



<http://nzsp.science.org.nz>

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Well, it has taken until near the end of my two-year term as President of the NZSP to be able to report that parasitology research seems to be looking up! The two AgResearch teams are much better placed financially than they have been for some time, and actual or prospective collaborations between the universities and AgResearch are on an upward trend. Most importantly, there is some excellent science being conducted and published, which I think is being reflected in the world paying more attention to us down here, particularly in livestock nematology. For example, we have a number of overseas visitors coming to spend time at The Hopkirk over the next few months (of course that could be the burgeoning reputation of Palmerston North as a mecca for tourists). Several NZSP members attended ICOPA XII in Melbourne recently, and I think the NZ contingent really left their mark. A number of us were invited to speak at symposia or workshops; I'm pretty sure I was there for all of them, and each talk was very well received. Let us bask in glory for a few seconds before putting our shoulder to the wheel again.

Ian

AWARD – DAVID HEATH

I am delighted to announce that **Dr David Heath**, AgResearch, has been awarded one of the inaugural World Federation of Parasitologists' Distinguished Parasitologist Award. Seven scientists from around the world received the award, and David is in exalted company. Deservedly so. On behalf of the NZSP, I congratulate David on this award, and would like to thank Wayne Hein and Caroline Costall for preparing the submission to the WFP Committee.

... from Ian Sutherland



WELCOME TO TIM ELLIOTT

Here is a brief bio from Tim....

I have been working for Veterinary Health Research since 2000 as a technician in the research parasitology lab as well as performing research trials for pharmaceutical companies. Isolating resistant strains of nematodes and maintaining a colony of *Lymnaea tomentosa* snails for the production of the infective stage of liver fluke for the use in research trials was a major role in Australia. In 2008 I moved to Hamilton with my partner (who is a kiwi) and set up a lab at Innovation Park for Veterinary Health Research. Since then I have been performing research trials and isolating susceptible and resistant strains of sheep and cattle nematodes for the use in trials.

Executive

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Treasurer:	Ian Scott	I.Scott@massey.ac.nz
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WORLD FEDERATION OF PARASITOLOGISTS

Professor Alan Cowman (Australia) has been elected as President of the WFP, with Dr. Ana Flisser (Mexico) as First Vice-President. Professor Maria Ving Johansen and Dr. Les Chappell were re-elected as Treasurer and Secretary respectively. Ian Sutherland was elected as a member of council.

CONFERENCE REPORT – ICOPA XII

Attracting 1800 delegates to the Melbourne Exhibition Centre from around the world, ICOPA XII took place over 5 days (6 if you count the Welcome Reception), with 12 concurrent sessions and more posters than you could shake a sausage roll at. Unlike the NZSP meetings, which traditionally have a strong focus on veterinary parasitology, ICOPA meetings cover the whole of the discipline.

Reflecting the amount of funding available worldwide, human disease such as malaria tend to dominate, although veterinary parasitology was well represented, particularly in the satellite meeting 'Novel Approaches for the Control of Helminths in Livestock'. One of the major benefits of attending such a meeting is the opportunity to renew old friendships and forge new ones. I know many of the NZ delegates have come home brimming with contacts, new ideas and opportunities for collaboration with overseas laboratories.

The conference venue was enormous by NZ standards. Richard Shaw had his pedometer with him, and walked 4 km a day going between the scientific sessions and breaks. That's without leaving the centre.

The conference dinner was a 'lively' affair – no names, no pack drill. Most unlike any parasitology conference I have attended around the world, however, the waiters came round while the band was still playing and took all the wine away! Hopefully the organisers of the next ICOPA (details below) will have taken note.



ICOPA XIII

Four cities prepared bids to host the next meeting, to be held in 2014. These were Cape Town, Copenhagen, Mexico City and Montpellier. A huge amount of effort and expense had gone into the bids, all of which were very impressive. Each participating society had one vote, and there was considerable tension and angst in the room when the votes were being read out. In the end, Mexico City beat off Copenhagen, with Montpellier then Cape Town some distance back.

Both ICOPA reports received from Ian Sutherland



David Heath & Ian Sutherland



Emma Ringqvist, Tania Waghorn & Tony Pernthaner

ICOPA XII AUGUST 2010

This was my first visit to Melbourne and to an ICOPA congress, a huge conference at a huge venue, 12 concurrent sessions on topics as diverse as malaria to tuatara and vaccines to evolution, over five days. There was always one session with a lot of interesting talks to go to and often people were dashing between rooms to hear this talk or that one.

