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Texas A&M Animal Science

MONTHLY

MARCH 2012 | A monthly publication from the Department of Animal Science at Texas A&M University.



INSIDE:

- Facts, education needed about lean, finely textured beef
- Horse Judging Team to host Kentucky Derby event
- Students join agricultural advocates' effort to spread ag education

Rebuilding
the
BEEF
Herd



Built on Tradition

As you walk into the Animal Science main office in the Kleberg Center, you'll see a group of old departmental photos hanging on the wall, photos from the late 1800s to early 1900s, 1920s and 1950s of livestock judging and instruction in the pavilion and of a young Brahman herd developed at the Beef Center on West Campus. I am always amazed at how many people stop to look at these pictures, read the descriptions and comment on these unique shots.

Entering my fourth month as head of this department, I am reminded of the great history, traditions and values that these pictures represent. Our department was built on these values and has established a reputation of excellence and prominence across the country.

As we move forward, we will continue to build on this same foundation but adjust where necessary to reach even greater levels. This past November, our department underwent an Academic Program Review, which involved an external review team spending three days in the department examining all aspects of our undergraduate and graduate programs. I'm pleased that this team provided an overall positive assessment and solidified our reputation as one of the leading Animal Science Departments in the country.

On Feb. 28 and 29, our faculty gathered for a Strategic Planning Retreat and developed a plan for the future of this department including an updated mission statement and establishment of core values, goals and the steps we need to take to reach these goals.

One of the recurring comments at our retreat pertains to communication. We need to improve communication internally and externally, which is why I'm excited to present our newly redesigned and named newsletter, *Animal Science Monthly*. Our previous newsletter, *Animal Science Weekly*, served its purpose for many years, but we are now retiring that publication and expanding on our new one. Our goal is to have more news and feature stories about this great department including our courses, programs, people, research and Extension highlights, and whatever comes up from month to month.

In this issue, we have a lot to brag about. I hope you enjoy reading about these accomplishments and join in my excitement to be affiliated with one of the greatest academic departments in the country.

H. Russell Cross, Ph.D.
Professor and Head
Department of Animal Science

Published monthly by the Department of Animal Science within the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences at Texas A&M University to keep current and former students, stakeholders, industry and trade organizations, and friends of the department informed on the accomplishments and discoveries achieved by one of the nation's most prominent and complex departments of its kind.

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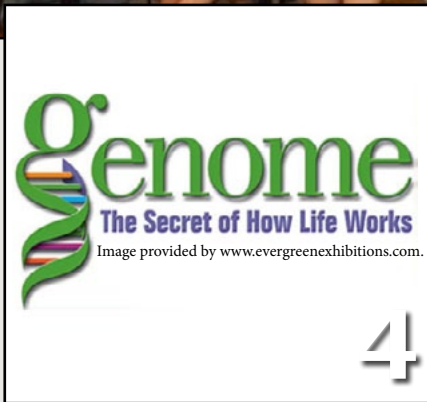
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Improving animal and human wellbeing

Initiative connects genomics researchers

Animal Science faculty are part of a group of scientists at Texas A&M University leading the Whole Systems Genomics Initiative. These scientists are committed to applying genomics research to improve the overall wellbeing of humans and animals, as well as environmental stewardship.

What is the Whole Systems Genomics Initiative?

Whole Systems Genomics for Human, Animal, and Environmental Wellbeing (WSGI) is one of eight Initial University Multidisciplinary Research Initiatives that represent “landmark areas” of research (abbreviated WSGI). Dr. Penny Riggs, assistant professor, and Dr. Clare Gill, associate professor, lead this effort in the Department of Animal Science as co-chairs of WSGI’s Implementation Team, an executive committee charged with developing and overseeing the activities of WSGI.

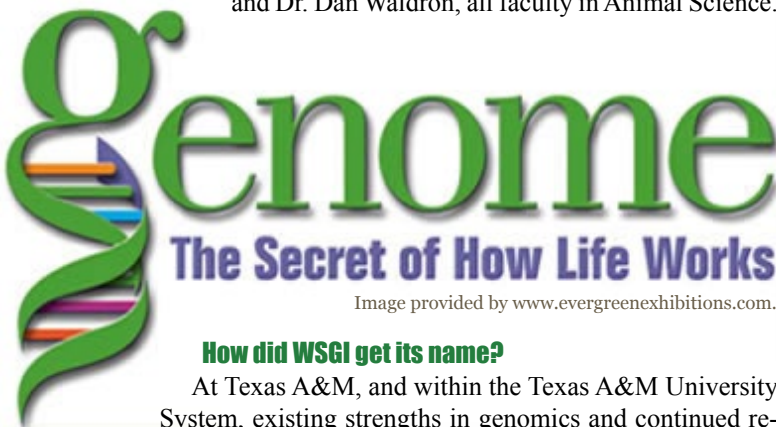
WSGI originated in the Department of Animal Science when Riggs and Gill presented the initial concept to other groups working on genomics-related projects. Several groups merged into the final WSGI proposal that was submitted by a team of 24 faculty including Riggs, Gill, Dr. Nancy Ing and Dr. Thomas Welsh, Jr., from Animal Science. A total of 125 Texas A&M faculty and staff participated in submission of the proposal including Dr. Marcel Amstalden, Dr. Fuller Bazer, Dr. Andy Herring, Dr. Jim Sanders, Dr. Thomas Spencer, Dr. Matthew Taylor and Dr. Dan Waldron, all faculty in Animal Science.

WSGI research scientists are committed to improving the overall wellbeing of humans and animals and promoting environmental stewardship. The long name reflects the importance of the “connectedness” of these diverse research areas, and acknowledges the overall impact of advances in genomics, in the context of a “whole system.” For example, advances in beef cattle genomics might simultaneously contribute to improvements in bovine health, productivity, beef products, resource use, and economic prosperity.

How and when did WSGI begin?

In fall of 2008, the university provost challenged faculty and staff to submit short “white paper” proposals to form multidisciplinary research landmarks that would address grand societal challenges, and at the same time, enable programs at Texas A&M University to achieve renown. The philosophy for the process was that because Top Ten institutions are not built upon narrow visions, faculty and staff should “think big” in drafting conceptual plans. This period was a unique and exciting time for faculty to shape and build new ventures on campus. During the process, numerous groups began organizing, drafting papers, merging and revising ideas, until finally, 111 concepts were submitted as white papers.

Faculty, staff and students in the Department of Animal Science were actively involved in this process, and led, or participated significantly, in many of the 18 finalist proposals, and the eight awardees that were ultimately selected during the initial funding period. One of the eight, WSGI, began very simply to develop a campus-wide project to expand and enhance genomics research, and address data analysis and infrastructure needs required for that expansion. The idea was that a collective group could work together and capitalize on the tremendous strengths and expertise that already exist at TAMU, to integrate efforts in genomics across a broad range of organisms, as well as social sciences, computational biology, and related disciplines. Development of a cohesive and functional genomics center or institute would bring people together, im-



How did WSGI get its name?

At Texas A&M, and within the Texas A&M University System, existing strengths in genomics and continued research efforts contribute greatly to improvements in food animal and crop productivity, improvements in nutrition, marketability, pest and disease control, human, animal and plant health, and a host of other achievements. In total,

prove the efficiency of resource utilization and acquisition of new equipment, and help strengthen future funding applications.

Staff and students in the department were instrumental in production of an overview video for the WSGI concept that was presented at an all-university retreat in Spring 2009. The video can be viewed at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v+fWXjR5gFCKw>.

What is WSGI doing now?

In some ways, the group is still in its early stages but is actively progressing on the goals outlined in the white paper proposal. One important objective is to foster interaction between faculty, staff, and students who use genomics tools in their research, or who study and apply the outcomes and consequences of genomics research findings, or determine whether technology should be adopted. To date, WSGI has accomplished a number of achievements and activities:

- In the spring of 2011, a new multidisciplinary course called Genomics & Society introduced graduate and undergraduate students, including Animal Science students, to the discussion and application of genomics in conjunction with ethics, public policy, livelihoods, and health – all topics with relevance to agriculture. The course will continue to be taught during spring semesters.

- WSGI was leveraged in a 2011 submission for Budget Reallocation: Activity 2 that was recently funded as a Tier One Program (TOP) interdisciplinary education grant to create the Aggie Undergraduate Genomics Corps and train students in bioinformatics and genomic data analysis.

- Kranti Konganti, bioinformatics programmer, and Sally Gaddis, senior genomics programmer, joined WSGI as staff in 2012 to support bioinformatics, genome sequencing, and genomic analysis projects.

- An exhibit, *Genomics: The Secret of Life*, is scheduled to be housed at the George Bush Presidential Library for a nine-month period beginning in August, 2012. The exhibit is underwritten by Texas AgriLife Research. WSGI will co-sponsor the exhibit and help develop additional content that will highlight genomics achievements at Texas A&M. An estimated 100,000 visitors will see the exhibit. Look for more information about this exhibit in upcoming newsletters.

- Catalyst grant funds and graduate traineeships have been awarded to Texas A&M and System faculty and graduate students to stimulate novel genomics research and interdisciplinary graduate study. Importantly, this initiative has resulted in the formation of many new research teams including several faculty from Animal Science. These new collaborations are enhancing research all over campus. Graduate traineeships were awarded to 13 students in five different graduate programs beginning in January 2011, including doctoral students Lauren Hulsman (ANBR) and Robert Vaughn (GENE) in Animal Science.

- In June 2011, the first WSGI Summer Forum was held and featured lively discussion on key genomics-related research questions, desired services and instrumentation, and solutions to re-

search barriers. These interactive sessions will help collaborative research groups apply genomics technology more effectively. An external advisory group of distinguished scientists also participated in the forum, and congratulated WSGI and Texas A&M for its success in integrating genome science and social science, and for involving faculty, staff, graduate students, and undergraduate students across multiple colleges and departments. Animal Science faculty continue to lead these activities. WSGI will host its second forum in September 2012.



Participants of the first WSGI Summer Forum.

What does WSGI have planned for the future?

As WSGI participants continue to make breakthroughs in genome science and achieve their goals, they hope to see this initiative grow into an entity that will contribute to development of a leading genomics research institute.

- A redesigned WSGI website will be online in April and will have news updates describing TAMU accomplishments in genomics. The site will also be a gateway for information about genomics resources at TAMU.

- The Genomics programmer staff will provide bioinformatics and genomics programming and computational support.

- Ten catalyst grant projects are currently underway. New applications for catalyst grants are due April 13 to encourage new collaborative efforts and new research ideas.

- Applications for 2012-13 WSGI graduate traineeships were due March 30.

- Monthly invited speakers, activities and special events will be held in conjunction with the Genomics Exhibit at the Bush Presidential Library and Museum, beginning with a fall research forum in September 2012.

- WSGI will actively promote organization and formation of interdisciplinary research teams. These faculty will lead future innovation and advancement in genomics research. They will also work together to pursue federal funding for graduate and undergraduate training, infrastructure and instrumentation, and other research activities.



AgriLife Extension to lead statewide CATTLE HERD REBUILDING education initiative

Photo courtesy of Rich Machen.

