

Animal Science Weekly

May 9, 2011

ATM | TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

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<http://www.facebook.com/tamuanimalscience>

Holub receives advising award

COLLEGE STATION -- Dr. Glenn Holub, instructional assistant professor and academic advisor in the Department of Animal Science, is the recipient of the 2011 Margaret Annette Peters Advising Award.

The award was presented by the Texas A&M University Advisors and Counselors (UAC) on May 4, 2011, and recognizes a faculty member or administrator who demonstrates exceptional concern and caring for the welfare of individual students.

Holub joined the Animal Science faculty in 2006. In his nomination, he was cited for his "dedication to educating undergraduate students and preparing them for successful careers" and is "often found in his office after hours to make himself available to students...occasionally giving up his lunch break or a Saturday if a student needs his attention."

UAC is a campus-wide organization of more than 200 members dedicated to coordinating professional advising and counseling to Texas A&M students. This award was established in 2000 through an endowment by Bryan residents Mervin and Annette Peters.



Hairgrove appointed to steering committee

Thomas Hairgrove, DVM, has been appointed to a new committee created by the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) that will advise the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) on the issue of veterinarians' involvement of antimicrobial use for food animals.

Hairgrove is Program Coordinator for Livestock and Food Animal Systems with the Texas AgriLife Extension Service and the Department of Animal Science.

The five-member Steering Committee for FDA Policy on Veterinary Oversight of Antimicrobials has been charged with the task of working with the FDA Center for

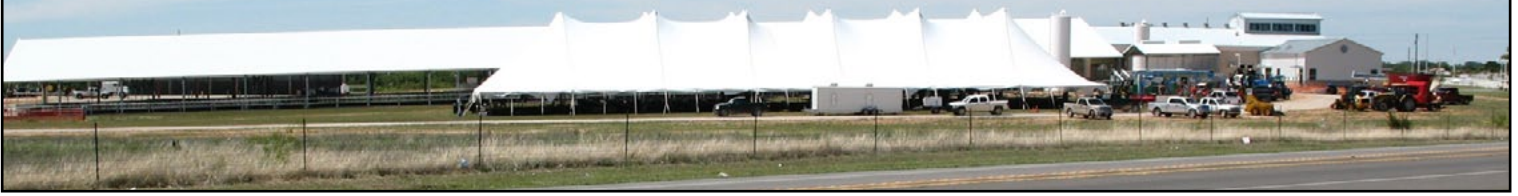


Veterinary Medicine to find practical ways of increasing veterinary oversight when antimicrobials are used.

"Antimicrobial resistance – and the debate on their judicious use – is an important issue facing veterinary medicine today," said John Brooks, chair of the AVMA's executive board. "This committee was assembled to help the FDA examine both the need

for increased veterinary oversight in order to minimize any potential increase in human antibiotic resistance while still ensuring that these important medicines continue to remain available to veterinarians when needed."

Grand opening of dairy center highlights Southwest Dairy Day



STEPHENVILLE -- The 2011 Southwest Dairy Day included the grand opening of the Southwest Regional Dairy Center in Stephenville, Texas, on May 5, 2011.

More than 1,000 dairy producers, industry representatives, vendors and other dairy enthusiasts toured the Southwest Regional Dairy Center facility, participated in educational activities, viewed the Dairy Discovery Zone and snacked on dairy foods.

The new Texas A&M System state-of-the-art facility will be used for teaching, research and extension activities. Several system and state dignitaries spoke at the grand opening. This includes Dr. Don Cawthon, dean of Tarleton State University College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences; State Representative Sid Miller; Texas A&M System Chancellor Mike McKinney; Tarleton President Dr. F. Dominic Dottavio; Agriculture Commissioner Todd Staples; and the center's operator, Alan VanderHorst, president of 360 Ag Management, LLC.

The Southwest Dairy Day was planned and coordinated by the Dr. Todd Bilby, associate professor and Extension dairy specialist in Stephenville; Ellen Jordan, professor and Extension dairy specialist in Dallas; Kevin Lager and Dr. Ralph Bruno, both Extension associates in Canyon.

