types, and outcomes of submissions, and other key data over time.

If you have any questions regarding your laboratory data analysis and how premise ID can enhance information for your herd health management, please contact Anatoliy Trokhymchuk, PDS Disease Surveillance Veterinarian at anatoliy.trokhymchuk@pds.usask.ca.

Interpretation of Fusarium Mycotoxin Concentrations in Animal Feeds

By: *Vanessa Cowan, Taylor Grusie, Jaswant Singh and Barry Blakley (Toxicology Centre and Veterinary Biomedical Sciences, WCVI) and John McKinnon (College of Agriculture and Bioresources, U of S)*

Fusarium fungi produce a wide variety of potent mycotoxins. Feed contamination by these mycotoxins has historically been a major concern in Manitoba. However **in the past two years extensive contamination has been identified throughout Saskatchewan.** 'Fusarium Head Blight', 'Fusarium Damaged Kernels', and 'Tombstone Disease' are common descriptors for Fusarium contamination. Cereal grains are important substrates for Fusarium infection. Grains typically farmed in Canada, like

barley, oats, rye, sorghum, and wheat', are commonly contaminated. Fusarium species produce a variety of mycotoxins across the Prairie Provinces, including: deoxynivalenol (DON), 3-acetyl-deoxynivalenol, 15-acetyl-deoxynivalenol, diacetoxyscirpenol (DAS), T-2 Toxin, HT-2 Toxin, zearalenone, α -zearalenol, and β -zearalenol. The production of these mycotoxins in pre- and post-harvest conditions is largely dependent on environmental conditions¹. Clinical disease associated with these mycotoxins is often

vague and intermittent. Feed refusal, dermal necrosis, gastrointestinal disturbance, high calf mortality, infertility, and abortion may be reported. These mycotoxins may act synergistically to cause disease. In response to concerned grain and livestock producers, **a Fusarium panel has been developed by the Toxicology laboratory of Prairie Diagnostic Services to test for all mycotoxins in forage and feed samples.**

Culturing molds in a laboratory setting is

useful for identification, but is of little value to quantify mycotoxins in feed. Fungal growth is a poor indicator of mycotoxin content, although nutritional content of the grain will be compromised. Laboratory analysis is essential to assess mycotoxin content in feed intended for livestock consumption.

Zearalenone and its zearalenol derivatives have been associated with estrogenic effects. Pigs are the most susceptible species, and, in particular, prepubertal gilts. Concentrations exceeding 0.3 ppm (mg/kg), total mycotoxin content, may be problematic in gilts². Concentrations ranging from 1-2 ppm may be tolerated in older pigs and cattle. Upon removal of the contaminated feed, clinical manifestations disappear rapidly. Zearalenone contamination of feed at clinically relevant concentrations has been seen in limited amounts during the past year in Saskatchewan.

In contrast, the trichothecene mycotoxins, which include DON (aka: 'vomitoxin') and its metabolites, T-2 toxin and its metabolite, and DAS, have become a major concern. In certain parts of the province, extensive contamination of wheat crops has been observed. Many facilities sort and remove damaged kernels or blend the contaminated grain to create "safe" concentrations. Companies also use commercially available testing kits (i.e. ELISA tests) to screen for DON. Although useful for screening purposes, these inexpensive and quick tests

do not detect the remaining mycotoxin contaminants. Since all of these mycotoxins act in an additive manner, it is important to know the total trichothecene concentration. Simple summation of trichothecene mycotoxin concentrations is not possible due to substantial differences in potency. Considerable species variation also exists. For example, in swine, DON concentrations should not exceed 1 ppm². In cattle and sheep, the corresponding tolerance values are 5 ppm, although the guideline in dairy cattle is 1 ppm. For T-2 toxin and HT-2 toxin, 0.5 ppm and 0.1 ppm are acceptable in cattle². In general, monogastrics such as horses and swine are most susceptible. Species, age, stage of lactation or pregnancy will alter the level of tolerance. Interpretation becomes more complex. Major clinical manifestations of DON exposure and toxicity are feed refusal, vomiting/emesis, and, following long term exposure, anorexia, decreased weight gain, impaired nutritional efficiency, and immunosuppression³. To simplify interpretation of Fusarium mycotoxin concentrations, the creation of equivalence values can be used. For example, in cattle feed, conversion of all of the mycotoxin concentrations to DON "toxicology equivalents", DON and its acetylated metabolites should be multiplied by one, T-2 toxin and DAS should be increased 10-fold, and HT-2 toxin, the most potent trichothecene, should be increased 50-fold. These converted values can be added to create a single tolerance value. Species

sensitivity should also be factored into this calculation.