The venue was well suited to the conference with a large number of various sized seminar rooms all hooked together so that you only had one central speaker room where you loaded your talks and got help if needed. There were large foyer areas where people congregated between sessions allowing great mixing of all sorts of topics. The main plenary hall was a massive auditorium spanning three floors and must have held several thousand people when full. The handbook (not the abstracts) was A4 in size and had 170+ pages; the abstracts were given to us on a disk. The food was great different every day with a selection catering for all tastes and no crowding around tables trying to get some. It is the most well organised conference I have been to.

The organisers had gone as far as to set up internet access for congress participants as well as Wi-Fi for those who had bought their own computers. The dinner was great fun with large tables allowing a good mix of people at each. There was a good band playing covers till midnight.

We had a number of people attending (about 13) from the NZSP and all the talks and posters given were well received we certainly made an impression in the fields we are working in which is great as we have been seen in the past as not of much relevance to the rest of the world. However, we here can do work that cannot be done on the same scale anywhere else in the world and we should capitalise on this more. One of the main benefits for me and I think a lot of others attending the congress, was meeting and chatting to people. Being able to put faces to names I see on published work from all around the world. Now having spent time chatting to these people, hearing more about their work first hand has made it far easier to approach them, ask questions and form collaborations.

All in all a good trip despite the Melbourne weather, who said Australia is warm and sunny.

from Tania Waghorn

CHANGES AT FECPAK INTERNATIONAL – PRESS RELEASE 03 AUGUST 2010

FECPAK International has been purchased from PGG Wrightson by its original founder Greg Mirams for an undisclosed sum. Mirams has formed a new company, Techion Group Ltd and has added the FECPAK products and services range into the new business. Techion, meaning technology in action, has been

established to work with industry to ensure technology products are delivering on farm.

“For years I have watched many technology products come and go, promise much, but not perform on farm” Mirams says. “This is often not the fault of the technology itself, but is more about the management knowledge and

support required to get it to deliver effectively". Together with industry partners, Techion Group will use an expertise network and innovative support system, which has been developed over the past 18 years, to assist farmers to maximise their animal performance through the effective use of technology.

In today's environment, a farming operation has to maximise production in order to be viable and as a result, farmers will continue to come under increasing pressure to adopt new and existing technologies. In order to achieve increased levels of productivity in a livestock system, farmers firstly need to focus on the core drivers of animal performance within their specific operation.

"The industry is full of product promotion distractions and often it's the fundamental drivers of animal performance that get overlooked" Mirams says. "Farmers don't deal with a single component of animal

performance, they have to bring all of the components together and drive animal output. To capture the productivity opportunity, it is essential that the industry is more closely aligned to the needs of farmers and work collectively to focus on animal output rather than simply selling an input." Techion Group will work with other industry partners on this output focused approach to the application of technology on farm.

While Techion Group has a number of new activities underway, it will continue to support and grow the FECPAK range of products and services. The company will now provide the only nationally standardised drench assessment service that is not connected to the sale of a drench product. The company also has a number of new technologies under development that it will be bringing to the market in the future.

Greg Mirams
Managing Director

NEW PRODUCT FROM PFIZER ANIMAL HEALTH

Pfizer Animal Health has launched a powerful new broad spectrum, oral sheep drench, STARTECT®, a highly effective and sustainable drenching option.

STARTECT is the first product to contain a brand new active released in combination. It contains an existing active, abamectin, in combination with a unique new molecule called derquantel (a member of the new spiroindole family), which parasites have never been exposed to before.

Clinical studies using STARTECT's unique derquantel-abamectin combination have been conducted in New Zealand, Australia, South Africa and the United Kingdom under a range of farming conditions.

Results showed consistently high efficacy (>99%), even against worms that are resistant to MLs (mectins), BZs (benzimidazoles), levamisole drenches and combinations of these actives. The New Zealand field efficacy results have been published in NZVJ¹.

STARTECT is a highly effective worm control tool, which, when used responsibly as part of a well designed worming programme, will help you achieve optimum productivity and overcome subclinical production losses due to parasitism and drench resistance.



Being a combination, STARTECT has the potential to slow the development of resistance

to both the new active derquantel and also abamectin. The two actives are able to protect each other, which will lead to greater drench sustainability. Dave Leathwick, from

AgResearch has conducted some predictive modelling work, the results of which have been presented at the recent ICOPA meeting².

Even if you don't have a current drench resistance problem, STARTECT can be used as an effective proactive measure to help ensure drench resistance doesn't threaten the productivity of your farming business in the future.