Also participating from the Department of Animal Science were Drs. Russell Cross, Ron Gill and Michael Tomaszewski. and from Texas AgriLife Drs. Pete Gibbs and Larry Boleman. Retired dairy faculty member, Dr. Chris Woelfel, was also in attendance.

TAMU Meat Judging Team hosts State FFA Meat Judging event

COLLEGE STATION -- The Rosenthal Meat Science and Technology Center in College Station was full of activity on May 7 as 200 students representing 50 state-qualifying FFA programs competed in the Texas State FFA Meat Judging Career Development Event (CDE).

Florence FFA won the event by a slim seven-point margin over Seymour FFA. Florence will represent Texas at the National FFA contest in October, while Seymour qualified for the National Western contest in Denver, Colo.

The contest was hosted by the 2011 TAMU Meat Judging Team with assistance from former team members and Meat Science graduate students. Dr. Davey Griffin, associate professor and



Extension meat specialist, and Ray Riley, Rosenthal Center manager, served as contest superintendents, and Dr. Jeff Savell, regents professor and E.M. "Manny" Rosenthal Chair, served as an additional member of the official committee. As always, this contest would not be possible without the cooperation and support of the staff and students at the RMSTC.

Students present research at Texas Genetics Society meeting

DALLAS -- Several students from the Department of Animal Science participated in the 38th annual meeting of the Texas Genetics Society held March 31 - April 2 in Dallas.

John Luck, an Animal Science undergraduate, presented work from his honors research conducted in Dr. Clare Gill's laboratory. Other attendees included Dr. Gill, and graduate students Robert Vaughn and Jaime Brannan.

Undergraduates Laura Riggs, Aline Torres, and Izzy Guzman worked together in Dr. Penny Riggs' lab to generate chromosome maps for the goat, and Izzy Guzman presented the poster. Aline Torres received the award for best undergraduate poster presentation. The poster described analyses of a gene abundantly expressed in bovine and equine testis conducted by graduate students KK Adams, Jordan Shields, and Torres. Platform presentations and posters included:

**Luck, J. D., D. G. Riley, A. D. Herring, P. K. Riggs, J. E. Sawyer, J. O. Sanders, C. A. Gill. 2011. Identification of QTL for measures of feed efficiency in Nellore-Angus F2 steers. Proc. Texas Genetics Society Annual Meeting. Abstract 12. p. 28. March 31- April 2, 2001, Dallas, TX.

*Brannan, J. L., P. K. Riggs, P. Olafson, and P. Holman. 2011. Transcriptional profiles of immune genes in tick bite sites of resistant cattle infested with *Amblyomma americanum*. Texas Genetics Society Annual Meeting. March 31- April 2, 2001, Dallas, TX.

*Adams, K.K., **A.K. Torres, *J.E. Shields, K.J. Kochan and P.K. Riggs. 2011. Sequence characterization of the equine and bovine NMES1 and expression analysis in an equine tissue panel. Texas Genetics Society Annual Meeting. March 31- April 2, 2001, Dallas, TX.

**Riggs, L.J, **A.K. Torres, **I.J. Guzman , K.J. Kochan, and P.K. Riggs. 2011. A Radiation Hybrid Map of Goat Chromosomes 21 and 23. Texas Genetics Society Annual Meeting. March 31- April 2, 2001, Dallas, TX.

** undergraduate student * graduate student

Multi-District Judging Contest attracts 475 4-Hers



COLLEGE STATION -- The Department of Animal Science and Texas AgriLife Extension hosted the District 5, 8, 9, 11, and 12 Livestock Judging Contests at Pearce Pavilion on April 30, 2011. The contest was coordinated by Dr. Jason Cleere, associate professor and Extension beef cattle specialist; Dr. Chris Skaggs, professor and San Antonio Livestock Exposition Chair; Jake Franke, lecturer and livestock judging team coordinator; and members of the TAMU Livestock Judging Team. This year's contest attracted 475 4-H members from Central, South and East Texas.