It should be emphasized that these interpretations are guidelines only and not official standards. Since the mycotoxins are not uniformly present in feed samples, it is recommended to err on the side of caution and take the appropriate measures to collect representative samples. These values are based on the Total Mixed Ration (TMR). If the contaminated feed represents only a portion of the total ration, the tolerance value can be increased accordingly.

If you require additional information related to the interpretation and combined mycotoxin concentrations in feed, contact Dr. Barry Blakley at 306-966-7350 or at barry.blakley@usask.ca.

LITERATURE CITED:

¹ Bryden WL. Mycotoxin contamination of the feed supply chain: Implications for animal productivity and feed security. *Animal Feed Science and Technology*, 2012;173:134-158.

² Grading tolerances for fusarium-damaged grain and DON feeding guidelines. Canadian Grain Commission, 2014. Web. <http://www.grainscanada.gc.ca/guides-guides/don/don-1-eng.htm>. Last accessed January 19, 2015.

³ Pestka JJ. Deoxynivalenol: Toxicity, mechanisms and animal health risks. *Animal Feed Science and Technology*, 2007;137:283-298.

Interpretation of Ergot Contamination in Feed

By: Taylor Grusie, Vanessa Cowan, Jaswant Singh, and Barry Blakley (Toxicology Centre and Veterinary Biomedical Sciences, WCVM) and John McKinnon (College of Agriculture and Bioresources, U of S)

Ergot alkaloid contamination of grain and various grasses has become a major problem in Saskatchewan. Most areas of the province are infected to varying degrees. The economic impact has been felt by crop producers, feed companies and livestock producers. The fungus, *Claviceps purpurea*, produces a variety of alkaloids that are toxic to livestock. At the present time, Prairie Diagnostic Services has the capacity to detect 6 alkaloids including: ergocornine, ergocristine, ergocryptine, ergosine, ergotamine and ergometrine. Depending upon the plant species, one or more alkaloids tend to predominate. In most grains, ergocristine is most often reported at the highest concentration. In contrast,

ergocornine and ergocryptine are the more common alkaloids identified in brome grass.

All ergot alkaloids produce similar effects, with minor variations related to potency. Consequently, interpretation of analytical results is based on the additive total of all 6 alkaloids present. At the present time, **the total mixed ration (TMR) containing more than 100-200 ppb (µg/kg) is viewed as potentially problematic.** The highly contaminated ergot sclerotia are not distributed uniformly in the feed. Subsequently, non-representative sample collection can result in widely variable analytical results and often flawed interpretation. Before the establishment of

analytical methods, producers would visually count or weigh the sclerotia to estimate the extent of contamination. Highly variable sclerotia size and concentrations of ergot within each sclerotia can result in erroneous estimates of ergot content. Historically, 5-20 ergot sclerotia per liter or 0.1-0.3% by weight were deemed problematic; however, clinical observation in diseased livestock has clearly indicated these guidelines are outdated. The 'fines', very small particles found in grain, also raise concern. Although no sclerotia or sclerotia fractions are present in fines, clinically relevant concentrations of ergot alkaloids may still be detected. **Chemical**

analysis of feed samples is currently the most reliable method.

Horses, sheep and swine are more susceptible than cattle. In all species, agalactia, reduced growth and feed consumption become evident when feed concentrations exceed approximately 330-700 ppb. Ergot suppresses prolactin secretion, which may adversely reduce milk production for the entire lactation. The economic impact is so dramatic that many authorities recommend that ergot-contaminated feed

should not be fed to lactating or pregnant animals at any concentration. In the winter months, reduced feed consumption and growth are observed in the livestock both directly and through vasoconstrictive effects. Animals are more susceptible to cold stress and potentially gangrene due to these vasoconstrictive effects, which alter thermoregulatory mechanisms. In addition to cold stress, heat exhaustion in hot climates may also be a problem. In Saskatchewan, abortion and CNS excitation

have not yet been reported. Bull fertility and spermatogenesis may be affected by altered thermoregulatory properties of ergot.

