Animal Science Weekly

June 27, 2011

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

Inside this issue:

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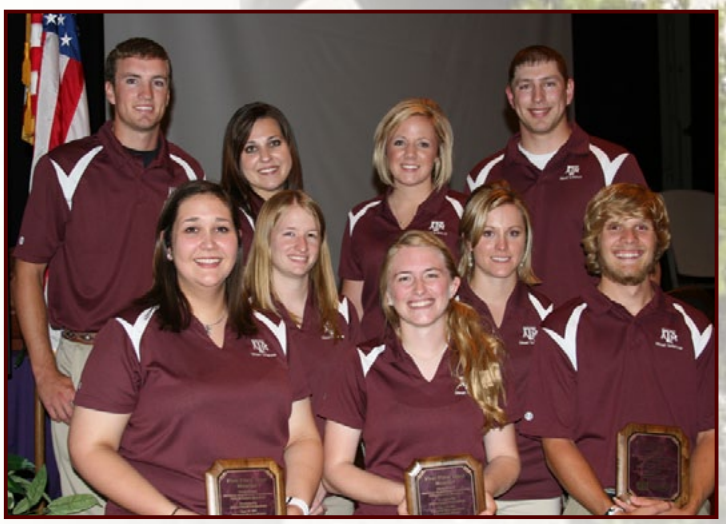
Texas A&M meat science team wins national quiz bowl



Front left, Jessica Steger, Kaitlin Shaw, Jae Ebeling, Lauren Thompson and Lance Wheeler. Back left, Trey Brooks, Kayla Nelson, Rachel Glascock and Carson Ulbrich.

MANHATTAN, KAN -- A team of students from the Texas A&M University Department of Animal Science won the national championship in the American Meat Science Association (AMSA) Intercollegiate Quiz Bowl.

The competition, considered the academic 'Super Bowl' in the world of meat science, was held June 19 during the AMSA's 2011 Reciprocal Meat Conference held at Kansas State University in Manhattan, Kan.

Two teams from Texas A&M competed against 29 teams from 18 universities. The A&M maroon team of Jae Ebeling from Plainview, Jessica Steger from Del Valle and Lance Wheeler from Dallas stood undefeated through the competition, beating North Dakota State University in the final round.

A second A&M team of Trey Brooks from Llano, Rachel Glascock from Pilot Point and Lauren Thompson of Grandview finished in the top eight. Kaitlin Shaw from San Antonio served as alternate.

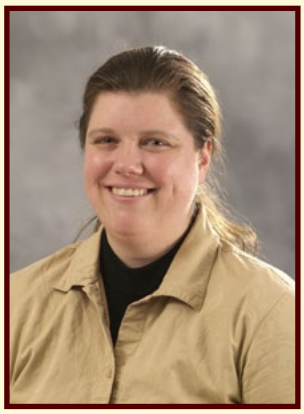
"These seven students have been studying all facets of the meat and livestock industries and the meat and animal sciences for the past six months. I consider them all national champions," said Dr. Dan Hale, professor, Extension meat specialist and team coordinator. "The contest preparation and participation have prepared these students to be the next key leaders in the food, meat or animal industries."

The quiz bowl is designed to encourage interaction among students from different universities, increase student interest in the area of meat science and provide a field for friendly competition within academia.

The teams are divided into a double elimination bracket. Each round consists of 40 questions on meat safety, quality and chemistry; muscle biology; animal physiology; meat production and industry history and current events; and human nutrition and health.

The team is coached by graduate students Carson Ulbrich of Jourdanton, Kayla Nelson from Houston and Adria Grayson from Childress. In preparation for the contest, the team members trained with the coaches as well as the meat science faculty in the Department of Animal Science.

Gill accepts associate vice president post



COLLEGE STATION -- Dr. Clare Gill, associate professor, has accepted a part-time appointment as associate vice president in the Office of the Vice President and Associate Provost for Diversity at Texas A&M University starting July 1, 2011.

Gill will maintain her position in the animal breeding and genetics section within the Department of Animal Science. She also serves on the faculty of genetics and biotechnology.

As associate vice president, Gill will assist with the implementation of the Difficult Dialogues Program, provide leadership and coordination for the mediation training program as well as other initiatives associated with the implementation of the office's diversity plan. The Difficult Dialogues Program at Texas A&M University aims to enhance communication and learning, with the goal to make campus more welcoming, inclusive, and safe for the free exchange of ideas and differences in perspecitve that come with building a diverse and global learning community.

Gill received an honors (class I) degree in bachelor of biotechnology from Flinders University of South Australia in 1995. She graduated from the University of Adelaide in 2000 with a doctorate in animal molecular genetics.

Joint effort leads to complete genome sequencing

COLLEGE STATION -- In a joint effort with faculty from the College of Veterinary Medicine, faculty from the Department of Animal Science have helped to sequence the complete genome of a quarter horse mare. This is only the second horse and the first quarter horse to have a complete sequence performed.

In addition, the same team of scientists sequenced an Angus cow and Nelore cow from the McGregor Research Center. This development represents the second *Bos taurus* and the first *Bos indicus* genome to be sequenced.

Look for more details in the next issue of *Animal Science Weekly*.

Equine Science graduate, former students recognized at national equine symposium

MURFREESBORO, TENN -- Faculty and graduate students from the Department of Animal Science equine science section participated in the 2011 Equine Science Society Symposium hosted by Middle Tennessee State University in Murfreesboro, Tenn., May 31-June 3, 2011.

Jessica Lucia, a doctoral student working under the direction of Dr. Josie Coverdale, won the exercise physiology graduate competition with her presentation entitled, "Influence of an intra-articular lipopolysaccharide challenge on markers of inflammation and cartilage metabolism in young horses." Jeannette Mawyer, who completed her master's degree in May working under the direction of Dr. Clay Cavinder, was second in the reproductive physiology graduate competition with her presentation entitled, "Thermoregulation of the testicle in response to exercise and subsequent effects on seminal characteristics in stallions."