Save the Date

Meat Judging Team Reunion

Former Meat Judging Team members mark your calendars and plan to attend the Meat Judging Team Reunion scheduled for September 16-19, 2011 in College Station. Plans are still being finalized but the date has been set. The Association of Former Students will help spread the word about the reunion, so watch for an email from the AFS for more details including available hotel rooms and an opportunity to purchase football tickets (TAMU vs. Idaho) online in our block! Please email Davey Griffin (dgriffin@tamu.edu) your current email and mailing addresses if you are interested in the details. Also, if you would like to be involved in planning activities for the weekend, indicate so in your email.

There is also an opportunity to arrive early and participate in the Rosenthal Lecture Series which will feature Dr. Temple Grandin. More information about the RLS will also be forthcoming in future newsletters.

Was it a blunder to stop the slaughter of horses for human consumption on welfare grounds?

Part II of II: What the data show

by Ted Friend, Ph.D.
Faculty Fellow and Professor,
Animal Behavior and Wellbeing
Department of Animal Science

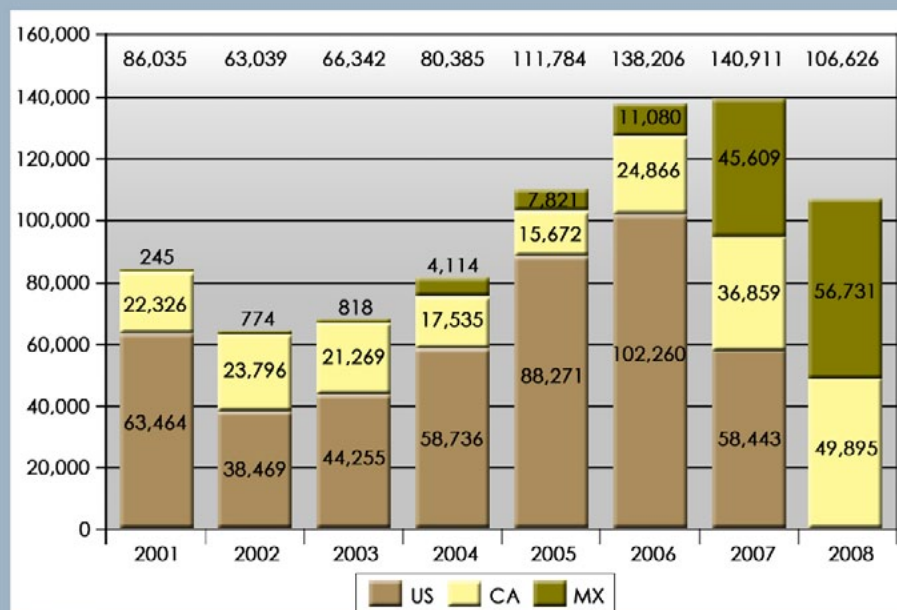
In last week's *Animal Science Weekly*, I presented a brief background of the United States controversy over the slaughter of horses for human consumption. The lack of any initiative on the part of horse slaughter plants to present themselves as responsible stewards in providing a humane end to unwanted horses' lives, reluctance of horse breed and trade organizations to even acknowledge that this was an important service, and the popularity of the issue with activist groups combined to create the perfect storm.

As mentioned last week, Tim Cordes, a doctor of veterinary medicine with USDA's Animal Plant Health Inspection Service (Veterinary Services Program, Equine Programs) was asked to lead USDA's Slaughter Horse Transport Program. The Program funded research on the issue and then published the proposed regulations for comment in 1999. The regulations then went into effect in early 2002.