Disease associated with the consumption of contaminated feed is influenced by age, species, pregnancy, lactation, temperature and feed consumption. If you require assistance related to interpretation or ration modification related to ergot-contaminated feed, contact Dr. Barry Blakley at 306-966-7350 or at barry.blakley@usask.ca

Outbreak of *Taenia hydatigena* infection in a feedlot lambs

By: Chris Wojnarowicz, Veterinary Pathologist, PDS

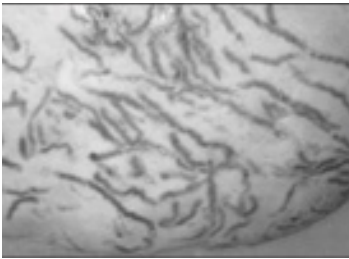


Fig. 1: Gross appearance of the affected ovine livers

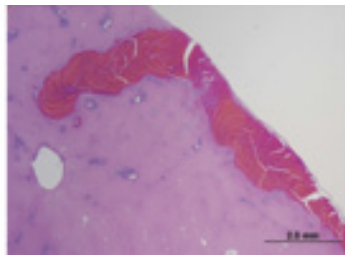


Fig. 2: Metacystode-induced hemorrhagic channels, ovine liver

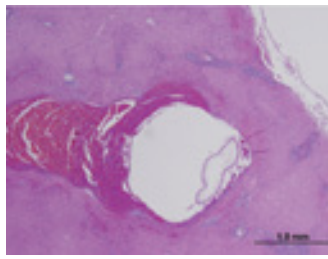


Fig. 3: *Cysticercus tenuicollis*, visible in the cavernous part the intrahepatic hemorrhage.

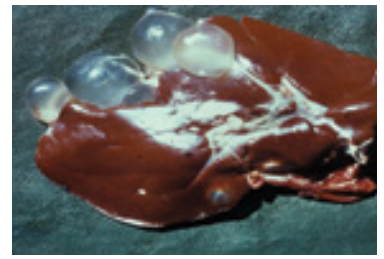


Fig 4: Fluid-filled vesicles containing cysticerci on the hepatic surface

Infection of sheep by the canine tapeworm *Taenia hydatigena* is fairly common in countries with a long established sheep industry but on the Canadian Prairies the condition is rare. This certainly was my first case of this kind and, at the same time, a testimony to the growing volume and significance of the sheep industry in Western Canada.

A producer in Alberta established a lamb feedlot populated with purchased lambs. The affected lambs were asymptomatic but their livers, which exhibited similar gross lesions, were condemned. The producer brought sections of affected liver to their local veterinary practitioner who then submitted formalin-fixed and fresh sections of affected liver to the PDS Necropsy

laboratory for examination.

Grossly, there were multifocal to generalized, brown/black (hemorrhagic), serpiginous, short, subcapsular to deeper parenchymal tracks in the liver (Fig. 1). The liver capsule was shiny and undisturbed. Histologically, wide, blood-filled channels that did not penetrate the liver capsule (Fig. 2) randomly traversed the liver. The edge of the channels were often necrotic and infiltrated by a mixture of lymphocytes, plasma cells and eosinophils. Most of the portal areas were heavily infiltrated with a similar inflammatory infiltrate and some foci were clearly dominated by eosinophils. Some sections contained the larval form, *Cysticercus tenuicollis* (Fig. 3).

Taenia hydatigena is a large tapeworm (1.5 to 5 meters in length) that inhabits the small intestines and its natural host is a carnivore. Eggs containing a larval stage are ingested by small ruminant from sources contaminated by feces. After the egg's shell is digested the larvae penetrate the wall of the intestines and migrate to the liver where they may remain or they may migrate to the surface of the liver, mesentery or omentum and develop into fluid-filled vesicles (Fig. 4).

The essential elements of *Taenia hydatigena* infection prevention include: frequent deworming of dogs with a taeniocide, keeping dogs away from infected sheep offal and keeping sheep away from dog feces.

READERS' FEEDBACK

The **Animal Health Perspectives** editorial team (Dr. Moira Kerr, Brian Zwaan and Kathryn Tonita) invite readers' comment on 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: brian.zwaan@pds.usask.ca

in memoriam

KENNETH EDWIN JUST 1929 - 2015

Kenneth Edwin Just, DVM, of Regina, Saskatchewan was born on November 1, 1929 and passed away at the Wascana Long Term Care Centre in the early morning on March 3, 2015 after a brave and lengthy battle with cancer. He was 85 years of age. He was predeceased by his parents, Martin in 1979 and Hulda in 1969; a brother Herbert in 1919, and brothers Georgie in 1933, Alvin in 1995 and Lyle in 2004.

Kenneth is lovingly remembered by his wife of 62 years, Eldi (Fiege) and their three sons: Murray (Marlene), Howard (Maria), and David (Allison); grandchildren Jaime (Jason) Andrusiak, Jennifer (David) Lowe, Celeste (Bill) Zborowski, Serena and Adam Just; great grandchildren Ashley and Carley Andrusiak, Ellis and Smith Lowe and Bianca Zborowski; brothers Dr Harvey Just and David Just, his sister Agnes Husulak, and many more family members and friends.