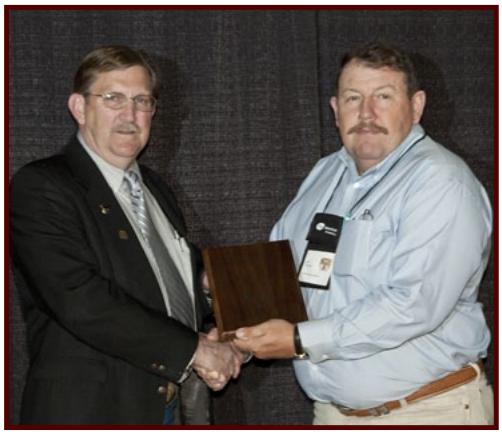
Others from Texas A&M in attendance include Drs. Clay Cavinder, Josie Coverdale, Dennis Sigler and Martha Vogelsang, all faculty members in the Department of Animal Science, and graduate students Ashley Wolford, Kelly Winsco and Cari Mueller. Wolford presented her research entitled, "Influence of confinement housing on the cecal environment of the horse" and Winsco presented, "Effect of dietary energy manipulation on mares and their foals: Determination of voluntary dry matter intake of mares during late pregnancy using a dual marker system."

Jessica Lucia, equine science doctoral student, is recognized for winning the student graduate presentation competition.

Also in attendance were approximately 25 former students of the department who now hold positions at other universities or in the horse industry. Dr. Kathy Anderson, who received a master's degree from Texas A&M in animal science-equine reproduction, was awarded the Outstanding Educator Award. Anderson currently works at the University of Nebraska as associate professor and extension horse specialist. Dr. David Freeman was presented the Distinguished Service Award in Equine Science. Freeman received bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees in animal science-equine nutrition from Texas A&M and currently works at Oklahoma State University as professor and extension equine specialist.

The Equine Science Society promotes quality research on equine nutrition and physiology and strives to establish effective communication among researchers, teachers, extension and production personnel regarding equine nutrition and physiology, according to the society's website found at http://www.equinescience.org/.

Beef Improvement Federation recognizes Paschal



BOZEMAN, MONT. -- The Beef Improvement Federation (BIF) honored Dr. Joe Paschal with its Continuing Service Award during the organization's 43rd annual meeting and research symposium in Bozeman, Mont., June 1-4. The award recognizes those who have made a significant contribution to the industry.

Paschal is currently a professor and extension livestock specialist in the Department of Animal Science, located at the AgriLife Research and Extension Center in Corpus Christi.

A native of Corpus Christi, Paschal earned bachelor's and master's degrees in animal science and a doctorate in animal breeding and genetics at TAMU. He is a member of the animal breeding and genetics section and is on the graduate faculty at TAMU. He is also an adjunct/external professor of animal science at TAMU-Kingsville.

Paschal began his extension career as a livestock specialist at the Fort Stockton, District Extension Headquarters. In 1988, he moved to Corpus Christi to assume his current position, where his primary interests have been in applied beef cattle breeding and genetics (especially involving the use of *Bos indicus*), production systems, and beef cattle growth and development.

He has been involved with BIF for more than 30 years, starting with his position with the American-International Charolais Association. In 1995, Paschal became the BIF liaison for the Texas A&M Beef Cattle Extension Group.

Friend participates in World Horse Welfare's meeting

LONDON -- Dr. Ted Friend, AgriLife faculty fellow and professor of animal behavior and wellbeing in the Department of Animal Science, made a presentation before a group of experts at the World Horse Welfare's meeting in London, England, on June 15, 2011.

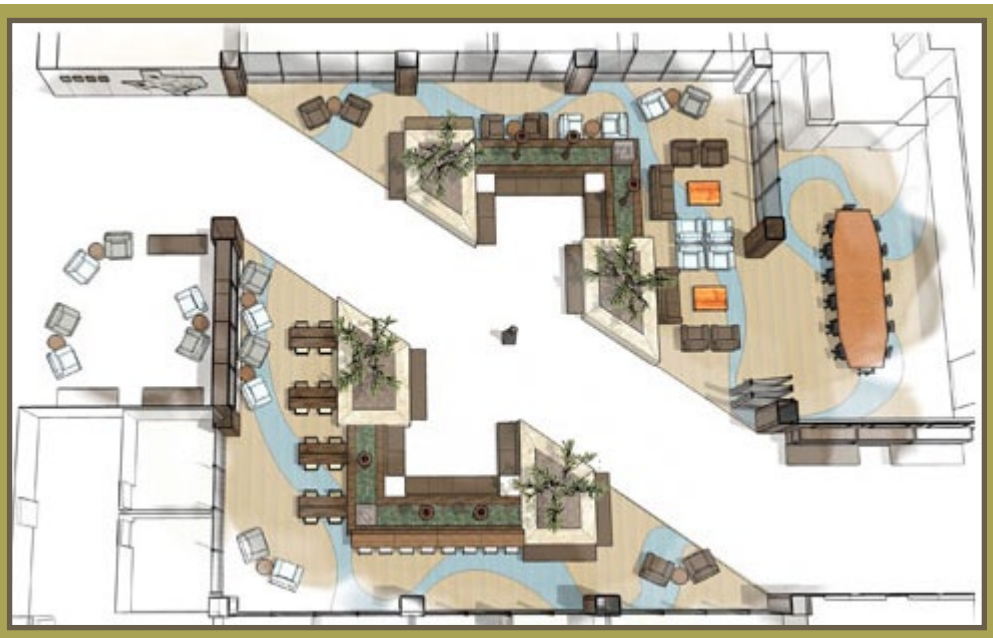
World Horse Welfare brought together a group of distinguished scientific experts in a bid to develop recommendations that will help address key welfare concerns currently facing horses being transported long distances across Europe to slaughter.

Friends' presentation reviewed his lab's research on horse transportation, including behavior during transport, exhaustion, duration of travel, dehydration and the effects of density. The European Union implemented sweeping regulations for the transport of all livestock in 2005. However, the requirements for slaughter horses to be separated into narrow stalls and to receive 24 hours of off-truck rest after every 24 hours of transport may exacerbate conditions for the horses because many horses have trouble accepting the narrow stalls, conditions at the rest stations are not often conducive to receiving the intended feed, water and rest, and there is little enforcement.