In the spring of 2008, Dr. Cordes's program released the graph (to the right) showing the number of horses that originated in the U.S. that were processed in the U.S., Canada and Mexico between 2001 and 2008 for

human consumption. This was based on the Owner-Shipper Certificates that his program had initiated. The two Texas plants stopped processing horses during 2006, while the remaining Illinois plant stopped processing horses for human consumption in the fall of 2007. Comparing 2005 (which was the last full year that the three U.S. plants were operating and avoiding the increased volume that occurred in 2006 and 2007 in anticipation of the closings) with 2008, the first year that all three ceased operating, we see startling trends. The number of horses exported to Mexico for processing increased 725 percent, while the number exported to Canada increased 318 percent. It is also important to realize that a good percentage of the horses going into Mexico had to be transported an additional 18 hours into Mexico, not counting delays at the border. A truck driver told me in 2008 that if you think the additional 18 hours is bad, horses that do not pass the initial veterinary inspection at the slaughter plants are loaded back on the truck and have to be transported back across the U.S. border. Of course, the additional horses going to Canada also experienced much longer time in transport and delays at the border. The activist groups declared the "closing" of the plants a great victory for horses. However, these USDA data were extremely embarrassing for the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS), People for

United States Origin Equines Processed in
US, CA, & MX; 2001-2008



the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA), and other activist groups because simple math reveals that in 2008, 83,133 horses were subjected to many additional hours of transport and no longer had the benefit of the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service's (APHIS) welfare inspection program that they had in the U.S. in 2005. The welfare of 83,133 horses clearly decreased in 2008 when compared to 2005. It is also important to realize that these data likely underestimate the actual numbers because the program relies on the good will and diligence of the foreign plants to collect the Owner-Shipper Certificates.

Data for 2009 and 2010 on the destination of our unwanted horses are crucial for stakeholders to make rational decisions regarding this issue. However, most of the funds for the program were redirected when the U.S. plants closed to other APHIS functions and Dr. Cordes left the program near the end of 2008. Although the Owner-Shipper Certificate program still seems to be functioning, data are no longer being compiled and released. I requested the data for 2009 last year and then the data for 2009 and 2010 several times this year, but have been told only that they are working on them with no estimation of when they might be available. I suspect the program does not have any funds left to process the data, a fact which is very convenient for activists, who declared victory. It is reasonable to assume that even larger numbers of horses are being exported to Mexico and Canada in 2009 and 2010, given the recession and the recent large accumulation of unwanted horses in the U.S. Although some states have pro-slaughter activists who are attempting to open up a plant that can process horses for human consumption, there are major legal obstacles that make opening the plants difficult. Also, there may not be much interest by companies to open a plant in the U.S. because the present market is limited and demand is being met by the plants in Mexico and Canada.

Ending the slaughter of horses for human consumption in the U.S. not only resulted in a significant loss in the value of horses that helped justify the costs of taking care of a horse, but simple disposal of unwanted horses is costly. Shelters and

horse rescues were already swamped and underfunded before the plants closed. Putting an unwanted horse "to sleep" at a stable usually involves a farm call by a veterinarian, which along with drugs, can easily cost \$200 or more. Disposal of the carcass can also be a major problem. The high dose of barbiturates the vet has to administer makes the carcass a

hazard. The contaminated carcass should not be left out where scavengers might feed on it. Burial can result in water contamination issues, and burial of such a large carcass is banned in most municipalities. Cremation is often the only route, but finding a crematorium that can take a horse is a feat, and it will also be costly and consume a lot of fuel. If you want to try cremation on your property, be sure to check local regulations because burning of animal carcasses is illegal in many Texas counties. There are still some rendering companies in parts of the country, but farm pickups are costly and you will

likely have to wait several days before you can schedule a pickup. This is especially problematic during warm weather. When the plants were open, I made a point to watch over 80 horses entering the plants and being stunned. I was relieved to see how readily those horses walked through the handling facilities. They also held their heads amazingly still for stunning and all the horses I observed were correctly stunned. They displayed little of the nervousness that we often see in other species, probably because the horses were accustomed to being handled by people.

Thanks to activists basing their decisions on emotion and ignoring the many warnings by experts of what would happen with the ban, we have clearly succeeded in making conditions much worse for our unwanted horses. These horses deserve a rational resolution to this issue. The problem has not gone away because we do not have USDA export data for 2009 and 2010. Unwanted horses deserve a painless death with minimal stress in highly regulated and well designed facilities. We had not achieved that goal before the plants were forced "closed," but we had a system in place that was rapidly improving, the free market was paying for it, and it was unquestionably better than what we have at present.



