



**Centre for Veterinary Epidemiological Research
Annual General Meeting**

AVC 280N

November 8, 2013

1:30 pm

1. I. Gardner called the meeting to order at 1:35 pm, and welcomed attendees.
2. Approval of agenda: moved by J. VanLeeuwen; seconded by G.Keefe; approved.
3. Approval of minutes from last year's AGM; no discussion; moved by C. Revie; seconded by G. Keefe; approved.
4. Announcements:
 - i. Kathy MacKenzie joined the CERC as the Admin. Project Manager (replacing L. Newson) on October 21 for a maximum of 3 months. Kathy will give a training session on use of on-line requisitions on January 6, 2014 and will be able to provide some limited support for CVVER through January 2014.
 - ii. C Revie announced that the EPI Dry lab on the 2nd floor was available for CVVER/EPI programmers or post docs on a drop-in basis.
 - iii. I Gardner introduced the most recent Post Doctoral Fellow, Juan Garcia
 - iv. Adam Fenech will give a presentation on his UPEI Climate Lab and its activities on December 9 at 10.30am following the CVVER coffee social
 - v. CVVER account balances were updated by L. Newson prior to her departure and everyone was informed of account balances
5. New Business:
 - i. Succession plan for CVVER Directorship (proposed to be a 2 year rotation)
 - a. J. Sanchez and H. Stryhn have expressed their willingness to be candidates in 2015/2017. Agreement that there would be further discussion of candidates in 2015 and that the commitments were not binding.
 - b. There were no suggestions of alternate plans.
 - ii. Graduate students in Epidemiology
 - a. Epi I may be able to attract more students, perhaps from the Nursing Program.
 - b. S St. Hilaire suggested sharing the teaching load with Guelph or Calgary.
 - c. M Cockram suggested that the group voice their concern to Dean's Council about the cessation of new AVC scholarships for graduate students via a letter. Some college-wide investment in graduate students should be supported. S St Hilaire pointed out

- that the group needs to present research as revenue generating. D Hurnik pointed out that there is no core funding to spend on producing research proposals.
- d. Action: With input from members, I Gardner to draft a letter regarding branding and graduate students for D Hurnik to present to Dean's Council. Moved by J Davidson; seconded by M Cockram; approved of alternate plans.
 - e. J VanLeeuwen has plans for 1 graduate student; G Keefe plans for 1 or 2 graduate students in each of the next two years; J Davidson plans for 1 graduate student in Shellfish Disease in late spring 2014; S St Hilaire has plans for 1 graduate student and 1 post-doctoral. The CERC will advertise for 2 more students early in 2014
 - f. Action: Table discussion until a later date with the intent to have a meeting dedicated to Epi II. Previously, students had found it very challenging to take the condensed version of Epi II over 3 weeks
- iii. Plans for staff support for CERC, CVER and CRVENet in 2014.
 - a. I Gardner indicated that there is currently a posting for a Project Manager to be filled in mid-January. This position is to be 100% CERC dedicated. This means there is no administrative support for CVER and CRVENet activities, although in the short-term K. MacKenzie will be able to assist
 - b. J Van Leeuwen reported that he has drafted a proposal to D Hurnik for a half-time administrative position in which Health Management could fund the other half position.
 - c. It was suggested that the discussion continue at the next Health Management Faculty meeting.
 - iv. CVER coffee socials – how to increase the number of volunteers willing to host socials in 2014?
 - a. The last e-mail seems to have resolved the issue for the rest of 2013. K. MacKenzie has posted an up-to-date list.
 - v. CAVEPM and Epi on the Island in 2014
 - a. On behalf of J. Sanchez, I Gardner reported on plans to host CAVEPM and Epi on the Island in June, 2014. The theme for the CAVEPM 2014 conference will be “Observational studies in the era of bioinformatics”. The CAVEPM meeting will consist of a series of scientific paper presentations during the two day meeting (June 9th -10th) and the Epi on the Island summer courses will consist of the following events:
 - 1) June 5th to June 7th: “Bias in Observational Studies”. Instructors: Drs. Ian Dohoo and Henrik Stryhn.
 - 2) June 11th to June 13th: “Bioinformatics for veterinary epidemiologists – from gene sequence to surveillance”. Instructors: Dr. Peter Durr and Kim Halpin.

More information about CAVEPM abstract submission, meeting and course

registration, and course details will be posted soon at the CVER website at <http://cver.upei.ca/CAVEPM-2014>.

6. Updated on centres, groups and projects;

Centre for Aquatic Health Science (CAHS) – L. Hammell:

Current project funding will finish in June 2014. Although not officially a Centre, the AVC-CAHS brand is important for attracting project funding from the Maritime provinces, especially NL and NB. The focus has always addressed the most pressing needs (long and short term) for regional aquaculture industries, most recently this has been sea lice but other projects involve infectious salmon anemia (ISA) and bacterial kidney disease. In NL, CAHS employees have participated collecting samples for ISA investigations (e.g. test performance, prevalence studies) and in NB sea lice training, audits, and treatment monitoring has dominated recent activity. Sea lice trends (weekly counts and treatment effects) are ongoing outputs of our centralized data management (fishitrends.com) programs with the salmon industry in NB, NL, and NS.

The Canadian Regulatory Veterinary Epidemiology Network (CRVE-Net) – presented by I. Gardner on behalf of J. Sanchez:

The most important change has been the securing of 3-year funding (450K total) for the Network beginning April 1, 2012. The main funding will be allocated to the development of educational learning and research projects, with the latter to be determined based on review by representatives from the 5 veterinary schools and CFIA. Aquatic animal health has also been included in CRVE-Net activities and a new Terms of Reference document is currently being drafted to reflect changes in the organizational and administrative structure of the Network.