Howard Hesby Student Atrium

Construction Begins

Construction on the Hesby Atrium project has begun. Along with the support we have received from former students and friends of the Department of Animal Science, we have received a generous donation from the Houston Livestock Show & Rodeo that allows us to launch the first phase of the project. This initial phase will allow us to accomplish a significant amount of the planned work, but much remains to be done. Thus far, we have raised $320,000, but we still need an additional $500,000 to complete the project.



We will keep you updated as work progresses. We are grateful for the enthusiastic response we've received thus far in support of this important initiative. Your continued support is needed as we move forward to complete this project in honor of Howard Hesby that will provide our students with much needed updated facilities.

Visit http://animalscience.tamu.edu/hesby-atrium.

Temple Grandin to speak at Texas A&M Beef Cattle Short Course

COLLEGE STATION – Dr. Temple Grandin will be the keynote speaker at the Texas A&M Beef Cattle Short Course, sponsored by Texas AgriLife Extension Service, Aug. 1-3 in College Station.

Grandin is a professor at Colorado State University and specializes in cattle behavior and handling facilities. She has advised ranchers, feedlots and meat plants throughout the U.S. and Canada on handling equipment as well as assisting in the development of animal welfare guidelines for the meat industry, consulting with McDonald's, Wendy's International and Burger King.

Grandin has received numerous awards including the Beef Top 40 industry leaders award from the National Cattlemen's Beef Association and HBO recently premiered a movie about Temple's early life and career with the livestock industry. The movie received seven Emmy awards, a Golden Globe and a Peabody Award.

"We are fortunate to have Dr. Grandin join us again at the Beef Cattle Short Course and provide insight as to the latest developments in animal handling and welfare issues," said Dr. Jason Cleere, AgriLife Extension beef cattle specialist and conference coordinator. "These issues are very important to the beef industry and we think attendees will come away with fresh information that can be applied in their operations."

The short course features a number of educational sessions and workshops. The Cattleman's College portion of the three-day short course provides participants with an opportunity to choose workshops based on production experience and the needs of their ranch, Cleere said.

"These concurrent workshops will feature information on introductory cattle production, management practices in the areas of forage, nutrition and reproduction, record keeping, brush busting, cattle handling, landowner issues, and much more," he said.

In addition to classroom instruction on Aug. 1-2, participants can attend one of the popular demonstrations on the morning of Aug. 3, Cleere said.

"There will be demonstrations on chute-side calf working, cattle behavior, penning, selection and brush busting," Cleere said. "These provide an opportunity for ranchers to see beef cattle production practices put to use."

"The goal of the short course each year is to provide the most cutting-edge information that is needed by beef cattle producers, and this year is no exception," he said.

Participants can receive a Texas Department of Agriculture pesticide applicator's license during the short course, and can earn at least 10 pesticide continuing education units if they are already licensed, Cleere added.

An industry trade show will be held during the event, featuring more than 110 agricultural businesses and service exhibits.

Registration is $140 per person and includes educational materials, a copy of the 600-page Beef Cattle Short Course proceedings, trade show admittance, admission to the prime rib dinner, meals and daily refreshments.

Registration information and a tentative schedule will be mailed in June to previous participants, but can also be found on the short course website at http://beef.tamu.edu.

Producers can register online at http://beef.tamu.edu or contact Cleere's office at 979-845-6931.

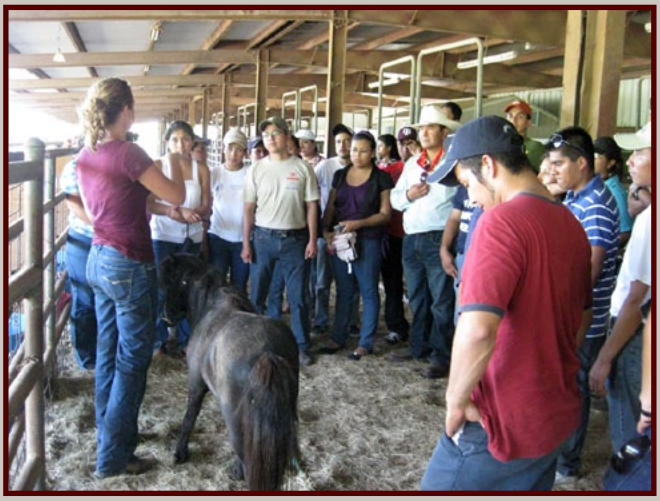
Sterle accepts position at Iowa State University

COLLEGE STATION -- Dr. Jodi Sterle, associate professor and Extension swine specialist, has accepted an Endowed Professorship in Teaching and Learning and Section Leader for the Teaching Program with the Department of Animal Science at Iowa State University. Sterle has been extension swine specialist since March 1998. She has worked with producers in all facets of the swine industry in Texas, including the youth exhibitors, and taught several courses.

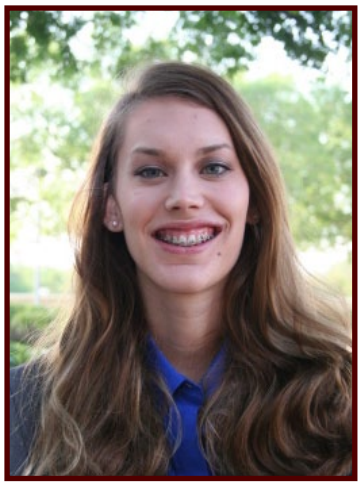
In her new position, Sterle will coordinate recruitment, retention, advising, curriculum and placement for almost 900 undergraduates, as well as teach.

Students from Mexico tour Animal Science facilities

COLLEGE STATION -- A group of 28 undergraduate students with the Department of Animal Science at Unversidad Autónoma Chapinga, Mexico, along with Dr. Baldomero Alarcon-Zuniga, associate professor, visited the Texas A&M University Department of Animal Science on June 23, 2011. The students were presented an overview of the Texas A&M animal science program and updates from the faculty on animal behavior and well being, genomics, meat science, physiology of reproduction, nutrition physiology, beef cattle research, sheep program and equine science. The group stopped at Texas A&M University during their tour of agricultural operations and businesses in Texas.