Ken was born November 1, 1929 at the family farm near Orcadia, Saskatchewan. He took his first eight years of schooling in the one-room Orkney stone school, completing high school at Yorkton Collegiate Institute in Yorkton, SK. Ken tried farming for a short time but decided that farming was not for him, so he and his family moved to Saskatoon, where he spent a few years as a Saskatoon City Transit driver.

With encouragement from family, Ken and Eldi left Saskatoon for Guelph, ON so Ken could attend the Ontario Veterinary College. After graduation, Ken returned to Saskatchewan as owner of Mohawk Veterinary Clinic in Melfort for twelve years. He then set up a small animal clinic, the Ambassador Pet Hospital, in Yorkton. In 1977, Dr Just was offered a position with Agriculture Canada, for whom he

worked weekdays at the poultry processing plant in Wynyard while spending his weekends in his Yorkton clinic.

In 1978, Agriculture Canada offered Dr Just a new position, so it was time to sell the Yorkton clinic and move the family to Regina. Dr Just was Regional Veterinary Supervisor, Meat Hygiene, Food Production and Inspection Branch, a position he held until he retired in 1993.

While in Melfort, Ken was instrumental in forming a 4-H light horse club. He was also a Rotarian for a short period of time. Dr Just was an avid bird carver, and he won many awards and competitions. His birds can be found in homes of friends and relatives around the world. Ken and Eldi were very involved in square dancing in Melfort, Yorkton and Regina and they made many long lasting friends through this social activity.

After retirement, Ken and Eldi spent a good part of the winter months in Mesa Arizona, where they had a trailer and later a park model at Valle del Oro Park. Ken was able to indulge his bird carving hobby and entered into several shows in Scottsdale and Mesa, winning many ribbons.

Ken was interred in the family plot in the Orkney Cemetery. A memorial service to celebrate a life well lived will be held in early summer at the Orkney Church near Yorkton. Memorials in Ken's memory may be made to William Booth Special Care Home for use in the Regina Wascana Grace Hospice, 50 Angus Road, Regina SK, S4R 8P6. 🐾



Keep informed

of the decisions council is making and actions being taken on your behalf. The minutes from council meetings are posted on the website www.svma.sk.ca/members. Council welcomes comments and suggestions from the membership. 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.

An Invitation to... the Council Table

When you think about your Association's decisions and policies, do you wish you had more influence? Would you like an opportunity to handle things differently? The opportunity is here, at the SVMA Council table.

Your Council is made up of member veterinarians just like you. Every SVMA member has important ideas and perspective to share. We want your point of view, your

knowledge and your ideas.

Council members invariably say they obtain a wealth of knowledge and insight about the Saskatchewan veterinary profession to take back to their practices.

All SVMA members with at least five years of practice experience are welcome. Council terms go by quickly, and three (3) council seats will need to

be filled by election at the next AGM in September. Members with experience from volunteering with other SVMA committees are preferred. If you are interested, please contact the SVMA office or a current council member for more information.

**BE PART OF THE PROCESS.
SHAPE THE FUTURE OF YOUR
PROFESSION. RUN FOR A
COUNCIL SEAT.**

IT'S TIME AGAIN FOR SVMA SPRING REGIONAL CE AND OUR 2015 DINNER & LECTURE SERIES:

Diagnostic Techniques In Dermatology / Updates In Allergies

Presented by Allison Foster, DVM ACVD
WCVM VMC Clinical Associate in Dermatology

Tuesday	May 19	Yorkton	RC Legion Hall	380 Broadway St W
Wednesday	May 20	Weyburn	RC Legion Hall	150 3rd St NE
Thursday	May 21	Swift Current	Home Inn & Suites	1411 Battleford Trail
Tuesday	May 26	North Battleford	West Dev. Museum	Highways 16 & 40
Wednesday	May 27	Melfort	Melfort Golf Club	Melfort

2H APPROVED SCIENTIFIC CE

Dinner 6:00 pm

Lecture session 7:00 – 9:00 pm

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**Contact Sue at sgauthier@svma.sk.ca
or call 306.955.7868 to register .**



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DIETS

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It seems we have finally made it to that glorious time of year – Spring! (minus the odd Spring snowfall, typical Saskatchewan). I find this time bittersweet as a student, both excited for summer holidays and anxious of the looming final exams.