By Blair Fannin
AgriLife Communications

COLLEGE STATION – Texas AgriLife Extension Specialists in the Department of Animal Science are beginning a statewide educational initiative focusing on rebuilding cattle herds within the state.

“For the past two decades, we have seen a continual decline in cattle numbers within the state,” said Dr. Ron Gill, AgriLife Extension livestock specialist and associate department head for animal science at Texas A&M University in College Station.

“The historic drought of 2011 dramatically accentuated that trend. The state’s cattle industry and affiliated trade and service companies are the second largest economic driver in the state, bringing in billions of dollars to the state economy. With the cowherd at such a critically low level, Texas will start to lose infrastructure if cow numbers do not increase soon.”

A series of in-depth, educational programs will be held across the state throughout the month of April and throughout the year, Gill said. Kickoff programs are scheduled for Midland, Yoakum, Alice, Graham,

Abilene and Athens. For complete schedules and on-line registration, visit <http://agriferegister.tamu.edu> (Enter the keyword: beef)

Program topics include: changes in lending policies that will impact availability of capital to reinvest in cattle; balancing forage recovery with cattle inventory recovery; systematic approach to evaluating options for securing replacement females; and developing a logical and systematic system to evaluate the worth of available replacement females.

The program sessions will also include discussions on such issues as herd health, biosecurity and building strategic inventory flexibility into an operation.

Another critical area of concern is generational turnover, Gill said. The ongoing drought has been so severe that many producers have decided to not go back into the cattle industry, he said.

“It’s important to long-term sustainability of the beef industry that we do not keep this range/pasture land out of cattle production,” he said. “One special session will be devoted to the topic of how to develop a long-term relationship between landowners and land lessors.”

Above photo: In many areas of the state, annual weeds were the first green to appear following spring rains. While some weed species may be temporarily nutritious, prior grazing history as well as current management will determine what, if any, warm season perennial grass species survive to replace these short lived weeds. Topics such as this will be discussed during the Rebuilding the Beef Herd workshops.



Photo courtesy of Rich Machen.



Photo courtesy of AgriLife Communications.



Photo courtesy of AgriLife Communications.

Gill said there are a large number of young men and women who want to go into ranching, but who do not have the capital or, in some cases, the experience to start an operation.

“Developing partnerships with family members or others in the community will allow a new generation of ranchers to emerge during this recovery process,” he said. “We will address this issue and the challenges that lie ahead.”

The program sessions will also discuss additional uncertainty with both weather patterns and intentions of state beef producers following the devastating 2011 drought, Gill said.

“Recent surveys indicate that as many as 25 percent of producers who have sold cattle due to drought do not intend to go back into beef production and another 10 percent to 15 percent indicate they may seek alternative livestock enterprises if they do go back into production.”

Gill said whether this property is taken out and put into real estate development, recreational or wildlife use or sits idle, it “will have long-term implications on the future of the Texas beef cattle industry.”

Other factors such as competing land use, economics, drought and availability of financing have all contributed to the decline in livestock inventories, he said.

“However, the Texas livestock industry is not solely dependent upon the livestock produced within the state,” Gill said. “The stocker and finishing phases depend upon inventory that comes from a large geographical area.”

In particular, Gill said the supply of calves from the southeastern states and Mexico are critical to supplying inventory to support the grazing of warm season forages during spring and summer programs and winter annuals during the fall and winter grazing cycle.

Upcoming Events	
Graham	April 17, 2012
Abilene	April 24, 2012
Athens	April 24, 2012
Bastrop County	May 3, 2012
San Antonio	May 4, 2012

“These cattle, along with the calves they produce within the state, supply the cattle feeding and packing industry primarily in the High Plains and South Texas regions,” Gill said.

Further erosion in cattle inventories will result in loss of infrastructure within all of these sectors, he said.

“As world demand for proteins continues to increase, the need is for more beef cattle numbers and increasing supply of high-quality protein to meet the increasing demand.”

Gill said it’s important that as herds are rebuilt, producers take into account the value and need for environmental adaptability of cows used to rebuild the cowherd. The educational programs offered will address this issue.

“Research information from the past on cow longevity, retained heterosis and ongoing work on cow efficiency will be invaluable to producers as cowherds are rebuilt,” he said. “This type of information will be shared in the programs offered across the state.”

For more information, visit <http://rebuilding.tamu.edu/>.

Facts, education needed about **LEAN, FINELY TEXTURED BEEF**

By Blair Fannin
AgriLife Communications

COLLEGE STATION – Lean, finely textured beef “is meat” and a healthy form of protein, according to a Texas A&M University expert.

Dr. Russell Cross, head of the department of animal science at Texas A&M, said lean, finely textured beef is nutritious, and a production process he approved while serving as administrator of the U.S. Department of Agriculture-Food Safety Inspection Service in 1993.

“The simplest way to describe this is that it is meat, it’s beef,” he said. “The protein content is similar to what is ground in a steak. This product is no different than meat; that’s the reason USDA calls it meat.”

Cross said much misinformation has been reported and discussed in various media. That’s why it is important that the facts be told about the production of lean, finely textured beef, which comes from traditional carcass-harvesting-methods, he said.

“The carcass is chilled 24 to 36 hours and broken down into parts we call primal cuts, and put into vacuum bags and sent to retail stores. And that is cut into steaks and roasts,” he said. “The trimmings taken from this process — the lean, finely textured beef — is separated from the fat and from the lean trimmings. These products are frozen and put into a 60-pound box and shipped to processing plants that generate ground hamburger meat.”

Cross said there is no difference in taste, and that “it is perfectly natural to have trimmings that come from cutting out steaks and roasts from the carcass.”

“These trimmings have pieces of lean still attached to

them,” he said. “It is valuable; it’s meat. Lean, finely textured beef is a process of centrifugation. It separates the lean and the fat, resulting in a very nutritious and very safe product.”

Cross said every time an animal is harvested, 12 to 15 pounds of this product is generated and used in ground beef.

“It’s been used for more than 20 years,” Cross said.

From a beef industry perspective, this adds value to the carcass, Cross said.

“We try to harvest every single aspect of the animal during the process,” he said. “This 12 to 15 pounds would be that amount of protein not on the market. The fact we are going through this exercise of removing it from the market has caused the price of lean trimmings to go up over 15 percent. That’s going to cause the price of ground beef to go up, and we all know who is going to pay for that – the consumer.”

He said the Southwest just came off the worst drought in its history and the region “lost more than 35 percent of our cows in Texas alone.”

“We are going to have a shortage of protein and this is just adding to that shortage,” Cross said. “This is going to cause the price of a lot of our products to go up.”

Cross said he and faculty members, as well as those who serve in dual roles with the Texas AgriLife Extension Service and Texas AgriLife Research, will continue to educate consumers on the facts of lean, finely textured beef.

“We have people who are very knowledgeable about this product both on the quality side and the food safety side,” he said. “We will do what we always do – we will collect the right data and get it out to the public and to the industry so they can use it. We will make it a priority to get the real facts out to the public.”

LFTB RESOURCES

For more information on Lean Finely Textured Beef, go to:

⇒ View a video of Dr. Russell Cross discussing the safety of LFTB at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t4bQYBxr-u0>.

⇒ Questions and answers about LFTB from the American Meat Institute at <http://www.beefusa.org/CMDocs/BeefUSA/Resources/AMI%20Fact%20Sheet%20LFTB.pdf>.

⇒ View a video featuring Dr. Gary Acuff discussing the safety at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wYKbN38wqgo>.

Forage, corn feed alternative for cattle may come from biodiesel industry

By Kay Ledbetter
AgriLife Communications

AMARILLO – Crude glycerin, a byproduct of biodiesel production, could be an economical ingredient in cattle diets, according to studies by Texas AgriLife Research and West Texas A&M University personnel.

Dr. Jim MacDonald, AgriLife Research beef cattle nutritionist in Amarillo and professor in the Department of Animal Science, said during biodiesel production from sources such as cottonseed oil, glycerol is separated from fatty acids. The fatty acids become the biodiesel and the glycerol, combined with the impurities that remain, is a potential ingredient in livestock feed.

“Crude glycerin is usually priced at a discount relative to corn, so we wanted to look at replacing corn to evaluate at the energy value of the glycerin,” MacDonald said. “Then the question became, what if you replace forage, which would be the case with stocker cattle?”

MacDonald said glycerin has good flowability in low temperatures, as opposed to molasses or other similar products, and is non-corrosive to feeding equipment — both traits making it attractive to the cattle feeding industry.

Additionally, glycerin is low in phosphorus, protein and sulfur, which can be concentrated in other dietary ingredients, he said.

While the researchers knew the physical and nutritional properties made crude glycerin an attractive carrier in liquid supplement programs, relatively little was known about its performance implications in growing or high-concentrate finishing diets for beef cattle.

For the past two years, MacDonald has teamed up with Dr. Mike Brown at West Texas A&M University to conduct four experiments designed to determine the value of feeding crude glycerin in beef growing and finishing diets.

The studies were funded by the Texas Department of Agriculture Food and Fibers Research Grant Program with the thought that cottonseed oil could be used for biodiesel production. Capturing the value of the byproduct is important to bioenergy plants, and “that’s where we came in,” MacDonald said.

Another portion of the study was funded by the Department of Transportation – Research and Innovative Technology Administration through the South Central Sun Grant program.

The studies were designed to determine the feeding value, optimal concentration and which dietary components were most optimally displaced by crude glycerin

in growing diets, he said.

Within the studies, the researchers looked at two strategies: replace corn or replace some forage. In the studies replacing corn, the researchers saw an optimal inclusion between 2.5 percent and 7.5 percent glycerin, MacDonald said. At 10 percent inclusion, feed efficiency was reduced.

When forage was replaced in one study, they saw no change in average daily gain, but the cattle consumed less feed and so feed efficiency was improved, Brown said. The feed efficiency was improved when either 5 percent or 10 percent glycerin was fed. Another advantage is a less bulky ration as forage is replaced.

“I feel very comfortable using crude glycerin up to 7.5 percent of a diet,” MacDonald said.



The researchers even tested for a possible negative impact on fiber digestibility, but found none when the crude glycerin was fed at the low levels.

“We also saw an increase in microbial protein and a reduction in rumen ammonia,” MacDonald said.

This information could lead to further studies, he said. In high-forage diets, often excess nitrogen is formed in the rumen, which is excreted as urea and volatilized into the atmosphere as ammonia. The crude glycerin may allow more of the nitrogen to be captured before it is excreted and, thus, reduce ammonia emissions of cattle grazing high quality forage.

“We also observed no negative impacts on animal health up to 10 percent inclusion in diets of newly received calves,” MacDonald said.

Texas A&M researchers unlock Quarter Horse genome

COLLEGE STATION – In a study recently reported in the journal *BMC Genomics*, researchers at Texas A&M College of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences, working with collaborators in the Texas A&M College of Agriculture and Life Sciences and the Texas AgriLife Genomics and Bioinformatics Center, have sequenced the first Quarter Horse genome – helping unlock the secrets of what makes this breed so unique.