Students spend summer in Washington D.C.



WHITWORTH

VANASSE

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- Two students with ties to the Department of Animal Science are spending this summer in Washington D.C., working as interns through the Agricultural and Natural Resources Policy Internship Program.

Callie Whitworth from Junction is currently a senior agricultural communications and journalism major. She also works as the administrative student assistant for the Department of Animal Science. She is an active member of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences student council, currently serving as president. Her career interest is in increasing agricultural literacy in the United States. Whitworth's main focus is to understand the role journalism plays influencing the policy process, particularly agricultural policy. Whitworth is interning for Congressman Bill Flores of the 17th District of Texas.

Caitlin Vanasse of Coon Rapids, Minn., graduated from Texas A&M in May 2011 with a degree in animal science. During her time at Texas A&M, Vanasse was involved in the honors program as a student and peer mentor and served as communications chair of the freshman mentoring organization, ASPIRE. Vanasse hopes to use the knowledge she gains this summer to better understand her role and lives of her clients as she pursues a degree in veterinary medicine. Vanasse is interning for the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture.

Winter pastures workshop planned

OVERTON -- A Winter Pastures for Central and East Texas workshop will be held Aug. 19, 2011 at the Texas AgriLife Research and Extension Center in Overton beginning at 10 a.m. Cost to attend is $60 per person and includes lunch and program materials. Registration is limited to 50 participants. Register online at https://agrilifevents.tamu.edu (keyword: pasture).

For more information on the event, contact Michelle Sensing at (903) 834-6191 or visit http://animalscience.tamu.edu/images/pdf/beef/Winter-Pastures-for-Ctrl-East-Texas-Flyer.pdf to view the agenda and topics to be discussed.

ANIMAL SCIENCE FORMER STUDENTS

We want to hear from you! Tell us what you are up to now by filling out a quick form online at...

http://agrilife.org/animalscienceforms/former-student-news-and-updates/.

Animal Science student helps women's basketball team to national title

by Callie Whitworth

COLLEGE STATION -- Philip Mynarcik of West, Texas, is a junior animal science major on the path to becoming a large animal veterinarian and is a member of the practice team for Texas A&M's national champion women's basketball team.

Mynarcik is a one of 11 men selected to prepare the women's basketball team for fast-paced play through practicing with them six days a week.

"I loved playing basketball and I'm not good enough to be on the men's team," said Mynarcik. "I wanted to go to vet school and that didn't work out right" with playing on the men's basketball team.

Several interactions led Mynarcik to become a member of the women's practice team. He was advised by his basketball kinesiology professor to try out for the women's practice team. Mynarcik met player Catherine Snow randomly through friends. The final connection to the women's practice team was former high school basketball teammate, David Mechell, who was a member of the practice team.

One of Mynarcik's favorite memories playing on the practice team was a 3-point shooting contest between the players, practice team and coaches before the Dallas series against Baylor.

"It was just a fun activity to lighten the mood because they were tense coming back from the games," said Mynarcik.

The benefits of being a member of the practice team besides playing basketball against the national champions are basketball shoes, some food and early athletic registration, said Mynarcik. Most importantly we just have fun, said Mynarcik.

Mynarcik plans to graduate in May 2012 and will pursue a veterinary science degree with a focus on large animals at Texas A&M.

"I'd like to try to go back to West. I'm all about rural living and country family," said Mynarcik.





In memoriam of

Dr. T. D. Tanksley Jr.

When Robert Easter was in the sixth grade in La Pryor, Texas, he won the Sears Foundation Boar, a young pig he was required to raise and show at a 4-H competition in San Antonio. Show day eventually came and T.D. Tanksley was the judge. "I can vividly recall that he placed my boar at the top of a class of "Sears" boars and then asked me to walk with him for one final look. I did, he found a structural flaw and moved the boar to the bottom of the class!" Easter said.

Little did Easter know at that time, Tanksley would become a life-long friend and mentor and would influence his life in many ways. Easter attended Texas A&M University and received a bachelor of science degree in agricultural education. He then earned a master of science degree in animal nutrition in 1972 working under the direction of Tanksley. Upon graduation Tanksley encouraged Easter to pursue a doctoral degree from the University of Illinois working under the direction of his good friend Dr. David Baker.

"When I completed my doctorate under Dave Baker, there were two vacancies in the field—one at Texas A&M and one at the University of Illinois. One of the more difficult decisions of my life was to tell Dr. Tanksley that I would not be a candidate for the position at A&M. I remained at Illinois as a faculty colleague of Dr. Baker's for the next 30 years."

Now the interim vice-president of University of Illinois, interim chancellor of the Urbana-Champaign campus of the University of Illinois and professor of animal science, Easter credits Tanksley for setting the course of his career.

"Dr. Tanksley was a brilliant advisor, a tireless advocate for his students, a full working partner in all research and writing efforts, a real taskmaster and a life-long counselor," Easter said. "One final note – when I joined Tank's lab, his lab technician was a young lady who became my wife and mother of my children."

Like Robert Easter, Dr. Tanksley helped shape the lives of many people he knew whether it be a former student, a child in the show ring, a pork producer or a family member.

Tanksley passed away on April 12, 2011 at the age of 86 at his home in Betram, Texas. He lived a large life that he loved, devoted to being a teacher, a researcher, serving and advising the pork industry, judging pig shows, being an Aggie and loving his family and community. He was an important man to many people, and had a great influence on those he met.

It's been noted that at his retirement reception he proclaimed, "I can't believe they paid me to do this job!"

The teacher, researcher, Extension swine specialist & Aggie

T.D. Tanksley, Jr. became an Aggie at the early age of 16 and spent most of his life devoted to Texas A&M University as a faculty member in the Department of Animal Science, an avid sports fan and believer in the traditions. He was proud of what being an Aggie stood for and was loyal to his alma mater.

"Grandad was as Aggie as Aggie can be," said Chris Boleman, Tanksley's grandson and 4-H and youth development program director. "I remember going to Bonfire and football games with him. He always wore maroon and wore his ring into a big chunk of gold. He bled maroon."