The past few months at WCVM have been very exciting. The library renovations are now complete and boast an incredible 4th floor study area open 24/7 (a place that will no doubt be frequented this month).

In March, the college invited Dr. Temple Grandin to speak to a packed house over the lunch hour as a way of presenting our newly established Animal Welfare Fund. Many students were also fortunate enough to attend her sold-out evening presentation at TCU place. Dr. Grandin spoke of autism, cattle handling, animal behaviour and animal welfare.

New to the students of the WCVM has been the establishment of the WCVM Chamber Orchestra. Jessica Semper, a second year veterinary student, explains that the group was born rather serendipitously out of a number of situations, which included the donation of a piano to the school's buffeteria and the annual Christmas caroling event. Her motivation for establishing the orchestra was to bring students together to play music and unwind throughout the school year.

"I've played the violin for over 15 years now, and leaving my home city [to attend vet school], I was extremely sad to also be leaving the community orchestra that I had played with for ages. Vet school being what it is, there was no way I could commit to joining another music group in Saskatoon!" says Jessica, who did not want to lose her musical craft while attending school.

The collection of fourteen musicians, from all four of the veterinary classes plus a few graduate students, features violins, flutes, a cello, a trombone and even a harp! The talented group played their second concert at the college in early April, featuring music by Vivaldi and Mozart.

Jessica is quick to admit that the group has grown tremendously, both musically and individually, with many musicians using this avenue as a great way to relieve the stresses of school life.

"Every week, I have one of my fellow classmates come up to me after a Thursday morning exam, saying things like 'Man, I can't wait to play tonight! I've been looking forward to it all week!' or after a rehearsal 'Wow, I needed that so much; I feel so refreshed now!' There really is something about playing music that revitalizes tired and worn out minds, souls and spirits I think... something that is rather invaluable in a college and profession like the one we have all entered!"

Earlier in the Spring, The WCVM Pawsitive Practice committee, which focuses

on balanced living, hosted a Women's Round Table panel discussion as a gift for the graduating class of 2015. This student-driven initiative invited female veterinarians to share their life experiences and advice, as well as offer mentorship to our upcoming graduates. With a generous donation from the SVMA, this wine and cheese gathering featured discussions about the unique challenges women face, as new grads, with developing families and managing their careers.

It has been my pleasure to serve as the student representative for the 2014-2015 school year. I am excited to begin my clinical rotations this summer in the large animal clinic. I look forward to meeting and interacting with my peers as I enter the professional veterinary community. 🐾



LINDSAY CHAPMAN

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CONNECTING WITH CLIENTS IN THE NEW MARKETPLACE

**"THE ECONOMIC IMPACT CAN
ONLY BEEN DESCRIBED AS HUGE.
REVENUE IN OUR PRACTICE IS
COMPOUNDING QUARTERLY
BY DOUBLE DIGITS."**

DR BOB BELLAMY

Veterinary practices are facing an alarming benchmark. Over the past decade, the number of “active” clients per “full time equivalent” (FTE) veterinarian has been cut in half. In 2004 the average veterinarian serviced 1500 clients on a yearly basis. That number has steadily declined, so that by 2014 the number of active clients per veterinarian had dropped to 840. Unfortunately, all indications project that this trend will continue.

There are many reasons for the declining demand. There are significantly more veterinarians in practice in Canada and all of our veterinary colleges are geared towards expanding enrollment. The Canadian Animal Health Institute (CAHI) recently published a report showing a significant drop in pet populations. Finally, pet owners are visiting veterinarians less frequently. A decade ago, 70% of dogs visited their family veterinarian yearly; today that number is down to 50%. Statistics are even worse for cats, with only about a third of house cats visiting their veterinarian on an annual basis.

One of the problems with statistics is that they can be manipulated to support both sides of any scenario. The profession has coped with the declining demand by offering more services and increasing fees. Over the past decade the average veterinary income has not grown but has managed to keep pace with inflation. So it could be argued that the declining visits have allowed practitioners to work less for the same income! However, there is no hard evidence that this trend is likely to continue.

It would be great to have a crystal ball, but based on what we are already seeing, I think it would be safe to predict that an increasing supply of veterinarians will be faced with fewer clients who own still fewer pets and who will visit less frequently.

Thanks to the Internet, even our active clients have access to more information and misinformation than ever before. Waiting to educate active clients about healthcare issues at their next visit is already becoming a risky business strategy. In fact, waiting to get any important information out carries the hazard of falling behind. To adapt, our profession will need to modernize its communication strategies to keep up with the ways in which today's clients are interacting with the marketplace.