Genome sequencing is not a new science, but advances in sequencing technology, often referred to as next-generation sequencing, have made it easier and cheaper to sequence the genome of an individual, according to the researchers. It can then be analyzed for clues causing genetic disorders and distinctive traits.

The Texas A&M Quarter Horse is the first horse to be sequenced using next-generation sequencing technology, according to researchers.

“Genome sequencing aids our study of normal and abnormal genetic variation,” said Dr. Scott Dindot, lead researcher and assistant professor in the veterinary pathobiology department at the College of Veterinary Medicine. “This project is important because it is a start towards understanding what genetic factors make breeds unique and what mutations may play a role in presenting or diagnosing disease.”

Dr. Noah Cohen, professor in the Department of Large Animal Clinical Sciences in the College of Veterinary Medicine and collaborator in the study, underscored the importance of the role genetic variation plays in the disease process.

“This study represents a valuable contribution to our understanding of genetic variation in horses,” said Cohen, “including efforts to study the relationship between genetic variation and susceptibility to important diseases in Quarter Horses and other breeds.”

The genome sequencing of an American Quarter Horse has the potential to have a tremendous impact on the equine industry, as the American Quarter Horse Association represents the largest breed registry in the U.S. The information from this study may lead to improvements in performance in horses, and facilitate the management of health of horses everywhere.

“Many diseases and syndromes are the result of genetic variation,” said Dr. Jason Sawyer, a Texas AgriLife Research scientist and associate professor in the department of animal science in College Station who was part of the research team. “Perhaps more importantly, the ability to combat infectious diseases may be greatly impacted by the underlying genome and the variation that arises during recombination. This study has identified areas of variation that may play a role in the health and

disease resistance of horses. While more research must be done to specifically identify desirable and beneficial variants, this study has set the stage to enable those future studies.”

The first horse genome to be sequenced and assembled, a Thoroughbred mare, was completed

by a large international consortium. This reference assembly was used to map the Quarter Horse genome and to identify differences in genetic information between the two horses. The sequence data from the project has been made available publicly for researchers interested in equine genetics.

“The horse used in the study, a mare named Sugar, is the descendant of key foundation sires in the Quarter Horse breed,” Dindot said. “We were able to identify several genetic variants in this mare, both good and bad, known to be common among Quarter Horses. Results from this study have increased our knowledge of genetic variation in horses three-to four-fold, and proved that, through collaborations such as this, we can one day apply this state-of-the-art technology to identify and possibly manage genetic disorders not only in horses, but also in other species.”

To view a provisional version of the paper, go to <http://www.biomedcentral.com/1471-2164/13/78/abstract>.

Funding for the study was provided by the G. Willard and Ginger Pool Equine Teaching and Research Endowment, the Link Equine Research Endowment, Texas AgriLife Research, collaborators from the Department of Animal Science and the Department of Veterinary Pathobiology at the College of Veterinary Medicine at Texas A&M.

“This study has identified areas of variation that may play a role in the health and disease resistance of horses. While more research must be done to specifically identify desirable and beneficial variants, this study has set the stage to enable those future studies.”

► Dr. Jason Sawyer



Beef program helping producers 'PEP' up their bottom line

By Blair Fannin
AgriLife Communications

COLLEGE STATION – Helping a beef producer become more profitable and identifying methods to make an operation more efficient are just two goals associated with a program offered by the Texas AgriLife Extension Service, according to organizers.

The Beef Partnership in Extension Program, also known as Beef PEP, began in 1996 to conduct applied research in cow-calf production management and teaches producers the benefits of implementing improved management practices.

“Our goal with the Beef PEP program is to improve profitability and lower the cost of production,” said Dr. Tom Hairgrove, veterinarian and Extension Program Coordinator for Livestock and Food Animal Systems in the Department of Animal Science. “A producer in this program gets a complete examination of their operation and comes away with several methods to help improve their bottom line.”

AgriLife Extension specialists assist program participants with a variety of expertise. Specialists in the areas of forage, economics and animal health work with different producers in Texas. Representatives from Texas A&M University’s College of Veterinary Medicine also assist in the program, while Pfizer Animal Health continues to sponsor activities with products and consultation.

AgriLife Extension specialists have one-on-one meetings with the producers, evaluating all aspects of an operation from finances, forage systems, and herd selection and breeding programs. From those meetings, a broad-view plan is developed for the rancher and specialists work in consultation for several months during the year.

“The bottom line of the Beef PEP project is to benefit Texas beef cow-calf producers,” said Dr. Steve Wikse, who started the program and is now a retired pro-

fessor of veterinary medicine at Texas A&M. “It helps them have sustainable operations. Even greater, the program helps build on the economic impact of Texas beef cattle operations.”

The first Beef PEP program had six study herds, Wikse said, successfully adding more than 100 pounds of weight gain on marketed calves.

“We gave each of those ranches scores on a scale of one to five,” Wikse said. “During this initial start of the program, drought conditions prevailed, but 80 percent of added gain came as a result of new methods implemented upon the advice of our consultation.”

In 2011, of the four herds involved in the Beef PEP program, the average herd size is 200 head. One of the first evaluations was finances of the herds, said Dr. Stan Bevers, AgriLife Extension economist in Vernon.

“The main thing producers need to realize is how important records are,” Bevers said. “It can be as simple as pen and paper, or putting financial information into an Excel spreadsheet.”

Bevers runs the data collected from the herds through the Standardized Performance Analysis software system. It generates specific production data showing a producer how much each cow is generating in sales and profit.

Dr. Glenn Rogers, Pfizer senior manager for beef veterinary operations, said the program benefits everyone involved.

“We consider Beef PEP a program that can have a big impact on livestock health and the state of Texas,” he said. “Instead of focusing on just one disease, it allows us to showcase our whole portfolio of (livestock) health products.”

Pfizer has been a Beef PEP sponsor for more than 10 years and has been an active participant in the study herds, Hairgrove said.

For more information about the program, contact Hairgrove at 979-458-3216 or email TBHairgrove@ag.tamu.edu.

Horse Judging Team to host Kentucky Derby event

Banquet to showcase judging program, successes

COLLEGE STATION -- The Texas A&M University Horse Judging Team is hosting its first-ever banquet to bring together current and former team members as well as supporters of the program.

The inaugural Run for the Roses Banquet will be held May 5, 2012, at the AgriLife Center on the Texas A&M University campus in College Station beginning at 4:30 p.m. The evening will kick-off with the viewing of the 138th Kentucky Derby live on a 28-screen wall display followed by silent and live auctions, dinner and entertainment by Joe Teichman and the Cool Arrows.

Dr. Clay Cavinder, assistant professor in the Department of Animal Science, is coach of the Horse Judging Team and said this event will allow the team to showcase the program, celebrate its successes and learn about the valuable experiences gained by those who participate.

"Members of the Horse Judging Team learn to evaluate horses and horse performance, but it also teaches them much more. The process helps them develop oral communication, confidence, diction and it promotes good sportsmanship, teamwork and commitment," Cavinder said.

The team competes in seven national contests throughout the year. Proceeds from this event will be used to assist with team travel expenses.

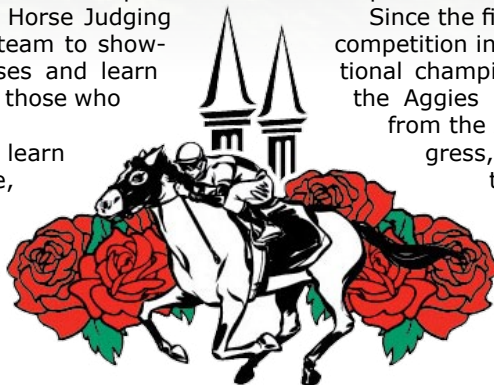
"The team needs support from students, former students, parents, the Texas A&M community and anyone interested in this program. I expect the banquet to be a great time to meet new people while watching the 'Greatest Two Minutes in Sports' on a giant screen and bringing much needed support to our program so we can continue to thrive as a team," he said.

Those who plan to attend the banquet are encouraged to dress to impress in spring Derby attire. Awards will be given for "Best Dressed" and "Best Derby Hat." A raffle also will be held for a free attendance to this summer's Horse Judging Camp.

Since the first Texas A&M Horse Judging Team began competition in 1972, no other school has won more national championships than Texas A&M. Most recently, the Aggies have brought home championship titles from the American Quarter Horse Association Congress, the National Reining Breeders Classic and the National Reining Horse Association Futurity.

Cost to attend is \$35 per adult, \$20 per youth (ages 12-18) and \$10 per youth (11 and under).

For more information on the Run for the Roses Banquet or to register to attend, go to <http://animalscience.tamu.edu/run-fortherosesbanquet>, call (979) 458-2967 or email tamuhorsejudging@yahoo.com.



TEXAS A&M HORSE JUDGING RUN FOR THE ROSES BANQUET

Grass-fed beef conference scheduled May 30-31

COLLEGE STATION -- All facets of grass-fed beef production will be featured at a conference hosted by the Texas AgriLife Extension Service May 30-31 at Texas A&M University in College Station.

Last year's inaugural conference in College Station was attended by more than 60 beef producers, said Dr. Rick Machen, AgriLife Extension beef cattle specialist in Uvalde and professor in the Department of Animal Science.

"Judging by the comments from last year's participants, it was a huge success," Machen said. "We're excited about the lineup of speakers we will have for this information-sharing opportunity. As soil moisture improves and forages begin to recover, now is the time to re-evaluate forage and beef production systems."

Machen said the conference will cover a broad range of important topics pertaining to grass-fed beef production and is open to both beef producers and consumers.

The following topics will be discussed: overview of the beef industry; defining natural, grass-fed and organic beef; growing forage -- the fundamentals; cattle types suited for

grass-fed beef; forage-based nutrition for cattle; preventative herd health; handling cattle for wholesome beef; carcass fabrication; consumers and their expectations; marketing a unique product; and economics and sustainability.

"In addition to traditionally produced beef, products from natural, grass-fed and organic production systems are important contributors to the beef market. We welcome both the beef producer and interested consumers to attend this conference and learn more about this segment of the industry," Machen said. "There will be several topics of interest to both audiences."

As a highlight, this conference will feature carcass demonstrations, allowing producers to learn about fabrication methods and retail cuts, Machen said.

Cost is \$250 through May 15 and \$300 after. The conference will be held at both the Rosenthal Meat Science Center and the Louis Pearce Pavilion on the Texas A&M campus.

To register online, visit <https://agrifileregister.tamu.edu/> and enter keyword "grassfed."



FORMER STUDENT

ERIN MORROW HAWLEY

“I am teaching, among other things, agricultural law and hope to pass on the love for learning and for agriculture that my professors at Texas A&M instilled in me while a student there.”