Tanksley entered Texas Agricultural and Mechanical College right out of high school. He spent three semesters in college before he was drafted into the Army at Ft. Sam Houston to serve his country in World War II. He spent 30 months in active duty as an Air Force bomber pilot, then returned home to marry his high school sweetheart Margaret McAndrew on Aug. 12, 1945 and continued his education at TAMC. He graduated in 1947 as valedictorian with a bachelor of science degree in agriculture education.

Tanksley started his career in Llano County. His work with producers and students as the county agricultural agent earned him recognition as one of the Five Outstanding Young Texans in 1956 by the Texas Junior Chamber of Commerce. Joining Tanksley in this elite group of five was George H. Bush who later became the 41st president of the United States.

Not long after, Tanksley returned to Aggieland to pursue a doctoral degree and started working as extension swine specialist in the Department of Animal Science. Over the course of several decades with the department, he served as leader of the swine research and teaching program, maintained part-time extension responsibilities, was promoted to associate professor and eventually professor in 1973. He retired from the department in 1985 as professor emeritus.

Dr. Zerle Carpenter, director emeritus of the Texas AgriLife Extension Service, met Tanksley in 1962 and worked with him as a faculty member in animal science for years. Carpenter eventually became head of animal science and then director of the extension service.

"T.D. was an outstanding faculty member who was greatly responsible for the excellent reputation of the Department of Animal Science. He possessed unquestionable professional and moral standards in such a way that his integrity was considered extraordinary," Carpenter said.

Tanksley excelled in his teaching, research and extension activities. He served as major professor for 11 doctoral and 45 master's degree agricultural graduates. His excellence in teaching twice earned him the Distinguished Achievement Award in Teaching and Outstanding Professor Award from Texas A&M University. He was a polished communicator who could explain complex ideas and concepts in terms that students, producers and scientists alike could easily understand. His intimate knowledge of swine production and nutrition, coupled with his ability to communicate, made him an effective and well-known speaker.

"T.D. was an outstanding classroom teacher in the Animal Science department, and beyond this was an excellent communicator with members of the Animal Science faculty and with pork producers of the state. Students were motivated by his passion and expertise of the subject matter," Carpenter said.

Among Tanksley's greatest contributions to the department was to seek and hire Dr. Howard Hesby in 1971, (now deceased) who served as professor, advisor and great friend to thousands of students during his 30 years in animal science.

Tanksley was asked by Dr. O.D. Butler, head of animal science at the time, to visit doctoral students in the Midwestern states in search of a suitable addition to the Texas A&M animal science faculty.

"It was not an accident that one of the criteria for selecting Howard was his effectiveness and 'passion' for teaching – for it was that 'passion' trait Tank measured many by including himself," said Dr. Larry Boleman, son-in-law to Tanksley and associate vice chancellor for outreach and strategic initiatives for Texas A&M AgriLife. "Where Hesby gave modern definition to passion in teaching, Tanksley set the standard by which everyone was compared."

Chuck Real, owner of a purebred hog farm in Marion, Tx, knew Tanksley for nearly 50 years. Real received a bachelor's degree in animal science as well as master's degree in swine production from Texas A&M under the direction of Tanksley. He managed the Texas A&M Swine Center from 1976 to 1978. He worked closely with Tanksley at A&M, in livestock shows and putting on educational programs around the state.

"As a major professor, he was one of the best mentors you could hope to have," Real said. "He was unmatched in his knowledge and most importantly was his unique ability to communicate. He was one of the most educated in nutrition," Real said.

Dr. Rae (Wilkinson) Oldham, also a former graduate student of Tanksley's, met Tanksley as a freshman in the Department of Animal Science when she became involved with the Saddle and Sirloin Club. With encouragement and advice from several professors, including Tanksley, Oldham pursued a master's degree in agricultural economics. Tanksley served on her committee. Oldham now works as the state 4-H youth development specialist and extension professor for the Mississippi State University Extension Service.

Howard Hesby, O.D. Butler, Jr. and T.D. Tanksley Jr. view construction plans for the building of the Kleberg Animal and Food Science Center.

"Dr. Tanksley was very kind but also knew how to encourage and push you to your capability. He was passionate about what he taught – pork production - and he knew his field. He expected and encouraged students to find what they were passionate about and be the best."

As Extension swine specialist, Tanksley worked closely with the pork producers and industry in Texas. He applied his expertise while serving as a member of the National Pork Producers Council committee that developed the first Procedures to Evaluate Market Hog performance. The Texas Pork Producers inducted him into the Texas Pork Producers Association Hall of Honor in 1995. Additionally he received the industry's Distinguished Service Award during the National Pork Industry Forum in 2000.

Ken Horton, executive vice president of the Texas Pork Producers Association, said Tanksley's work and research was influential in changing the pork industry nation wide.

"One of his primary contributions to the pork industry was through some of the research he did in nutrition. He did very important work that helped develop the usage of grain sorghums in swine feeding such as milo. He formulated swine rations for people to use based on the use of milo. His understanding in how amino acids work in diets and nutrition were very precise."

Horton said Tanksley was proactive in the early development nation wide of promoting the meat-type swine that was developed after World War II.

"His research eliminated a lot of the fat in swine and added muscle through genetic and breeding programs. This changed the type of animal that modern pork producers use today," Horton said.

In addition, Tanksley conducted more than 100 live animal appraisal evaluation programs throughout Texas. In the 1970's, Tanksley was of the first to recognize the hazards of continued selection with lean meat production without considering reproductive and feed lot productive traits.

More important than anything, Horton said, was the general influence Tanksley had on the people he visited. "He was a strong advocate of people improving themselves to do the best they could do which led people to doing a better job than what they would have done otherwise."

"He was a real taskmaster and he expected the best of you. He had no time to be wasted but he spent all the time he needed to do things right."

As a researcher, his early research focused on the use of sorghum and cottonseed meal as swine feedstuffs. The feeding guidelines established from this research have impacted the Southwest, and countries worldwide, where these feedstuffs are available. He was one of the first U.S. researchers to determine the calcium and phosphorous requirements needed to maximize development and strength of bone in fast-growing boars. His research in amino acid nutrition has included work to determine the lysine, tryptophan, and threonine requirements of growing swine, and the use of low-protein sorghum diets fortified with crystalline amino acids. His work in determining the digestibility of amino acids in swine feedstuffs has gained international attention.