Maritime Quality Milk (MQM) – G. Keefe:

Active research projects involve mastitis control, Johne's disease, bovine leukemia virus, calf health and immunoglobulin measures, and cow comfort and there is a joint project with the University of Guelph on biosurveillance similar to the NAHMS program in the U.S. A proposal will be submitted on a more comprehensive disease control strategy called Atlantic Healthy Herds (25% funded by producers and 75% by government) in December; the deadline for submission was changed which may disadvantage our proposal. Jenny Yu, the HM epi technician has been assisting with some data analyses.

Shellfish Research Group – J. Davidson:

The group continues their work in tunicates within the framework of the Canadian Aquatic Species Network. A proposal investigating MSX in the Maritimes, led by Dalhousie University and involving Drs. Kehar Singh and Davidson has been submitted to Genome Atlantic for consideration. The CERC sponsored pilot project public health in Vietnam has led to funding by Grand Challenges Canada in collaboration with the University of Calgary.

Kenyan Projects – J VanLeeuwen:

John VanLeeuwen is continuing to go to Kenya twice each year, in partnership with Farmers Helping Farmers: once in winter to teach a senior rotation and check up on research project analyses and reports, and once in summer to continue field work on research projects. In 2013, he and 7 other team members worked on 4 projects involving 110 farms. They conducted observational and controlled trial studies on post-partum cow nutritional enhancement and neonatal calf nutritional enhancement, with and without agroforestry augmentation. With the biweekly monitoring of the trials, they also conducted studies on the incidence rates of subclinical mastitis in post-partum cows, and on the incidence rates of infections with various neonatal calf diarrhea pathogens, along with how nutrition influenced the incidence and severity of the diarrhea and mastitis. Jeff Wichtel, Fabienne Uehlinger and Collins Kamunde are faculty collaborating on these projects. There are two other ongoing projects: a cohort study on infectious causes of bovine abortion and a case-control study on factors of bovine tuberculosis. There are currently 4 Kenyan graduate students and one Canadian graduate student working on these Kenyan projects. We are gearing up for next year's projects: a clinical trial on dry cow therapy and internal teat sealants, and an observational study and clinical trial on cow comfort. John VanLeeuwen is continuing to go to Kenya twice each year, in partnership with Farmers Helping Farmers: once in winter to teach a senior rotation and check up on research project analyses and reports, and once in summer to continue field work on research projects. In 2013, he and 7 other team members worked on 4 projects involving 110 farms. They conducted observational and controlled trial studies on post-partum cow nutritional enhancement and neonatal calf nutritional enhancement, with and without agroforestry augmentation. With the biweekly monitoring of the trials, they also conducted studies on the incidence rates of subclinical mastitis in post-partum cows, and on the incidence rates of infections with various neonatal calf diarrhea pathogens, along with how nutrition influenced the incidence and severity of the diarrhea and mastitis. Jeff Wichtel, Fabienne Uehlinger and Collins Kamunde are faculty collaborating on these projects. There are two other ongoing projects: a cohort study on infectious causes of bovine abortion and a case-control study on factors of bovine tuberculosis. There are currently 4 Kenyan graduate students and one Canadian graduate student working on these Kenyan projects. We are gearing up for next year's projects: a clinical trial on dry

cow therapy and internal teat sealants, and an observational study and clinical trial on cow comfort.

Sir James Dunn Animal Welfare Centre – M. Cockram:

Two projects with Ian Dohoo as co-investigator are in the final stages. Cyril Roy has studied the welfare of horses transported to slaughter in Canada and Iceland. Niamh Caffrey has been analysing risk factors during transport for broiler chicken dead-on-arrivals. In a subsequent project with Crawford Revie as co-investigator Ketan Dulal is studying risk factors for broiler injury and death associated with broiler handling and transportation. Led by Jeff Wichtel, the SJDAWC is undergoing a restructuring with different activities devolving to specific committees. A research committee will examine how to facilitate animal welfare research and will hopefully provide an improved way of assessing research proposals submitted to the Centre for funding.

No epidemiological related projects on animal welfare were successful in the 2013 applications. Through industry links provided through the Atlantic Poultry Research Institute there are opportunities for the application of epidemiological methods to study health and welfare issues in poultry.

CERC – I. Gardner

In 2013, CERC continued to build capacity through the additional of 2 post-docs (Annette Boerlage and Juan Garcia) and based on the CERC visioning meeting on October 1 2013 will add an E-learning co-ordinator, at least 1 more Research Scientist in Shellfish Epidemiology, and 2 more post-docs with a focus in molecular epidemiology and disease ecology of wild aquatic animals. Mark Fast and Javier Sanchez have joined the CERC team. Ten seed grants are nearing completion and an additional round of funding is expected early in 2014. The research portfolio continues to grow and includes activities of 2 PhD students (Jia Beibei in China and Gabriel Arriagada in Chile). A meeting is planned in December to discuss strategies for on-going research in south-east Asia, especially Vietnam and Thailand.

7. Election of CVER Director for next two years;
 - i. I Gardner nominated J VanLeeuwen as Director of CVER for 2 year term (seconded by L.Hammell) and requested additional nominations from the floor. No other nominations were received. The nomination of J. Vanleeuwen was unanimously approved.

8. Election of replacement for CVER Steering Committee
 - i. I Gardner nominated S. St Hilaire to the CVER Steering Committee to replace himself. Seconded by J VanLeeuwen; approved.

9. Adjournment – meeting was adjourned at 3:05pm