Erin Morrow Hawley has been busy since graduating from Texas A&M University with a degree in Animal Science in 2002. A 2005 graduate of Yale Law School, Erin joined the University of Missouri School of Law in 2011 following several years as an associate in the national appellate practice at King & Spalding LLP in Washington, D.C. Prior to this, she worked at the Department of Justice as counsel to Attorney General Michael Mukasey and at Kirkland & Ellis LLP. Erin is a former clerk to Chief Justice John G. Roberts Jr. of the Supreme Court of the United States and Judge J. Harvie Williams III of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit. Erin has briefed cases in the Supreme Court of the United States as well as numerous federal courts of appeals and state courts of last resort. She has twice argued before the D.C. Court of Appeals and also represented the United States in oral argument before the U.S. Court of Appeals in the Seventh Circuit.

■ *Tell us what you currently are doing?*

I am teaching at the University of Missouri’s School of Law. I am delighted to be at a place that combines my love for legal theory, students, and agriculture. I am teaching, among other things, agricultural law and hope to pass on the love for learning and for agriculture that my professors at Texas A&M instilled in me while a student there.

■ *Do you feel your degree in Animal Science and your time at Texas A&M helped you get to where you are today?*

Absolutely. My experience at A&M could not have been more rewarding or better preparation for my future career, no matter how far that career seemed to take me from agriculture at times. My professors at Texas A&M encouraged, challenged, and believed in me. The information I learned in their courses, in addition to their friendship and genuine interest in my success, were invaluable gifts.

■ *Is there anything specific about your time in Animal Science that shaped your career?*

I participated in the TAMU-Washington program during the summer of 2001 and interned for Congressman Thornberry. Congressman Thornberry asked me to sit in on the farm bill hearings; those hearings were a window into how laws and regulations affect farmers and ranchers on a daily basis. That experience prompted my interest in agricultural law.

■ *What activities did you participate in as an undergraduate student?*

I was a member of the 2001 Texas A&M University Livestock Judging Team. Livestock judging and the reputation of the Animal Science program were the primary reasons I attended A&M -- and I was not disappointed. Dr. Chris Skaggs was a fantastic coach and mentor. I was always proud to represent Texas A&M and its commitment to excellence in the classroom and beyond. The knowledge, confidence, and lifelong friendships that livestock judging gave to me are irreplaceable. I also participated in the MARC Judging Team, Saddle & Sirloin Club, and the Ag Quiz Bowl.

■ *Additional thoughts?*

One of the most rewarding aspects of my career thus far has been the opportunity to serve as a law clerk to Chief Justice John Roberts at the Supreme Court of the United States. My responsibilities included preparing the Chief Justice for cases, drafting opinions, and writing memorandums to the Justices about cases where a party sought the Court’s review. It was fun to see the nuts and bolts of Supreme Court litigation and an honor to serve at the Court and for Chief Justice Roberts.

Savell teaches students with stories, experiences

Wins prestigious university professorship in teaching

Jeff Savell often looks forward to his Fridays, but he never dreads a Monday. After nearly 40 years of being a part of the Department of Animal Science and Texas A&M, he still loves what he does and looks forward to coming to work.

By title and training, Savell is a Regents Professor, meat scientist, holder of the E.M. “Manny” Rosenthal Chair, and leader of the meat science section for the Department of Animal Science; but to his students, he’s much more, a fact supported by the long list of awards he’s received, including his most recent honor.

In January, Savell was selected as a holder of the Cintron Professorship in Undergraduate Teaching Excellence, an honor conferred upon the university’s “most distinguished teachers of undergraduates; those faculty who have exhibited uncommon excellence and devotion to the education of undergraduate students at Texas A&M University.”

This fall will mark Savell’s 35th anniversary of joining the department as a faculty member, after earning all three degrees from Texas A&M in animal science. It also marks the 30th year that

he has been teaching ANSC 307, (a.k.a. Meats). During this time, he has taught more than 8,000 students an introduction to meat science. He also teaches ANSC 437, Marketing and Grading of Livestock and Meat; ANSC 627, Carcass Composition and Quality; and UGST 181, Texas Barbecue. In addition to this, he serves on the graduate faculty and provides leadership and guidance to graduate students studying meat

science. He’s developed a successful research program focusing on improving the quality, quantity, safety and usefulness of red meats. He also helps conduct AgriLife Extension meat science programs like Beef 101, Beef 706 and Barbecue Summer Camp.

Setting the Bar High

Savell came into the department as an undergraduate student in 1972, but was exposed to the department at an earlier age. As a young boy growing up in Ferris, Texas, Savell was involved in FFA in high school and made several trips to Texas A&M for judging contests and got to know several people who would later become his professors.

After winning a livestock judging scholarship to Tarleton State University, Savell spent his freshman year of college judging in Stephenville. When he transferred to A&M, he got involved in meat judging and became particularly interesting in the meat science field.

“I really enjoyed being in the department because I felt like the professors really took a strong interest in you. I had Dr. Franke, Dr. Bassett, and Dr. Hesby (who was the new guy back then), Dr. Smith, Dr. Carpenter and Dr. Tanksley, you know the whole bunch of them. I’d get to see them when I came down to visit A&M in high school and then got to have classes with them. I always felt like we were so blessed as students to have professors as great as them,” Jeff said.

He went on to earn his masters and doctorate degrees in meat science from A&M. Towards the end of his Ph.D. work, he was offered the position as a meat science Extension specialist. After a couple of years in Extension, he accepted the teaching position.

“I think that is part of my challenge as being a professor. There was a high bar set by the people who were my professors so I need to have that same high bar of whatever I do when working with the students, not only in teaching them but getting to know them and help them out because they have this rollercoaster that they call life.”

Savell credits his former professors for helping to shape his teaching style and philosophy. Largely through sharing personal experiences and stories with his students, showing his students he cares and outlining



Top: Jeff Savell and his students in Texas Barbecue class.

Bottom: Life father, like son, Jeff’s son Jonathan, left, was once a student of his and now works in the meat industry.



Jeff and his wife Jackie have three children Jennifer, Jeffrey and Jonathan, and three grandchildren, Jackson, 6, Lauren, 3, and newborn Jack. He has built several pieces of furniture for his grandchildren and takes great pride in seeing them enjoy his work

his expectations early in each semester, Savell’s method of teaching has appealed to students.

“I find that my philosophy of teaching is rather simple. I have high expectations for students and let them know that on the first day of class. I expect students to be in class each day, on time and ready to go, and I tell them I will present a tremendous amount of complex information in such a way so that they will be able to learn it,” said Savell.

He added that being a great teacher is really about being a great storyteller and through telling his students stories that relate to the subject matter, he increases their learning opportunities.

“I have had the opportunity to travel extensively in the United States and internationally, and the places I have been and the experiences I have been able to share with my students have really made a difference in bringing the teaching experience to life. The feedback I get from students is that the stories I tell really help them with understanding the importance and application of the information I present,” he said.

Savell works hard to get to know as many of his students as possible, which can be difficult given he teaches almost 250 each semester. To help him with this, he takes pictures of each student every semester and asks them to send him details about their background as well as the things that interest them.

“I find that students are amazed that their professors are interested in getting to know them so well, but I cannot think of any other way of teaching than this. I am a firm believer that students do not care how much you know until they know how much you care,” Savell said.

Outside of Texas A&M

Even after 35 years of teaching and numerous awards, Savell is always looking for ways to improve. On the weekends, Savell spends time with his family, his church, and working in his woodshop (otherwise known as his garage).

For the past 17 years, Savell has taught adult Sunday school at Christ United Methodist Church in College Station. This year, he has 120 people on the roster, ranging in age from 50-80.

“I’ve enjoyed teaching Sunday school because it helps hone my teaching skills. It like everything you do, the more you practice the better you’re going to be. I’m always teaching. During the week, its 18-22 year-olds and on the weekend I’m teaching 70-year-olds. And sometimes in Extension programs, I’m teaching to a group whose second language is English,” Savell said. “This really helps hone your teaching skills because you are always having to figure out how to deliver information to different audiences and how to connect with them. And so I think I have become a better teacher in all those arenas because of all the practice and the variety.”

“I am a firm believer that students do not care how much you know until they know how much you care.”

► Dr. Jeff Savell

In recent years, Savell has even taught himself how to build furniture and takes great pride in doing this for his family. With a garage full of tools (or “toys” as he likes to call them), he has built two baby beds and three changing tables for his grandchildren.

“This has been one of the most rewarding experiences. It was difficult and I wasn’t always sure what I was doing, but each time I build something, it gets better. And I think it’s important to have something to do outside of work.”

Whether he’s teaching his students in the classroom, his adult group at church or himself how to construct his next piece of furniture, Savell feels fortunate to be a teacher.

“I find that this profession has resulted in me having a greatly rewarding career as an educator and developer of young people. Being a successful teacher means that not only do you have to know subject matter very well, but you have to be able to deliver this information in such a way as to make it both interesting and compelling so that students will be able to relate to you and information you are presenting,” Savell said.

Students in LEADERSHIP

The Department of Animal Science offers one graduate and five undergraduate student organizations that support animal agriculture and foster a spirit of community service, public relations and social interaction among our students. We're proud of the students elected to lead these groups and appreciate their leadership.



**SADDLE &
SIRLOIN CLUB**
Henry Hilscher
President

Henry is a senior animal science major from Shiner, Texas, and will graduate in May. While at Texas A&M, Henry has been involved with the Freshman Leadership Experience, the Aggie Honor Council, the Wool Judging Team, Meat Judging Team and the Saddle and Sirloin Club. He worked as an intern for Cactus Feeders in Happy, Texas, Pinheiro Farms in Brazil, and for Dr. Clare Gill in the animal breeding and genetics lab. Honors include Eagle Scout, Outstanding Aggie REP junior year, COALS Dean's List, Senior Merit Awards and the Department of Animal Science Brewer Award.

Why did you want to lead the S&S Club? As an underclassman, I was involved but very active in judging teams and could not devote my full attention to the club. Entering my senior year, I wanted to give back to the club and wanted to continue holding up the excellence that the club has established.

Why would you encourage others to join S&S Club? If you plan on being involved in animal agriculture, the people you will meet in this club will be your peers the rest of your life.

Callie is a senior from Ridge, Texas. She is double majoring in animal science and agricultural communications and will graduate in May 2013. In addition to Texas Aggie Cattlewomen, Callie is involved in several student organizations within the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences.

What have you enjoyed most about being president? It has been a blast being a part of this organization and president for the past two years. As with everything, there are some challenges but watching this organization grow from six members to over 40 members strong is totally awesome to me. I have been blessed to make long-lasting friendships with the ladies in this club, and to watch them grow within the Animal Science Department, the beef industry and as individuals in general.

Do you think this experience will help you in the future? Of course! I think being well-rounded in all aspects of the beef industry will help me with my future. I have developed better leadership and communication skills that will be beneficial in a professional atmosphere. I have also met and spoken with industry leaders and making those connections is so important while in college.



**TEXAS AGGIE
CATTLEWOMEN**
Callie Nicole McCullough
President

Alyssa is a senior agribusiness major and will graduate this May. In addition to the BCA, Alyssa also serves as treasurer for the Saddle & Sirloin Club and treasurer for the Alpha Zeta Honors Agricultural Fraternity. She also is a member of the Gamma Sigma Delta Agricultural Honors Society. During her first two years at A&M, she was a member of the Texas A&M Competition Cheerleading Squad. Outside of A&M, Alyssa serves as public relations director on the National Junior Red Angus Board of Directors and previously served as president. She also has held the title of Queen of the Texas Red Angus Association for five years.