He authored or coauthored over 100 publications and served on the research advisory committees of the NPPC, American Soybean Association, Farmland Industries and American Hoechst Corporation. He received the Animal Management 1985 Award and was named Honorary Fellow in 1986 by the American Society of Animal Science and Outstanding Achievement in Sorghum Utilization in 1987.

The Livestock Judge

Most likely the most famous livestock show judge in the history of Texas, said Chris Boleman, Tanksley was most passionate about livestock shows and youth programs. He judged swine shows for almost 50 years and worked with all the major livestock shows in Texas.

"He set the trend in the show arena but he was also so good with the kids. He wanted to teach them responsibility. He went past judging, he made it a teaching moment. You just don't see that anymore," Boleman said.

In 1997, Tanksley was recognized by the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo for 50 continuous years of support as an exhibitor, 4-H and FFA youth advisor, and superintendent of the market swine and the 4-H and FFA Livestock Judging Contest.

Dr. Rae (Wilkinson) Oldham, who worked as a county extension agent-agriculture in Harris County from 1980 to 1987, crossed paths with Tanksley often when he judged various community fairs and high school FFA contests.

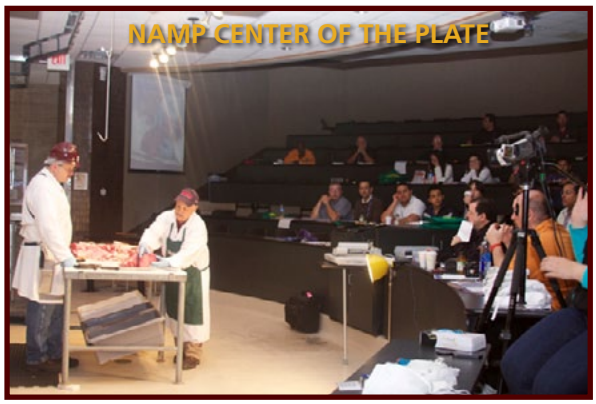
"The 4-H families would always comment that even if their child did not win the class, they knew that their child and their pig had been seen and given fair consideration by Dr. Tanksley." Oldham said. "Dr. Tanksley always took the time to explain his selection at the end of each class. He also made the 4-H and FFA members work for their rankings in the showmanship class. There was a great deal of pride felt by each 4-H member and FFA member if they won a showmanship class under Dr. Tanksley. He believed and lived the 4-H Motto: Making the Best Better."

Tanksley often reminded the parents and leaders to always keep things in perspective, "We are just using pigs to teach youngsters – more important than any grand champion is how this experience has helped the young man or lady become a more confident, responsible person."

"Dr. Tanksley would put so much into one day. He would be at the animal science department at 6:30 a.m., go through the day with teaching, extension and research with graduate students. Then around 6 p.m., he would show up at the house arriving with his crisp white shirt and tie on, meet the grandsons at the barn, change from his shoes into his famous white rubber boots, and get the boys in the pen with him to go through each show pig and how to feed and manage each one. Then off to home for supper with Margaret, then back to the department until 10 p.m. Simply amazing! He was tireless."

- Dr. Larry Boleman
Son-in-law

Click here to view complete obituary.



BARBECUE SUMMER CAMP - Foodways Texas and the Department of Animal Science co-hosted the Barbecue Summer Camp June 3-5, 2011 at the Rosenthal Center. Forty food professionals and backyard enthusiasts attended, all with a passion for learning how to make the best barbecue possible. Meat science faculty Dr. Davey Griffin, Dr. Jeff Savell, and Ray Riley served as coordinators and instructors for the camp. Don Palmer and meat science graduate students assisted with the demonstrations. Dr. Christine Alvarado, staff, and students from the Department of Poultry Science provided instruction on poultry products. Jeff and Jackie Savell and former student Bryan Bracewell of Southside Market and BBQ, Elgin, Texas, hosted a pig roast at the Savell home attended by the participants and instructors.

Other speakers at the camp included Ranzell "Nick" Nickelson from Standard Meat Company who spoke about the chemistry of wood smoke and food safety, and Chef Ed Harazak from Adams Extract and Spice who lectured on the use of various spices and seasonings. Robb Walsh, Foodways Texas founding member and multiple James Beard awardee, guided the group to Martin's Barbecue in Bryan for a tour and discussion of the history of Texas barbecue, and he showed the participants barbecue films from Foodways Texas and Southern Foodways Alliance.

NAMP CENTER OF THE PLATE - The North American Meat Processors Association and Texas AgriLife Extension Animal Science jointly hosted a Center of the Plate Conference May 3-5, 2011. The Center of the Plate Conference has become an annual event and brings in meat purchasing professionals, purveyors, military procurement officers and others to learn Institutional Meat Purchase Specifications and their applications from former USDA/AMS employee Steve Olsen and Dr. Davey Griffin.

BEEF 101 - Two sessions of Beef 101 were held on May 17-19 and June 6-8, 2011. Both sessions of the program were attended by beef industry professionals from 18 states and five foreign countries representing 32 major companies throughout the world, including major packer, retailer, food service, chefs and restauranteurs and beef associations. Beef 101 is in its 23rd year of supplying essential information about beef to industry professionals seeking to increase their knowledge base.

PORK 101 - The 14th annual Pork 101 at Texas A&M was held May 24-26, 2011. Pork 101 was developed by a grant to Texas A&M University, the University of Nebraska and Michigan State University and is coordinated by the American Meat Science Association with assistance by the National Pork Board. Typically, 3-4 Pork 101 courses are offered annually at participating universities across the U.S. The workshop allows pork and associated industry professionals a hands-on approach at learning more about the pork industry from live animal handling through pork fabrication and processed meat processing to palatability. Dr. Davey Griffin coordinates this workshop with major assistance from Dr. Rhonda Miller, Dr. Jodi Sterle, Dr. Dan Hale, Ray Riley, Jake Franke, Dr. Kerri Harris, Ashley Haneklaus and Dr. Chris Kerth, plus numerous meat science graduate students.