To suggest that Social Media are changing how we communicate is an incredible understatement. It's hard to fathom that household-name platforms like

“The SVMA's platform now has the highest engagement level in the country, surpassing other associations that have been active longer and in regions with much larger populations.”

Facebook and Twitter are less than a decade old. Social media are literally eclipsing conventional mass media. It has never been easier, faster or less expensive to convey a message or impression to the masses.

As an “old fart”, I initially found it difficult to embrace social media. The process began when I was forced to stop berating my kids for wasting their time on Facebook and ask them to show me how it worked. The process was humbling but worth the effort.

As project coordinator for the SVMA social media program, I have learned so much working with Wow Factor Media, the company administering the project. The SVMA's social media campaign has been highly successful in delivering a positive message about the value of veterinary service throughout Saskatchewan. In fact, the SVMA's platform now has the highest engagement level in the country, surpassing other associations that have been active longer and in regions with much larger populations. (Not that SVMA members are competitive —but isn't it nice to be winners?!!)

I have also used the information gained from working with Wow Factor Media to expand my own clinic's social media presence. The economic impact can only be described as huge: revenue in our practice is compounding quarterly by double digits.

For reasons that I don't fully understand, social media almost lures clients and potential clients to your message. It is an incredibly powerful, immediate and inexpensive marketing tool. Even a very basic understanding of social media feeds can empower you to inform clients about the value of regular veterinary visits.

In closing, the SVMA has invited me to do a number of regional workshops throughout Saskatchewan on using Social Media. In partnership with WDDC, whose representative Karen Laventure will be on hand to help set up Facebook feeds for your clinic, the aptly dubbed “Social Media 101 Tour” will be presenting in a city near you this June. If you already have a Social Media platform for your practice, it would be useful to bring the individual who administers your page. If all else fails - bring the high school kids who clean your kennels! You'd be amazed at how much they can teach us! 🐾



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Sunday	June 7	1:00 pm	RC Legion Hall	380 Broadway St W	Yorkton
Monday	June 8	6:00 pm	RC Legion Hall	150 3rd Street NE	Weyburn
Tuesday	June 9	6:00 pm	Home Inn & Suites	1411 Battleford Trail	Swift Current
Monday	June 15	6:00 pm	Western Dev Museum	Highways 16 & 40	North Battleford
Tuesday	June 16	6:00 pm	Travelodge Hotel	3551 2nd Avenue W	Prince Albert

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¹ Mehlhorn H. (2000). Mode of action of imidacloprid and comparison with other insecticides (i.e., fipronil and selamectin) during *in vivo* and *in vitro* experiments. *Suppl Compend Contin Educ Pract Vet.* 22(4A): 4-8.

² Mehlhorn H, Mencke N, Hansen O. (1999). Effects of imidacloprid on adult and larval stages of the flea *Ctenocephalides felis* after *in vivo* and *in vitro* application: a light and electron-microscopy study. *Parasitol Res.* 85(8-9): 625-637.

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message from the SAVT president elect

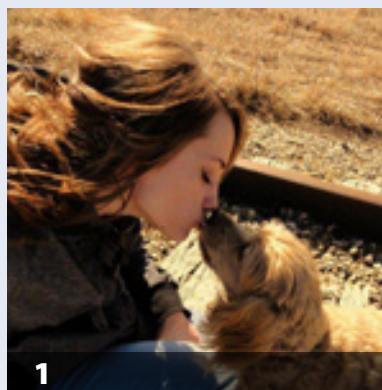
New Veterinary Technology Graduates and SAVT Membership

The SAVT has awarded two Bursaries to exemplary Veterinary Technology Program students, Class of 2015.

1 | **Kayley Halbach** is the recipient from Sask Polytechnic in Saskatoon, SK

AND

2 | **Miranda Kitzul** is the recipient from Lakeland College, Vermilion, AB



This is a good time of the year for Veterinarians to refresh their understanding of the requirements and process for new Veterinary Technology (VT) Program graduates to obtain ACTIVE membership status in the SAVT. This membership category is most pertinent to you, as a Vet Tech employer.

First and foremost, SAVT Active membership status allows the VT Program graduate to be employed as an assistant in the practice of veterinary medicine. Second, it should provide assurance that the VT Program graduate possesses at least a minimum skill level and, therefore should only require a minimum level of Veterinary supervision.