Why did you want to lead the Beef Cattle Association? This organization had become practically obsolete. Last year, I was able to help bring it back as a student organization. I wanted to continue with what I started, and thought the best way to do that was to lead BCA from the top.

How has being president added to your college experience? By being president, I feel like I have been able to give back to my university that has given so much to me.



**BEEF CATTLE
ASSOCIATION**
Alyssa Looney
President



DAIRY SCIENCE CLUB
David Volleman
President

From Comanche, Texas, David is a senior agricultural business and agricultural economics double major with a certificate in dairy science. He will graduate in August 2012. While at A&M, David has been a part of Alpha Gamma Rho Fraternity, the National Ag Fraternity and has served as president, secretary and scholarship officer. He is a member of Gamma Sigma Delta, National Society of Collegiate Scholars and made the Dean's Honor Roll in the fall of 2011. He studied abroad in Angers, France, spent a summer in the Southern Great Plains Dairy Consortium Teaching program in Clovis, N.M., and worked on his family's dairy farm.

Why did you want to lead the Dairy Science Club? I am very involved in the dairy industry and the Dairy Science Club at A&M is how I associate with dairy farming here. Having been in the club since I was a freshman, I felt prepared and ready to give back and lead the rest of the members.

Do you think this experience will help you in the future? Absolutely. Leadership experience is always a good thing, especially when it is in the field that you plan on going into as a career. It will help me lead other dairy farmers in cooperatives or board meetings that I could potentially become involved in.



TEXAS A&M HORSEMEN'S ASSOCIATION
Alexis Duhon
President

Alexis is a senior animal science major and business administration minor from Spring, Texas, and will graduate in May. She has been a member and officer of the Texas A&M Horsemen's Association since her freshman year and also serves as president of the American Collegiate Horsemen's Association. She was a member of the 2011 and 2012 Horse Judging Team, the Saddle and Sirloin Club, made the Dean's List in the Fall 2008, received the Gena Lyn Thornton Memorial Scholarship, worked one summer for a vet clinic in Spring and one summer in Grand Teton National Park as lead wrangler for Grand Teton Lodge Company at Colter Bay.

Why did you want to lead the Texas A&M Horsemen's Association? I am a strong believer that in order to accomplish goals in life, you have to be willing to put in time and dedication in order to gain something worthwhile. I wanted to be a bigger part of something that I could not only be passionate about, but also learn what it was like to be in a leadership position and be responsible for getting things done. Most of all, I wanted to make people feel welcome and to be comfortable while exploring the equine world regardless of their experience level.

What have you enjoyed most about being president? I've truly enjoyed the people that I've met through this organization. In particular, I have developed a close relationship with Dr. Martha Vogel-sang (club advisor), who is an integral part of an outstanding equine science section and whom I respect greatly. It's easy when you just sit in a classroom to detach yourself from people who provide you with an education, but if you make an effort, they are so willing to give you knowledge and advice about school, your career and simply about life.



ANIMAL SCIENCE GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION
Cooper Terrill
President

Cooper, from Fredericksburg, is a two-time graduate of the department with a bachelor's and master's degree in animal science. He currently is pursuing a doctorate in animal science working under the direction of Dr. Ted Friend and is studying immune gene expression in response to transportation stress in beef calves. He works as a graduate teaching/research assistant for ANSC 310. Cooper has worked as a large/small animal pharmacy technician for four years in the Vet Medicine Teaching Hospital as well as assisted Dr. Glenn Holub on dairy calf research while completing his undergraduate degree. He also has assisted with many research projects working with rodeo horses, beef cattle, dairy calves, goats and dogs. Cooper has participated in Big Event, Ag Facts Friday and has assisted with the Vet School open house.

Why did you want to lead the Animal Science Graduate Student Association? I wanted to increase our visibility as an organization in order to create a larger network of participating graduate students. This will allow ASGSA to give more back to the school and community as well as draw positive attention to agriculture.

Why would you encourage others to join this club? One of the main tenets of our organization is to promote a greater interest in the different industries of animal science. This group helps to foster stronger communication with students and advisors that members may not have contact with on a regular basis. These relationships create a network of communication which can certainly lead to greater collaboration between departments and allow for the positive promotion of our field.

Tomaszewski named 2012 Outstanding Dairy Industry Educator/Researcher of the Year

TEMPE, ARIZ -- Dr. Michael Tomaszewski has been named the 2012 Outstanding Dairy Industry Educator/Researcher of the Year by *Western DairyBusiness* magazine.

Tomaszewski was honored on Feb. 23 during the Southwest Nutrition and Management Conference in Tempe, Ariz.

According to a letter by Ron Goble, editor of *Western DairyBusiness*, Tomaszewski has made major contributions that have impacted the lives of countless animal science students.

"You have been recognized for your leadership in the use of microcomputers for on-farm decision making, and have been a major contributor through serving Dairy Herd Improvement on a national policy level," stated Goble.

Tomaszewski received a doctorate in dairy cattle breeding from North Carolina State University. He joined the Department of Animal Science in 1975 and currently serves as a visiting professor and professor emeritus.

He teaches a campus-based and web-based introductory dairy management course. The web-based course has seen increasing enrollment numbers with interest from a variety of students who wouldn't ordinarily have access to a dairy course.



Tomaszewski also serves as coordinator of the Southern Great Plains Dairy Consortium - Teaching program, a multi-university effort created specifically to address the need to improve the availability of dairy science education at universities in the Southwest and to ensure the growing dairy industry a well qualified pool of prospective employees for future employment. Under his leadership, the teaching program has grown in student enrollment as well as university and industry support.

Tomaszewski's other awards include the Association of Former Students' Distinguished Achievement Award in Continuing Education, the Vice Chancellor for Agriculture's Distinguished Achievement Award for Team Research, the Texas Agricultural Extension Service's Award and the National DHIA Outstanding Service Award.

The editorial content for *Western DairyBusiness* is focused on the latest time saving, income maximizing and practical management strategies for the region. Emphasis is given to producer proven techniques for herd health, feed and nutrition, milk quality and production, crop management, waste handling, environmental concerns and financial management.

Glenn receives prestigious university staff award

COLLEGE STATION -- Grace Glenn, senior administrative coordinator in the Department of Animal Science, is a recipient of the President's Meritorious Service Award.

The award was presented during the 25th annual President's Meritorious Service Awards program at Texas A&M University on Feb. 21.

Glenn is among 28 employees from Texas A&M selected for special Aggie recognition because of their exemplary service.

Texas A&M President R. Bowen Loftin said during the ceremony the staff represent one of the three "important legs" of the university - along with the students and faculty - and "we see evidence of it every day."

"Texas A&M continues to earn national recognition as a teaching and research institution; however it is also characterized by a sense of family and service to others. The Aggie family includes amazing staff members whose dedication keeps Texas A&M a special place."

Glenn has been with the Department for Animal Science

for 14 years. Prior to this, she worked for the Vice President for Finance and Administration and TEES Personnel Services for a combined 30 years of experience.

As senior administrative coordinator, Glenn provides personal assistance to the department head and three associate heads by providing independent oversight of routine and special purpose duties related to the overall operation of the department. In addition to her many duties, she is responsible for developing, implementing, and coordinating a diverse range of project assignments related to the teaching, research and Extension missions of the department.

"Grace is very deserving of this recognition," said Dr. Russell Cross, department head. "While her work ethic and accomplishments are sufficient reasons for deserving this award, I believe her positive attitude, willingness to put others first, and ability to always find the silver lining no matter how difficult the circumstances make her an exceptional employee to receive this prestigious award."



Porter Garner, president and CEO of the Association of Former Students, left, and Dr. R. Bowen Loftin, president of Texas A&M University, present Grace Glenn with the President's Meritorious Service Award.

According to one nominator, "In everything she does, Grace Glenn does it with class, style and dignity. With five different department heads since the turn of the century, Grace has been the stabilizer to make sure the department continues to run. We would be in big trouble without her!"

Another nominator states, "Grace personifies the TAMU

core values. Work produced in her office is always excellent, her integrity and loyalty are evidenced by the confidence faculty members have in confiding in Grace across a multitude of subject matter areas. Her leadership skills are without question across staff within the department and she greets and treats everyone with respect and good humor."

Build East Texas award presented to Randel



From left to right, Dr. Charles Long, resident director of research at the Texas AgriLife Research and Extension Center at Overton; Dr. Ron Randel, AgriLife Research scientist; and Ted Conover, past chairman of Build East Texas. (Texas AgriLife Research photo by Robert Burns)

TYLER — Build East Texas recently presented their Award of Excellence in Agricultural Research and Extension to Dr. Ron Randel, Texas AgriLife Research scientist.

The organization presents the award annually to recognize outstanding contributions by the personnel of Texas AgriLife Research and the Texas AgriLife Extension Service in East Texas.

Randel is a regents fellow and professor in the Department of Animal Science and specializes in beef cattle reproductive physiology. He is stationed at the Texas AgriLife Research and Extension Center at Overton.

Ted Conover, past Build East Texas chairman, presented the award.

"Since 1974, Dr. Randel has focused his research on beef cattle productivity at the Overton center," said Dr. Charles Long, resident director of research in Overton. "Among other achievements, Ron's research has allowed Brahman breeders to achieve artificial insemination pregnancy rates similar to those of other breeds of beef cattle, and he has shown the dramatic influence of nutrition on reproductive performance of beef cattle."

Long said other highlights of Randel's "ahead of the curve" research include: work with ionophore antibiotics that led to their cost effective use in beef production; investigation of the effects of gossypol that led to improved procedures of producing cottonseed meal for greater use as cattle feed; and developing an objective measurement system that defined the effects of poor cattle temperament on beef productivity.

The purpose of the Build East Texas program is to improve the agricultural income of East Texas citizens by encouraging new technology and marketing systems. BET works with area agribusinesses, develops local leadership and strives to beautify and best utilize East Texas natural resources.

Livestock Judging Team ends season with pair of wins



Front left, Stephanie Mazurkiewicz, Megan Webb, Conner Newsom, Shelly Sutton, Brent Cromwell, Wesley Krantz and Kassidi Click. Back left, Dr. Russell Cross, Jake Thorne, Tanner Wiegat, Graham Blagg, Jonathan Chachere, Brad Mendes, Lane Foster, Cimmaron Osburn, Darin Peters, Garrett Cline, Kyle Phillips, Cassidy Hayes, Dr. Mark Husey and Jake Franke.

HOUSTON -- The Texas A&M University Livestock Judging Team closed out the 2012 spring competition season with a pair of first place wins from the San Antonio Stock Show and Rodeo and the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo.

The Aggies competed in San Antonio on Feb. 25 and came out ahead of Texas Tech University, Oklahoma State University, West Texas A&M University and Kansas State University, rounding out the top five.