GRASS-FED BEEF CONFERENCE - Though herds are smaller, the profit-margin potential is greater for those venturing into the grass-fed beef business, according to experts. A recent grass-fed beef conference at Texas A&M University, sponsored by the Texas AgriLife Extension Service, featured experts and producers discussing several aspects of an emerging industry sector. Attendees had the opportunity to learn about several topical areas, including fundamentals of growing forages, nutrient needs of cattle, beef processing, economic sustainability, and production and marketing.

Modernizing the Beef Business

by Burt Rutherford
BEEF magazine's *Cow-Calf Weekly*

If you bought a new pickup in 1965, you got the best technology Detroit had to offer – an AM radio and 2x2 air conditioning; that is, two windows and two hand cranks to roll 'em down with. Buy a new pickup today and it's like climbing into the cockpit of an airplane.

Times have changed – at least as far as pickups are concerned. But what about some of the tools cattlemen use to determine markets? "Are those tools, those things we do, still valid? Are they still tools we need in the modern times we live in today?" asks Bill Mies.

In terms of today's markets, cattlemen are still driving 1965 pickups, figuratively speaking, while trying to keep pace in a crew cab, XM radio and GPS-guided world, Mies says. BEEF Cow-Calf Weekly explains in a three-part series featuring Bill Mies, former feedyard manager, professor emeritus of feedyard management at Texas A&M University, and one of the industry's preeminent thinkers.

In this series, Mies examines three aspects of the modern beef business that, in his opinion, need updating – live-cattle futures, the Cattle On Feed Report, and the beef checkoff.

Live Cattle Futures

If the beef business wants to think outside the box when it comes to modernizing itself, the first place to look is inside one.

In 1965, the Chicago Mercantile Exchange (CME) developed the live-cattle contract for a cattle-feeding industry that was considerably different than it is today. "We only had five breeds in the country at that time – Hereford, Angus and Shorthorn, some Brahman cattle in the South, and some Charolais crosses up North," Mies says. Those cattle were all harvested at 1,050 lbs. if they were steers, or 1,000 lbs. if heifers. "And we killed them all that way," he says.

"In 1965, we were just building the interstate highway system and the trucks were different. So they set 40,000 lbs. as a truckload of cattle. And they set up a way to deliver those cattle so USDA graders would grade them live. Boxed beef was just an idea."

What's more, the CME only developed six contracts. "In 1965, there weren't enough cattle on feed and the Mercantile didn't think they'd have enough volume to make any more than that viable," Mies says. So in the odd months, you can be as far as 60 days out.

Nowadays, there can be as many as 90 different breeds in a feedyard. Live and slaughter weights are considerably larger and considerably more variable. Cameras and computers can grade cattle. Virtually all beef from fed cattle goes out in a box.

In short, Mies says, a lot of the things the industry uses to establish prices on the live-cattle futures contract aren't accurate enough for the business we live in today.

Where that becomes a problem is in basis volatility and bringing the futures and the cash into convergence. Back in 1965, packers bought fed cattle every day. Today, the cash market is established in a one- or two-hour window one day a week. "The rest of the time, the market is trying to figure out what we're going to pay during that window. It runs the market up and down needlessly, trying to guess where the cash is going to be."

Mies says cattlemen have only to look over the fence at their hog-producing neighbors for a solution. Hog producers figured out that there weren't many consumers buying live hogs. So, 12 years ago, they based their futures contract on the pork cutout. "And they've gotten along fine."

If cattlemen eliminated the live-cattle contract and replaced it with a boxed-beef contract, the industry would then have price discovery using mandatory price reporting, which generates data every day, twice a day.

Further, the price information is based on carcass cutout values, which is what the industry really sells. "Do we produce live cattle and sell that to the consumer? No, we sell boxed beef. That's what we ought to be using as a risk-management tool."

Using boxed-beef contracts would produce sufficient volume to handle 12 contracts, he says. "So we'd have a contract for each month and eliminate the convergence and cut down on basis volatility." And converting the boxed-beef contract to a live-cattle value is a simple multiplication using dressing percent.

What's more, a boxed-beef contract would allow retailers – those people who sell cattlemen's product to consumers – to use it as a risk-management tool, further adding to the volume. "So there are some opportunities out there if we think outside the box and think about moving to a boxed-beef contract," Mies says. "It's what we produce. It's time to recognize that fact and update our futures contract to match our business."

Reprinted from BEEF magazine, www.beefmagazine.com.

Cattle on Feed Report

"We still try to determine our supply by counting the number of head in the feedyard each month, grouping them by weights, and trying to guesstimate when we're going to sell them, what weight they're going to be, and what the tonnage is going to look like," Mies says.

That worked fine when everything was sold at 1,050 lbs. "If we knew how many were in the feedyard, multiply that by 1,050 and that was the tonnage we were going to sell to the packer." Factor in the dressing percent and you knew how much tonnage was going to the retailer.

Today, outweights can vary widely, depending on market conditions. While technology has sped up the velocity of that data, the numbers haven't changed. "We're just a step ahead of the ol' boy sitting on a horse with a tally book, counting them into the pens after they'd driven them up the trail from Texas. We're trying to run a multi-billion-dollar business, forecasting our production, with that data."

So, Mies proposes this mind- and paradigm-bending idea – using satellites with heat-sensing capability to monitor the location and weight of cattle on feed.

The idea is not as far-fetched as many might think, he says. The satellites are up there right now, the technology is proven and in place, and it can be utilized with not much more than a flip of a switch. And depending on what the industry is willing to pay, those satellites can generate a picture with enough resolution to count the whiskers on a steer's muzzle. Mies knows of what he speaks, because he's seen it demonstrated.

Can the industry afford that? "I have no idea," he admits. But he thinks it's worth investigating. However, given the current budget-cutting mood in Washington, he doesn't think any publically funded research money will be available.