Suitable for a range of farming operations, STARTECT can be introduced early on to:

- Maximise worm management opportunities
- Optimise stock productivity potential
- Minimise emerging drench resistance
- Protect the efficacy of existing drenches.

STARTECT can be incorporated into any drench programme, for example as a routine preventative drench for lambs, as an exit drench, and as a quarantine drench.

It is safe to use on lambs and has a short meat withholding period of only 14 days.

The dose is 1mL/5kg.

STARTECT is available from veterinarians and rural supply stores.

www.startect.co.nz

STARTECT & Cydectin are registered trade marks of Pfizer Inc. or its subsidiaries Registered pursuant to the ACVM Act 1997, No's. A10353 & A6204. OTC

¹ Field efficacy and safety of an oral formulation of the novel combination anthelmintic, derquantel-abamectin in sheep in New Zealand. Little, P.R et al. NZVJ 58(3): 121-129.2010.

² Modelling the benefits of releasing a new class of anthelmintic in combination. Leathwick, D.M. In press

ENVIRONMENT DATA MANAGEMENT - MoRST

Managing scientific data so that is easily accessible and reusable is becoming increasingly important. The Ministry of Research, Science and Technology (MoRST) has recently launched a policy statement on Environmental Data Management, which you can find here (<http://www.morst.govt.nz/edm>). This signals the launch of an implementation programme MoRST and the Foundation for Research, Science and Technology (the Foundation) are undertaking in collaboration with the environmental science sector and its stakeholders. The implementation is effectively prototyping initiatives that will help New Zealanders better manage science data. The intention is to use lessons learned from data management in the environmental area

to improve data management in other science sectors.

The policy statement has two contexts: MoRST and the Foundation's push for better management and use of scientific data as an essential prerequisite for conducting e-science (internet-based science), and MoRST's support for the Open Government Information and Data Reuse programme. An opportunity for stakeholders to get involved is an environmental data practitioner workshop planned for later in the year.

Anyone interested in management of publicly-funded environmental data should contact MoRST Policy Advisor Isabella Cawthorn on (04) 917 3066 or isabella.cawthorn@morst.govt.nz

NEWS ITEM FROM THE WEB

A Sydney man is critically ill after eating a slug as a dare, leading authorities to issue health warnings on devouring raw gastropods.

The man, 21, is in a critical condition in hospital after contracting a rare form of meningitis called Angiostrongylus or rat lung worm after eating the slug.

NSW Health says animals including slugs and snails can carry a range of infections, including bacteria, viruses and parasites that may infect people.

NZSP CONFERENCE 2010

The dates and venue have been set with the deadline for registration and receipt of abstracts being the 30 September 2010. Abstract submission forms and registration forms will be available on the website shortly

Date: 28 & 29 October (1½ days)

Venue: ICLT, Massey University

Conference Dinner: 28 October at the Travelodge Hotel

Accommodation: a reduced rate will be available at the Travelodge Hotel.

The adult form of the rat lung worm is found only in rodents, which pass the parasite's larvae in their faeces. Snails and slugs then eat the faeces, becoming infected.

In some instances, the worm can cause fatal swelling of the brain and spinal cord.

But Dr Jeremy McNulty from NSW Health says such cases are rare and most people do recover.

He said the worm goes away by itself because the body's immune system eventually gets rid of it.

Dr McNulty said people should not eat raw slugs or snails and should ensure they wash their hands after touching them.

"It is also important to thoroughly wash and cook any produce that could be contaminated by animals," he said.

The worm was found mainly in Asia and the Pacific Islands.

It was rare for people to contract rat lung worm disease in Australia, but it occurred

occasionally from eating an uncooked slug or snail, Dr McNulty said.

"In the past, this sometimes has happened after a person has been dared to eat a slug or snail."

Infected people may have no symptoms or only mild short-lived symptoms, he said.

Sometimes the infection causes meningitis, with symptoms such as headaches, stiff neck, tingling or pain in the skin, fever, nausea, and vomiting, Dr McNulty said.

"Even if infected, most people recover fully without treatment," he said.

"However, it can sometimes cause severe meningitis.

"Because humans are not the natural host of the parasite, the parasite eventually dies without treatment."

Rat lung worm infection cannot be passed on to other people.

Thank you to Richard Shaw for the ICOPA photos

Next Newsletter: October 2010
Please send news items, notices etc. to Tania
Email: tania.waghorn@agresearch.co.nz

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