The SAVT promotes credentialing, technical competency and the value of professional networking to all of its membership categories. Here is a summary of how SAVT membership is structured:

Individuals enrolled in a CVMA accredited VT Program are provided with a STUDENT membership status upon completion of an application. STUDENT membership status remains in place until the individual's first sitting of the Veterinary Technology National Examination (VTNE). A VTNE exam session is typically scheduled to coincide with completion of a VT Program students' second year and/or graduation from their VT Program.

The VTNE is owned and administered by AAVSB and is used to evaluate an entry-level VT's competency to practice and to be credentialed. The computer-based exam is given in three testing windows every year; it is constantly updated, reviewed and reevaluated by highly qualified item writers so that it remains a valid evaluation tool.

Once a Student Member has written the VTNE and while the VTNE score is being determined, or in the case where a VT Program graduate requires a second or even a third VTNE sitting, the SAVT will grant the individual a TEMPORARY ACTIVE membership to facilitate employment in a veterinary practice and/or additional VTNE study time. A VT employee within this SAVT membership category should receive very close Veterinary supervision and/

or the veterinary employer should consider limiting the VT employee to performance of lower level technical tasks.

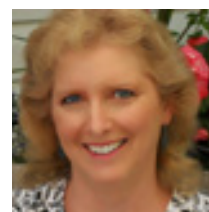
The SAVT grants an ACTIVE membership status when a VT Program graduate has:

- achieved a passing score on the VTNE,
- completed of an Active Membership application,
- paid the required membership Dues,
- provided written acceptance of the SAVT Code of Conduct, and
- has subsequently been approved by the SAVT Board of Directors.

At this point, the individual may use the designation Registered Veterinary Technologist (RVT) and the SAVT provides the individual with an ACTIVE membership card.

When you are hiring a new VT Program graduate, the SAVT suggests asking the individual for their VTNE number and for proof of their SAVT Membership status.

Next article – What if your newly graduated VT employee has failed a VTNE? 🐾



LOIS RIDGWAY, RVT

■ ONE PROFESSION. ONE STRONG VOICE.

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.

Earlier this year, CVMA president, Dr. Jean Gauvin, sent a letter to the Minister of Veterans Affairs Canada, weighing in on the government's decision to undertake the development of national standards for psychiatric service dogs under the Mental Health Services for Veterans Action Plan. While CVMA supports this initiative, it cautions against breed specific limitations and calls for the use of humane training methods, favouring reward-based methods. CVMA has offered to provide veterinary input should it be required during this process.


CVMA announced a new member service, the CVMA WebStore to offer your clients the ultimate in customer service with your own web store customized and branded to your practice. You can enhance and control your product offering without the cost of carrying inventory and also create and manage automated wellness plans that will greatly reduce your staff's administration. To learn more, consult the FAQs (member log-in required) on our website under the Practice & Economics tab.

CVMA recognizes the challenge of beginning a new career, especially the first years in practice. It has created a CVMA Mentoring Program to facilitate the connections among members and provide support to final-year DVM students, recently-graduated members and veterinarians in their early career. Visit the CVMA Mentoring Program section under the Practice & Economics tab on the CVMA website to learn more.

CVMA has revised its position statement on Antimicrobial Use in Animals to state that antimicrobials of high importance in human medicine (VDD Cat I-III) should only be used under veterinary oversight following a veterinary prescription. Antimicrobials approved by Health Canada should be used whenever possible. CVMA believes:

- veterinarians should promote antimicrobial stewardship practice that includes ongoing continuing education, following relevant practice guidelines, good infection control practices, etc.

- appropriate Extra Label Drug Use of antimicrobials is essential in certain circumstances, but should not be used unless there is evidence-based support for efficacy, dose, indication, withdrawal, etc.; and
- availability of medically important antimicrobials by prescription-only will require extensive consultation with veterinary/livestock producer stakeholders, as it could mean changes to the current animal production business model.

It's time to experience Canada's best CE for you and your team at the 2015 CVMA Convention in Calgary, Alberta from July 16 to 19! Presented in partnership with the Alberta Veterinary Medical Association, and in collaboration with the Registered Veterinary Technologists and Technicians of Canada, the rich program offers more than 105 potential continuing education (CE) hours - earn up to 25 CE hours in four days! For more information, visit the CVMA Convention section under the Science & Knowledge tab of our website. 

Questions or Suggestions? Contact your CVMA National Office: Tel: 1-800-567-2862, or email at admin@cvma-acmv.org. Contact your provincial Council Representative, Dr. Terri Chotowetz at tchotowetz@gmail.com.