"Maybe this is a place for the cattle industry to come together and see if we can do it for ourselves," he says, realizing that the thought of a satellite flying over somebody's ranch or feedlot and counting cattle will cause some concern, to say the least. "But with the technology that exists today, using a Big Chief tablet and No. 2 lead pencil, trying to figure out what kind of tonnage we've got, is something that belongs in the 1880s, not 2011."

The Beef Checkoff

The mandatory $1/head checkoff became reality with the 1985 Farm Bill and cattlemen voted to make it permanent in May of 1988. "Twenty-five years later, the checkoff has done what we asked it to do. It did a lot of generic advertising, it improved the image of beef, it's funded some great research that helped us sell a lot more product for a lot more money," he says.

But 25 years later, that dollar is worth about 30¢ in today's market. "So we've got a very small amount of money compared with what we had then," he says.

Then there's this – the beef checkoff is under the oversight of USDA. "Everything that is done, all the money that is spent, has to be cleared through USDA ahead of time." The net result, Mies says, is the politicization of the checkoff as politicians and bureaucrats find ways to manipulate the process and the procedures to achieve their long-term social engineering goals.

Mies says the options available to cattlemen are to go to Congress and change the Act and Order legislatively to increase the amount of money collected and streamline its operations; or to have cattlemen vote in a referendum to accomplish those goals. Both of those options would be costly, controversial and may not accomplish what is needed to make the beef checkoff a truly industry-driven program.

Which brings Mies to propose a third option – start over. "Maybe it's time to say the checkoff has done a lot of the things we want, but we're in a different day and time now."

Mies says there are 12-14 states that have legislation allowing for an in-state beef checkoff. However, those state-level programs haven't been active since the mandatory, nationwide checkoff came to be. "Let's say we discontinue the mandatory checkoff and replace it with a voluntary one of $2/head, with a refund to those who don't want to participate." Mies says. "Those states say we can fire up the legislation and move it to $2 pretty easy."

If the industry did that, the net result would be almost as much money as is collected now, and maybe more, he says. In addition, he says a voluntary checkoff would have no USDA oversight, states that don't produce many cattle could opt out, and overhead costs would be a lot less.

"But the real carrot is the operating board would be selected by cattlemen, not the USDA Secretary. If we had one person/state, we'd have 7-15 people making decisions on how to spend the money. Today, because of how the act and order are written, we've got 106 people deciding on how to spend that money. You can imagine how laborious it is to get a project through a committee of 106 people."

Hog producers realized the problems with set dollar figures and large boards, Mies says. So they structured their checkoff to reflect a percentage of the value of each animal, meaning checkoff collections fluctuate with the market. What's more, they have nine people who decide on how the money should be spent. "They can have a conference call, turn that thing sideways and head off in another direction the next morning."

Mies realizes that one argument against the idea is the refund provision. That was a major area of discussion 25 years ago and it will be again. "But in 1985, when we passed this, we knew the main thing we had to spend money on was advertising, because of the hole we were in as far as how beef was valued and how consumers looked at it."

Today, there are more than 50 different brands of beef, all promoting their individual brand to consumers. "We've got a different situation than we had then. We've got different needs. So maybe it's time to do it our way."

Former Students Remembered...

We would like to recognize and pay tribute to our former students in Animal Science who recently passed away. We extend our condolences to friends and families of these former students.

- Denton E. Sprauge '37
- Vernon Ray Schuchart '45
- Thomas Caton Newman '56
- John Edward Gorrell '80
- William Harry McNutt '38
- Charles W. Green '47
- Leo Edwin DuBose '65
- Emilie D. Oevermann '85
- Claud E. Brandon, Jr. '42
- Vincent Joseph Mandola '50
- George Roy Pickard, Jr. '70

Emilie Oevermann passes away

HOUSTON -- Emilie Oevermann passed away June 15, 2011 at the age of 47. Oevermann received a bachelor's degree from the Department of Animal Science in 1985. As a student, Oevermann was a member of the TAMU Meat Judging Team in 1983. She worked in the meat science section as a student worker and was active in the Saddle & Sirloin Club. After graduation, Oevermann worked in the Department of Animal Science as an academic advisor and was coordinator for the Aggie REPS. Most recently, she was employed by Wells Fargo as a project manager. For more information, please visit http://www.memorialoakschapel.com.

Upcoming events ☆ Upcoming events ☆ Upcoming events

Texas A&M Horse Judging Camp (July 6-8, 2011 - College Station) - For more information, please contact Dr. Clay Cavinder at (979) 845-7731 or email <cac@tamu.edu> or visit http://animalscience.tamu.edu/workshops/youth-workshops/tamu-horse-judging-camp.htm.

Aggieland Lamb & Goat Camps (July 15-17, 2011 & July 22-24, 2011 - College Station) - For more information, please contact Dr. Shawn Ramsey, Katie Fritz or Kelsey Willberg at (979) 845-7616 or email <aggielandlambandgoatcamp@gmail.com> or visit http://animalscience.tamu.edu/academics/sheep-goats/sheep-center/youth-camps/index.htm.

TAMU Steer, Heifer and Pig Futurity & Lamb Booster Futurity (July 29-31, 2011 - College Station) - For more information, please visit http://animalscience.tamu.edu/images/pdf/saddle-sirloin/futurity%20ad.pdf.

57th annual Texas A&M Beef Cattle Short Course (August 1-3, 2011 - College Station) - For more information, please contact Beef Cattle Extension at (979) 845-6931, email <extansc@ag.tamu.edu> or visit http://animalscience.tamu.edu/ansc/BCSC/index.html.

Rosenthal Lecture Series (Sept. 15, 2011 - College Station) - Dr. Temple Grandin will be the speaker at the Rosenthal Lecture Series to be held at the Annenberg Conference Center at the George Bush Presidential Library. For more information, please contact Dr. Jeff Savell at <j-savell@tamu.edu>.

4th annual Korea-United States International Joint Symposium (Nov. 1-2, 2011 - College Station) - For more information, visit http://animalscience.tamu.edu/symposium/ or contact Dr. Stephen Smith at (979) 845-3939 or <sbsmith@tamu.edu>.

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Please forward additions to the mailing list and future requests and events to Courtney Coufal <cacoufal@tamu.edu>