These yearlings are wearing protective head gear while participating in studies at Texas A&M that were the basis for the provision in APHIS's regulations that phased out the use of multi-decked semi trailers for the commercial transport of equines for slaughter in 2006. These horses were not yet fully grown, so the lack of head room in the upper and lower center compartments in these trailers was a major concern. Unfortunately enforcement of those very progressive APHIS regulations effectively ceased when the slaughter of horses for human consumption moved to plants outside the U.S.

Animal Science provides educational component at TJLA Camp

BRYAN -- The 2011 Texas Junior Livestock Association Camp and Show was held May 6-8, 2011 at the Brazos County Expo in Bryan. More than 400 parents and children from across Texas involved in raising and showing youth livestock projects gathered to learn about feeding and managing livestock projects, issues in animal agriculture, leadership skills, livestock judging and post-high school educational opportunities within the Department of Animal Science and College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. The educational component of the event was coordinated by Jason Cleere, associate professor and Extension beef cattle specialist; Chris Boleman, Texas 4-H program director; and Cherie Carrabba, executive director of TJLA. Educational demonstrations during the camp were conducted by Cleere; Boleman; Paul Maulsby, beef center manager; Chris Skaggs, professor and San Antonio Livestock Exposition Chair; Colt Sharpton, assistant facilities manager at sheep center; Tobin Redwine, College recruiting program; and Animal Science students.



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Summer camp looking for horseback instructors, counselors

HUNTSVILLE -- Camp Coyote, a 2,300 acre interdenominational Christian summer camp, ranch style retreat, and equestrian center located in Huntsville, Texas, has summer employment opportunities available. In the summer, Camp Coyote is transformed into an exciting residential sports and adventure camp for children ages 7-17. Campers select activities to participate in such as archery, riflery, horseback riding, swimming, cheerleading, dance, drama, football, basketball, and arts and crafts. Camp Coyote also boast a 55-acre private water skiing lake and a 76-horse stall center and covered riding arena. Camp Coyote is looking for counselors, lifeguards, horseback instructors, swimming instructors, challenge course instructors, water skiing instructors, and offer instructor certifications. If you are interested, contact the camp via email at <director@campcoyote.com> or <kay@campcoyote.com> or call (800) 677-CAMP or 936-355-9844, or go to www.CampCoyote.com.

Upcoming events ☆ Upcoming events ☆ Upcoming events

Animal Science Graduate Student Association 2nd Annual Crawfish Boil (May 26, 2011 - 2 p.m.) - Tickets on sale now. Cost \$10 per adult and \$5 per child. Open to all faculty, staff, students and family. Contact Shannon Garey at sgarey@tamu.edu or (515) 290-8275.

Texas A&M Livestock Judging Camp (May 27-29, 2011 & June 24-26, 2011) - For more information, please contact Jake Franke at (979) 845-7616 or visit http://animalscience.tamu.edu/workshops/youth-workshops/livestock_judging_camp.htm.

Texas A&M University's Club Lamb Sale (May 29, 2011 - College Station) - For more information, please contact Colt Sharpton at (979) 862-5099 or <cmsharpton@tamu.edu> or visit <http://animalscience.tamu.edu/images/pdf/sheep-goats/lamb-sale-2011.pdf>. Viewing begins at 10 a.m. with sale beginning at 1 p.m.

Grassfed Beef Conference (June 8-9, 2011 - College Station) - For more information, please contact Dr. Rick Machen at rmachen@ag.tamu.edu or 830-278-9151 or visit <http://animalscience.tamu.edu/images/pdf/beef/Grassfed%20Conference%20Program%20Flyer.pdf>.

Texas A&M Show Cattle Camp (June 10-12, 2011 & June 17-19, 2011 - College Station) - For more information, please contact Paul Maulsby at 979-862-4736 or email <beefcenter@tamu.edu> or visit <http://animalscience.tamu.edu/academics/beef/beef-center/camps/show-cattle-camp/index.htm>.

Texas A&M Horse Judging Camp (June 22-24, 2011 & 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>.



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