In team competition, Texas A&M won high team in reasons, beef cattle and goats, and second high in hogs and sheep. Individually, the Aggies secured six of the top 13 high awards including Graham Blagg, fourth; Brent Cromwell, fifth; Shelly Sutton, seventh; Kassidi Click, ninth; Conner Newsom, 11th; and Darin Peters, 13th.

A few weeks later, Texas A&M edged out Oklahoma State University for first place in Houston on March 12. Western Illinois University, Texas Tech University and Iowa State University finished third, fourth and fifth.

Texas A&M won high team in reasons and second place team in cattle. Overall individual honors went to Conner Newsom who finished first place high; Brent Cromwell, ninth; and Jonathan Chachere, fourth in the alternate division.

"Winning back to back in San Antonio and Houston was an exciting way to close out this season," said Jake Franke, team coordinator and coach. "This junior team boasted four first place finishes this spring and I am very encouraged and looking forward to the fall contests."

Earlier this year, the Livestock Judging Team won first at the Griswold Cattle Company Contest and the National Western Stock Show. They finished third place at the Fort Worth Stock Show.

In addition to Franke, the team is coached by Jake Thorne and Cassidy Hayes.

Team members are:
 Graham Blagg, Grass Valley, Calif.;
 Jonathan Chachere, Dayton;
 Conner Newsom, Giddings;
 Shelly Sutton, Sinton;
 Brent Cromwell, San Angelo;
 Tanner Wiegat, Wharton;
 Wesley Krantz, Winters, Calif.;
 Darin Peters, Stephenville;
 Lane Foster, Wylie;
 Kassidi Click, Muldrow, Okla.;
 Brad Mendes, Modesto, Calif.;
 Kyle Phillips, Vidor;
 Megan Webb, Burlington, W. Va.;
 Stephanie Mazurkiewicz, Bryan;
 Cimmaron Osburn, Logan, N.M.;
 Garrett Cline, Meridian.

Faculty, students attend SS-ASAS

BIRMINGHAM -- Department of Animal Science faculty and graduate students attended and participated in the 2012 Annual Meeting of the Southern Section, American Society of Animal Science held Feb. 4-7 in Birmingham, Ala. Highlights include:

- Leanne Wiley, graduate student working under the direction of Dr. Luis Tedeschi won first place in the graduate student paper competition among a pool of 18 other graduate students including Texas A&M's Lauren Hulsman. Wiley's presentation was titled, "A comparison of ruminal microbial populations of residual feed intake-indexed Brahman bulls under grazing conditions."
- Ashley Keith was a scheduled competitor in the undergraduate competition based on her research internship at Overton with Dr. Ron Randel and Dr. Tom Welsh.
- Dr. Jim Sanders chaired and presented the necrology committee's report to the SS-ASAS.
- Dr. Tom Welsh completed his term as the 2011-12 president of the SS-ASAS. Dr. Bob Godfrey, professor and director of the University of the Virgin Islands Agricultural Experiment Station, started his term as the 2012-13 president. Godfrey earned his masters and doctorate degrees from Texas A&M in the 1980s.



The Department of Animal Science was recently selected "Best University Animal Science Program" in the 2011 Best of the Barns Awards. The TAMU Livestock Judging was also chosen as the "Best Livestock Judging Program." The Best of the Barns Awards are given by Ranch House Designs, Inc., a full service graphic design and web design agency located in Wharton, Texas, as a way to celebrate excellence in the livestock industry. More than 4,000 votes were cast online during this year's voting process.

Meat Judging finishes fourth at HLSR



Front left, Hope Voegele, Morgan Merdian, Lauren Thompson, Whitley James, Lexus Weinheimer and Ty Klepac. Back left, Meagan Igo, Kevin Doonan, Arquimides Reyes, Lance Wheeler, Trey Brooks, Preston Gates and Melanie Moore.

HOUSTON – The Texas A&M University Meat Judging Team won fourth place at the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo Intercollegiate Meat Judging Contest on March 3.

Texas Tech University, Kansas State University and Oklahoma State University came out ahead of Texas A&M. Texas Tech also finished in fifth.

Texas A&M's Kevin Doonan won fourth high individual while Lexus Weinheimer finished 11th high individual.

Earlier this spring, the Aggie Meat Judging Team competed at the Iowa State University Invitational on Feb. 25 and brought home third place.

Oklahoma State University and Kansas State University finished first and second, while the University of Wyoming and South Dakota State University rounded out the top five.

Aggie Morgan Merdian won seventh place high individual.

"We had a good run this spring. We never gave up and continued to strive to be better evaluators. I am extremely

proud of the work ethic and dedication that this group has, as well as the possibilities for the fall," said Meagan Igo, coach. "In the fall, we will have four more contests with the AMSA International contest being held on November 18. We have a bright future ahead and the talent to be successful throughout the fall."

The team is coordinated by Dr. Davy Griffin and coached by Igo and Melanie Moore.

Team members are:
 Erica Holcomb, San Antonio;
 Whitley James, George West;
 Hope Voegele, Waco;
 Lance Wheeler, Dallas;
 Lauren Thompson, Grandview;
 Preston Gates, Sealy;
 Morgan Merdian, Anderson;
 Ty Klepac, George West;
 Trey Brooks, Llano;
 Kevin Doonan, Caldwell;
 Arquimides Reyes, Austin;
 Lexus Weinheimer, Fredericksburg

Wool Judging Team wins San Antonio

HOUSTON – The Texas A&M Wool Judging Team wrapped up the competition season with first place at the San Antonio Stock Show and Rodeo followed by a fifth place finish at the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo.

In a close contest, the Aggies edged out Texas Tech University by five points in San Antonio on Feb. 11. Angelo State University finished in third and fourth, while Texas Tech also placed fifth.

Texas A&M's Amelia Tanner won third high individual while Kandace Davenport placed fourth high and John Long, ninth.

On March 12, Texas A&M finished behind Texas Tech, first and third, Angelo State, second, and Colorado State University, fourth, at the HLSR Wool Judging Contest. Hunter Walters earned fifth high individual honors.

"This has been a very competitive group that I have enjoyed working with. They were very motivated and strived to succeed which is all a coach can ask for," said Dr. Shawn Ramsey, team coordinator.

Kim Hardan is coach and assistant coaches are Dillon Garr, Jacob Brown and Katie Moore.

Team members are:
 Hunter Walters, Tyler;
 Tyler Coufal, Troy;
 Jordan Manor, Haper;
 Kaysi Dean, Eula;
 Sydney Reese, Pleasant Grove, Calif.;
 Tasha Womack, San Antonio;
 Amelia Tanner, Georgetown;
 Kandace Davenport, Harper;
 Kayley Wall, Boerne;
 John Long, Lubbock;
 Kyle Davenport, Harper;
 Daniel Haverlah, San Antonio.

Texas A&M wins regional Animal Science Academic Quadrathlon

MONTGOMERY -- A team of four students from Texas A&M University won the Southern Section, American Society of Animal Science Academic Quadrathlon held Feb. 4 and 5 in Auburn and Montgomery, Ala.

Team members are Jacob Brown, an animal science major from College Station; Dillon Garr, an agricultural economics major from Springdale, Ark.; Brent Hale, an animal science major from Dayton; and Katie Moore, an animal science major from Richmond. Dr. David Forrest is the team advisor.

The first two segments of the competition, the lab practicum and 27-page written exam, were held at Auburn University on Feb. 4. Each of the eight teams competing were given 15 minutes to complete activities at 11 different stations during the lab practicum which challenged team members over seven species and four disciplines. Students showed off skills like vaccinating goats, assembling bridles and using an ultrasound machine.

The second half of the competition was held in Montgomery at the site of the SS-ASAS annual meeting and included a 12-minute oral presentation and quiz bowl competition.

The Aggies placed first in written exam, second in the lab practicum and quiz bowl, and third in oral presentation.

Texas A&M qualified as one of the four teams eligible to compete in the inaugural National Animal Science Academic Quadrathlon to be held in conjunction with the annual meeting of the American Society of Animal Science in July 2012 in Arizona.



Left, Brent Hale, Dillon Garr, Katie Moore and Jacob Brown.

Graduate students work as recorders at FAIR 2012

ARLINGTON, VA -- Texas A&M University Animal Science graduate students Lauren Hulsman and Andrea Loyd were among 23 graduate and postdoctoral students selected from across the U.S. and Canada to attend the Farm Animal Integrated Research (FAIR) 2012 Forum held March 4-6 in Arlington, Va. to serve as graduate recorders.

As recorders, they were responsible for attending seminars and three focus discussions (Economic Growth and Environmental Sustainability, Animal Agriculture in Society/Global Marketplace, and One Health: Health Animals, Healthy People, Healthy Planet) while serving as diligent, detail-oriented recorders to capture comments made from participants. These comments would aid in the development of the conference document.

This was the third national forum which is held nearly every five years to coincide with the U.S. Farm Bill deliberations. The priorities developed at the forum are designed to provide input to the \$3.2 billion federal agricultural research, education and economic programs.

The underlying theme of FAIR 2012 was the challenge of meeting future food requirements of a global population expected to reach 9 billion by mid-century, while preserving the ecosystems we all rely on. Experts presented economic, ecological and societal analysis, followed by discussion to identify key research, education and outreach priorities that will be essential in achieving these goals.

Participants in the conference for FAIR 2012 were by invitation only and included Dr. Clare Gill from the Department of Animal Science and Dr. John Carey, from the Department of Poultry Science. Graduate recorders also had the opportunity to travel to the USDA ARS Beltsville research facility on March 7, 2012 to tour and interact with lead scientists and administrators.



Andrea Loyd, left, and Lauren Hulsman traveled to the USDA ARS Beltsville research facility on March 7 to tour and interact with lead scientists and administrators.

Aggies compete in Dairy Challenge



VISALIA, CALIF. -- Five Aggie students competed in the Western Regional Dairy Challenge held March 1-3, 2012, in Visalia, Calif. This event is an innovative dairy management analysis competition developed by industry and university professionals from across the United States.

Participating from Texas A&M were Jaelan Gilbreath, animal science major from Fairfield; David Volleman, ag business major from Gustine; Adam teVelde, ag business major from Visalia, Calif.; Blake Wolf, ag business major from Windthorst; and Nicole Hoff, animal science major from Windthorst.

In the competition, the students evaluated a dairy based production and financial information, participated in an on-farm visit, prepared a presentation and presented their findings to a panel of industry experts.

Students join agricultural advocates' effort to spread ag education

By Lindsay Garrett
Texas A&M Senior

Agriculture Communications and Journalism

Students in the Animal Science Department and others from across the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences (COALS) are putting the "A" back in Texas "A&M" University.

Not enough people know where their food comes from and so do not appreciate the vital role that agriculture plays in their lives. In response, a group of self-proclaimed "AgVocates" is joining together on April 12 at Texas A&M to help consumers understand their connection to agriculture and help them build confidence in the food they eat.

The group is part of the Farmers Fight movement, which began in response to agricultural protests on campus, false articles in the campus newspaper about meat, and an article on Yahoo about the uselessness of an agricultural-related degree. More than 200 students have joined together to share their story.