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General

Ridgway, Ryan Jan-Jun
Smart, Lynn Jan-Jun

T-General

Chan, Mandy May 4
Chisholm, Bronwyn Apr 1
Chisholm, Forbes Leigh Apr 1
Derbawka, Stephanie May 11
Lerer, Assaf Mar 10
Shannon, Ashley Feb 10
Theroux, Kathleen Mar 9
Wilgenbusch, Conrad Mar 1

T-Limited To General

Sadar, Miranda Aug 15

Short Term

Farcas, Amy Mar 2 To 13
Pack, Leeann Mar 23 To Apr 3

T-Short Term

Rivas, Maritzabel 30 Day, Mar 4

T-Limited Short Term

Mauldin, Guy Neal Apr 6 - 17
Olive, Julien May 19 - 29

Deceased

Just, Kenneth E. Mar 03

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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:

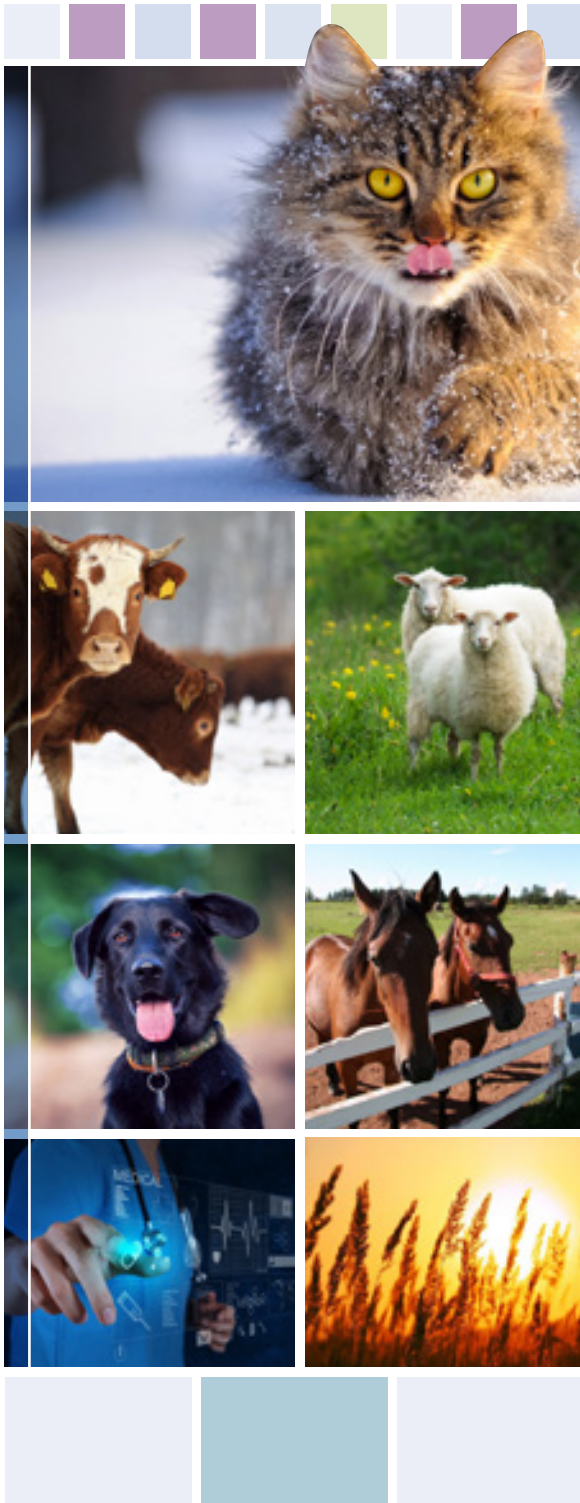
- Coronach
- Estevan
- Kindersley
- La Ronge
- Lloydminster
- Moose Jaw
- North Battleford
- Prince Albert
- Regina
- Saskatoon
- Swift Current
- Weyburn
- Yorkton

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.



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Dr Howard Seim

- Emergency care (4 hours)

Dr Marie Holowaychuk

- Radiology and making ultrasound machines pay

Dr Greg Starrak

- Ophthalmology (glaucoma; cataract care)

Dr Lynne Sandmeyer

LARGE ANIMAL SESSIONS:

- Planning for large scale disease outbreaks

Dr Leigh Rosengren

- Calf care and diagnostics

Dr Jonathan Naylor

- Equine nutrition

Dr Nadia Cymbaluk

- Ruminant nutrition

Murray Feist

- Field anesthesia (equine; bovine; unusual ruminant cases)

Dr Nigel Caulkett

- Safety/efficacy of MLV vs killed vaccines in bovines

Dr John Ellis

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