Farmers Fight has student organizations from COALS setting up booths all over campus and representatives at each booth/organization will be talking about a sector of agriculture. Farmers Fight wants to highlight the advancement that each agricultural sector has made in recent years and to educate the public on the diversity of agriculture in today's society.

"Farmers Fight hopes to bring the agriculture student body together to tell agriculture's story to the rest of the Texas A&M campus, to encourage consumers to ask questions and to give all students, faculty, public officials, along with farmers and ranchers

the opportunity to meet and discuss the importance of agriculture and the agriculture community," said Callie McCullough, a senior animal science major.

McCullough is in charge of updating the Farmers Fight weekly blog, along with editing each article that is posted. "I am looking forward to speaking with students across campus who might not know about agriculture or where their food comes from," she said, adding that she is also excited to communicate with students who and learn their thoughts about agriculture.

Saddle and Sirloin is one of 22 student organizations participating in Farmers Fight. Saddle and Sirloin's booth will represent all the different agricultural-related by-products found in a common household.

"Our goal is to engage our fellow Aggies in agriculture by showing them that nearly everything they use at home, whether it be makeup, clothes, boots, food, leather, etc. all comes from animals or crops that we raise," said Lea Luensmann, sophomore animal science major and head of Saddle and Sirloin's involvement with Farmers Fight.

Saddle and Sirloin plans to have a trivia game at its booth, where people can try to match by-products with the animals they came from, as well as a few big by-products on display.

"I feel that this is going to be a huge event for agriculture," said Henry Hilscher, Saddle and Sirloin president. "I wanted to make sure Saddle and Sirloin was involved so animal science majors could have an outlet to participate in this big day."

To learn more about Farmers Fight visit their blog (<http://tamfarmersfight.blogspot.com/p/about-writers.html>) or find them on Facebook and Twitter.



Animal Science students serve on COALS Student Council

Several students in the Department of Animal Science served on the 2011-2012 College of Agriculture and Life Sciences Student Council.

This includes Jacob Brown, Alycia Crandall, Kaysi Dean, Jae Ebeling, Chloe Geye, Brent Hale, Daniel Haverlah, Katie Heinrich, Misty Jackson, Whitley James, Laurie Jansky, Dustin Leiferman, Katie Muehlstein, Stefan Tucker and Lance Bauer.

Being on this council isn't merely a recognition of the talents and successes of these individuals, but it gives them the opportunity to exemplify and embody the true meaning of hard work, commitment and the ability to represent fellow students of the college. These elite individuals will not only continue to lead the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences in pursuit of success and excellence for another 100 years, but they will professionally be prepared upon leaving Texas A&M University. They are setting the standard and investing in something valuable that impacts more than just themselves.

Additional applause goes out to Lance Bauer for serving as the 2011-2012 Vice President of Finance, and Katie Heinrich for working as the 2011-2012 Public Relations Committee Co-Chair.

As the Vice President of Finance, Lance oversees the Professional Development Committee that helps to coordinate all college-wide events promoting professional development and leadership opportunities for the College of Agriculture and Life Science's students. These opportunities include ACE Day and lecture series. Lance is also in charge of all finances that pertains to the council, keeping all the record books organized and updating the necessary accounts throughout the year.

As Co-Chair to the Public Relations Committee, Katie helps



Left, Daniel Haverlah, Chloe Geye, Brent Hale, Misty Jackson, Jacob Brown, Whitley James, Dustin Leiferman, Katie Heinrich, Lance Bauer, Kaysi Dean and Stefan Tucker.

to oversee the committee and their mission to serve as the communication link between students, faculty and administration of the college, thus working to educate, create and promote council and college events throughout the year to current and prospective students, the faculty and the community. This includes advertising and promoting all fundraising events, ACE Day, and potential community service events. The committee was recently able to have a student written article featured in the eNewsletter of Dean Hussey and hopes to connect more in the future with all COALS students through this latest opportunity.

The Department of Animal Science extends deepest condolences to the family and friends of these loved ones and former students who recently passed away.

Frank Orts, Jr.

Dr. Frank A. Orts Jr, 80, of Bryan passed on March 14, 2012. Frank is a three-time graduate of the Department of Animal Science. He received a bachelor's degree in animal husbandry in 1953. Soon after, he married Pearl Laird before entering the United States Army at Ft. Bliss as a Second Lieutenant during the Korean War. After leaving the Army, Frank became the County Agent at Bay City and San Saba County. Frank returned with his family to Texas A&M in 1958, receiving his Masters Degree in Animal Husbandry in 1959. While working at the Texas A&M Meat Laboratory, Frank continued his education in Meat Science and received his Doctorate Degree in 1968. Upon this accomplishment, Frank joined the Texas Agricultural Extension Service as a Meat Specialist. He was a Professor Emeritus at Texas A&M and worked for many years with all of the major livestock shows through out Texas, working longest with the Houston Livestock Show. He also worked with numerous youth livestock shows, especially the Brazos County Youth Livestock Show. He was a member of St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church. He loved to play golf, and he loved to fish and hunt.

Frank is survived by his wife of 58 years, Pearl Lee Orts of Bryan; two sons, Frank Orts III of Houston and Ronald Orts of College Station; granddaughter, Alison Dyan Orts of College Station; and half brother Harry Schieberle and his wife Dee Ann of Gonzales, Texas. He was preceded in death by his parents, Frank and Rosa.

Brent Dworaczyk

Brent Alston Dworaczyk, 31, passed away at home on Feb. 22, 2012, surrounded by his loving family. He was born on Jan. 14, 1981 in Victoria, Texas to Bernard L. and Jimmie Parker Dworaczyk. Brent was an avid hunter and fisherman and was happiest when spending time with his family and friends. Brent was also gifted with the ability to make people laugh, and was well-reputed to have never met a stranger - easily living up to his nickname of "Mouth."

Brent is survived by his loving wife, M. Coral Dworaczyk of Portland, his parents Bernard L. and Jimmie Dworaczyk of Seadrift, sisters, brothers, nieces and nephews.

Carolyn Cartwright

Carolyn (Hobson) Cartwright passed away Feb. 20, 2012 in Moab, Utah, surrounded by her children. Carolyn Elizabeth Hobson was born in McCormick, South Carolina on Nov. 17, 1924 and became a Cartwright when she married Thomas Campbell Cartwright on Aug. 10, 1946. They embarked on a life together that led to homes in College Station, Texas and Pack Creek, Utah and to travels around the world.

Carolyn's life centered on her family: Tom, and their children Tommy and wife, Mary, Susan Prescott and husband, Steve, Clarke Abbey and Tom Rees, and Pat and wife, Deborah; 11 grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren.

Former Students Remembered....

Bill N. Rector '38
Paul Francisco Irwin '41
Jesse Burney Ligon '41
Cecil Milton Rodgers '43
Lester Webb Stiles '43
John Milton Hiltzold '44
Albert D. Steward Jr. '46
Frederick Sherrod Harral '49
Harold Hayes '49
Oscar Lee Barta '50
Lee R (Pete) Wright Jr. '54

William Dennis Dugat Jr. '55
Billy Lovell Kane '55
Ivan G. Mieth COL USAF '55
Charles Edwin Cypert '56
Robert Larry Bowen D.V.M. '63
J. Michael Godin '67
Michael Stephen Paul '67
Larry H. Reed '72
Bruce Anderson Straub '90
Nathan W. Anderson '02



Photo by Kassadi Click.

Livestock Judging Clinic brings crowd to A&M

The Livestock Judging Clinic hosted by the Texas A&M Livestock Judging Team on March 24 brought more than 625 Texas 4-H and FFA youth and their parents to College Station. The Livestock Judging Team members and coaches taught the half-day clinic which focused on evaluation training for breeding and market beef-cattle, sheep, goats and hogs. The clinic is designed for youth involved in livestock judging to prepare for district, area and state contests and to polish their judging skills. The hands-on learning also provides an opportunity for the youth to judge different classes and a review of how the Texas A&M Judging Team would place the class.

Horseman's Assoc. members attend national convention

GAINESVILLE -- Members of the Texas A&M Horsemen's Association traveled to Gainesville, Fla., March 1-3 for the American Collegiate Horsemen's Association Convention hosted by the University of Florida.

Approximately 40 college students and 15 club advisors from 10 universities were treated to tours of some of the most prestigious facilities and events in the Marion County, Fla., equine community. This included Goldmark Farm, a Thoroughbred race training farm, HITS-Horse Shows in the Sun



Left, Katie Owens, Alexis Duhon, Dr. Martha Vogensang, club advisor, and Seth Taylor.

for their Winter Grand Prix Circuit; The Sanctuary, a premier equine rehabilitation facility; Ocala Breeder's Sales Company; Florida Thoroughbred Breeders and Owners Association. Aggie students in attendance included Alexis Duhon, current Texas A&M Horsemen's Association President and outgoing ACHA President, and Katie Owens, outgoing ACHA Representative.

Animal Science students inducted into agriculture honor society

COLLEGE STATION -- Several students in the Department of Animal Science were recognized and inducted in the Texas A&M University Chapter of Gamma Sigma Delta, the Honor Society of Agriculture, on March 28, 2012 at the Kleberg Animal and Food Sciences Center.

Catherine Moore, a junior animal science major, was awarded Outstanding Junior; and Henry Hilscher, a senior animal science major, was recognized as Outstanding Graduating Senior.

Undergraduate animal science students inducted were juniors Mac Bohanan, Garrett Cline, Sarah Keil, Haley Loftis and Catherine Moore, and seniors Aubree Allen, Merry Kroeder, Tanny Wieghat and Tiffany Yarbrough.

Animal science graduate students Holly Edwards, Adria Grayson, Amanda Harbison, Thomas Hairgrove, Matthew Hendricks, Ashley Keith, Russell McKeith, Stephanie Valasek and Leanne Wiley also were inducted.

Dr. Matthew Taylor, assistant professor in the Department of Animal Science, served as president of Gamma Sigma Delta in 2011 and Donna Witt, academic advisor, was the 2011 departmental representative.



Left, Senior Animal Science major Henry Hilscher was presented Outstanding Graduating Senior by Dr. Matt Taylor, president of Gamma Sigma Delta.



Left, Junior Animal Science major Catherine Moore was awarded Outstanding Junior, presented by Dr. Matt Taylor.

Horseman's Assoc. to host Aggie Super Circuit

The Texas A&M Horsemen's Association and the Brazos Extension Horse Committee are sponsoring the Aggie Super Circuit, a two-day double judged American Quarter Horse Show, to be held at the Brazos County Expo Center April 6-7, 2012.

This show has been conducted annually since the early 1980's when it was held at the N.W. "Dick" Freeman Arena at the Equestrian Center. The show outgrew the on-campus facilities and in 2008 moved to the Expo Center. Several hundred competitors and their horses are expected to participate in the show as well as in the pre-show clinics on April 5.

For more information, see the website, <http://www.tqha.com/wp-content/uploads/Show-Bill-2012-for-Website2.pdf>.

B

Straight from the

BLOCK

TAMU Saddle & Sirloin Club News

Members attend National Convention

MURFREESBORO -- Several Texas A&M students in the Saddle & Sirloin Club won awards at the 2012 National Block and Bridle Convention at Middle Tennessee State University in Murfreesboro.

Alyssa Looney was awarded second place top junior member and the club received fifth place for scrapbook. In addition, the Texas A&M team of Katy Know, Alyssa Looney, Christine Mesecher and Alyzabeth Looney won second place in the Beef Quiz Bowl. Club members also enjoyed tours at the Grand Ole Opry, the Country Music Hall of Fame, Tyson Chicken as well as some of the nation's top Tennessee Walking Horse farms where students had the chance to ride world champion horses. Students also attended the National Cattleman's Beef Association Convention in Nashville.



Ham trimming held to prepare for auction



Saddle & Sirloin Club members participated in the Ham Trimming on March 20. Students trim the hams in preparation for the Parents' Weekend auction. The top ham trimmers are announced at the Spring Awards Banquet.

Students participate in Big Event



Several S&S members gathered together to participate in the 2012 Big Event on March 24. During Big Event, Aggies perform tasks that range from painting to yard work and cleaning.

In the next issue: Details from the Parents' Weekend and Spring Banquet.

FIND US ONLINE AT
SADDLEANDSIRLOIN.TAMU.EDU
 AND ON FACEBOOK



Students present at Texas Genetics Society

SAN ANTONIO -- The Department of Animal Science was well-represented at the 39th Annual Meeting of the Texas Genetics Society held in San Antonio, March 22-24.

Shannon Garey and Amber Adams, doctoral students working under the direction of Dr. Ted Friend, and Robert Vaughn, a doctoral student in Dr. Penny Riggs' lab, presented their work at the conference. Dr. Clare Gill served on the Society's nominating committee for 2011-2012. Dr. Riggs was elected President-elect of the society for 2012-13.

Student presentations include:

- Adams, A. L., T. H. Friend, P. K. Riggs, L. R. Berghman, G. A. Holub, S. M. Garey, C. L. Terrill, and M. J. Carter. Transport stress does not influence expression of genes related to immune function.
- Garey, S. M., T. H. Friend, P. K. Riggs, L. R. Berghman, J. E. Sawyer, M. M. Vogelsang, A. L. Adams, C. L. Terrill, and M. J. Carter. Expression of granulocyte-macrophage colony-stimulating factor is down-regulated in young quarter horses housed in isolated stalls versus group pasture.
- Vaughn, R. N., A. K. Torres, K. J. Kochan, D. G. Riley, R. K. Miller, A. D. Herring, J. O. Sanders, C. A. Gill, and P. K. Riggs. Differential gene expression associated with extremes in shear-force after electrical stimulation.



Aggie Reception held at NCBA convention

NASHVILLE -- For the third consecutive year, the Department of Animal Science hosted an Aggie Reception at the annual National Cattleman's Beef Association Convention. This year's NCBA Convention was held in Nashville on Feb. 1-4. More than 150 Aggies and friends of the department attended. Dr. Hollis Klett '58, '63 and Wes Klett '81 from Anipro/Xtraformance Feeds sponsored the reception.



Graduate students represent department

Animal Science graduate students Lauren Hulsman, Chase Runyan, Dusty Sugg and Aimee Hafila represented the Department of Animal Science at the 2012 NCBA Tradeshow in Nashville from Feb. 1-4. They visited with former students, prospective students, attendees and exhibitors about the department, upcoming events including the 2012 Beef Cattle Short Course, and Texas A&M University. The 2013 Convention and Tradeshow will be held in Tampa, Fla., on February 6-9.



Cleere to participate in leadership program

Dr. Jason Cleere, associate professor and Extension beef cattle specialist, has been selected to participate in the San Antonio Livestock Exposition - Leadership Extension Program.

Through a series of seminars to be held in College Station, Louisiana, Austin and San Antonio, Leadership Extension is designed to provide participants with broad insight into many agricultural, economic and social issues while building leadership skills.



Southwest Beef Symposium held in NM

ROSWELL, NM -- The 7th annual Southwest Beef Symposium, a two-day educational forum and trade show tailored for beef producers in West Texas and New Mexico, was held Jan. 17-18 in Roswell, N.M.

The event is coordinated by Texas AgriLife Extension Specialists from the Department of Animal Science Drs. Bruce Carpenter and Ted McCollum, and by New Mexico Extension Specialists Drs. Manny Encinias and John Wenzel. The location alternates each year between West Texas and New Mexico.

This year's program was attended by 160 producers and allied industry. Post-meeting evaluations by attendees showed an average cow-calf herd size of 471 head with a range of 30 - 1300; stockers a 763 head average with a range of 50 - 3,000; and feeders an 1100 head average with a range of 100 - 3,000. Attendees traveled an average of 362 miles round-trip to attend.

Media coverage included live radio by KFLP / KZIP, Floydada and Amarillo; *Livestock Weekly* and *Beef Magazine*. The event was also made available by CENTRA-cast to county Extension offices in Texas and New Mexico.



Cavinder gives invited presentation

VANCOUVER -- Dr. Clay Cavinder, assistant professor of equine science, was an invited speaker for the 38th Annual Animal Transportation Association International Conference held in Vancouver, BC, Canada. His talk was titled, "A modest proposal to mutual benefit: ATA in the classroom" and covered the implementation of the new course called Equine Marketing and Development into the Animal Science curriculum and its benefit to the ATA.



The new course was designed to introduce students to specific topics such as the history of transport, welfare issues, marketing, emergency preparedness, liability and law, and even research opportunities, along with many other topics. As a result of a combination of methods used, such as classroom lectures, group presentations by the students, field trips, and guest speakers, students have gained an appreciation for and awareness of more diverse opportunities for employment. Providing students and future industry professionals an improved knowledge of international culture and diversity and exposing them to ideas presented in this course are of direct benefit to the ATA and the equine industry as a whole.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

April 18 - Department of Animal Science Seminar Series - Kleberg room 126. Dr. Tom Welsh will present an update on the departmental strategic plan. Lunch will be served at 11:45 with presentation beginning at noon.

April 18-21 - 44th Annual Beef Improvement Federation Research Symposium and Meeting - Crowne Plaza Hotel, Houston. For more information, visit <http://www.bifconference.com/bif2012/index.html>.

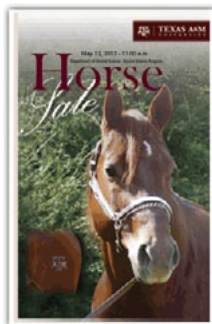
April 27 - Animal Science Graduate Student Association Coffee Break - Kleberg 126. Animal Science faculty, staff and graduate students are invited to attend.

April 27-29 - Show Cattle Camp - TAMU Beef Center. For more information, visit <http://animalscience.tamu.edu/academics/beef/beef-center/camps/show-cattle-camp/index.htm>.

May 2 - Department of Animal Science Seminar Series - Kleberg room 126. Dr. Ron Gill will present. Lunch will be served at 11:45 with presentation beginning at noon.

May 5 - Department of Animal Science Spring Picnic - Veteran's Park, College Station. Faculty, staff, students, retirees and their families are invited to attend.

May 5 - Run for the Roses Banquet - AgriLife Center. For more information, visit <http://animalscience.tamu.edu/runfortherosebanquet>.



tamu.edu/academics/beef/beef-center/camps/show-cattle-camp/index.htm.

May 22-24 - Pork 101 - College Station. For more information or to register, visit <http://www.meatscience.org/page.aspx?id=8318>.

May 25-27 - Livestock Judging Camp - College Station. For more information, visit http://animalscience.tamu.edu/workshops/youth-workshops/livestock_judging_camp.htm.

May 26 - Animal Science Graduate Student Association 3rd annual Crawfish Boil - Lake Bryan. More information will soon be available.

May 30-31 - Grass-fed Beef Conference - College Station. For more information, visit <http://animalscience.tamu.edu/images/pdf/beef/Grassfed-Conference-2012-Flyer.pdf>.

June 5-7 - 3rd International Symposium on Beef Cattle Welfare - Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. For more information, go to www.beefwelfare2012.ca.

May 12 - Horse Sale - Freeman Arena. For more information, visit <http://horsecenter.tamu.edu>.

May 18-20 - Show Cattle Camp - TAMU Beef Center. For more information, visit <http://animalscience.tamu.edu/academics/beef/beef-center/camps/show-cattle-camp/index.htm>.

June 27-29 - Aggie Horse Judging Camp - College Station. For more information, visit <http://animalscience.tamu.edu/workshops/youth-workshops/tamu-horse-judging-camp.htm>.

July 11-13 - Aggie Horse Judging Camp - College Station. For more information, visit <http://animalscience.tamu.edu/workshops/youth-workshops/tamu-horse-judging-camp.htm>.

July 20-22 - Aggieland Lamb Camp - College Station. For more information, visit <http://animalscience.tamu.edu/academics/sheep-goats/sheep-center/youth-camps/index.htm>.

July 27-29 - Aggieland Goat Camp - College Station. For more information, visit <http://animalscience.tamu.edu/academics/sheep-goats/sheep-center/youth-camps/index.htm>.

Aug. 3-5 - Saddle & Sirloin Club 2012 Steer, Heifer and Pig Futurity - Brazos County Expo Center. More details to come.

Aug. 3-5 - Livestock Judging Extravaganza - Brazos County Expo Center. More details to come.

Aug. 6-8 - Beef Cattle Short Course - College Station. For more information, visit <http://animalscience.tamu.edu/ansc/BCSC/index.html>.

To submit an upcoming event to be listed in the *Animal Science Monthly*, please email cacoufal@tamu.edu.

PUBLICATIONS

Harris, K.B. and J.W. Savell. 2012. Reassessing HACCP: Ongoing evaluation of prerequisite programs should be a priority. *Meat & Poultry*. Vol. 58, Iss. 2, pp. 72 & 74, February 2012.

Muras, T.M., K.B. Harris, L.M. Lucia, M.D. Hardin, and J.W. Savell. 2012. Dispersion and survival of *Escherichia coli* O157:H7 and *Salmonella Typhimurium* during the production of marinated beef inside skirt steaks and tri-tip roasts. *J. Food Prot.* 75: 255-260.

Savell, J.W. and K.B. Harris. "Beef." *Encyclopedia of Lifestyle Medicine and Health*. Ed. James M. Rippe, MD. Thousand Oaks, CA; SAGE, 2012. 284-88. *SAGE Reference Online*. Web. 29 Feb. 2012.



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Feature Photo

ANSC Aggie REPS recruit at Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo



Animal Science Aggie REPS (Recruiting Exceptional Prospective Students) spent March 9 at the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo walking the grounds and visiting with hundreds of young exhibitors about Texas A&M and the many opportunities available in the Department of Animal Science. Pictured, left, Susan Waldron, Kristin Valadez, Kley Pruski, Alyzabeth Looney, Michelle Bedenbaugh, Jessie Hoffman, Rachel Brooks, Carina Cedillo and Katie Muehlstein. The group was accompanied by REPS advisors Donna Witt and Kelly Essler.