



PIG VETERINARY SOCIETY

A message from the PVS President

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Dear Colleagues,

Pig Veterinary Society Spring Scientific Meeting

May is approaching fast and with it the Pig Veterinary Society Spring Meeting on **20th and 21st May 2009** at the **Mercure Holland House Hotel**, Bristol. PVS would like to thank **Pfizer** for their generous sponsorship of this meeting. A big thank you, as always, to Jenny Murray for identifying and organising a great venue for the meeting. Our apologies to those who missed out on attending the autumn meeting because of restrictions on space so to avoid disappointment this time remember to **BOOK EARLY!!!** Please try and make your bookings by **May 1st!!!!!!**

Stan Done has done yet another great job in putting together a programme that is varied and interesting and will provide much fuel for debate and discourse during the meeting. The Farm Animal Welfare Council Chairman, Christopher Wathes, opens the scientific programme and will be keen to hear feedback from members on **pig welfare**. FAWC is currently seeking views on mutilations and environmental enrichment for growing pigs as part of their study leading to an Opinion next year. The consultation closes on 30 April 2009 but **your views** as members of the Society are important and I would encourage you to send them to me or to the Honorary Secretary so that PVS can represent the spectrum of Member's views in its response.

Emergence, spread and control of disease is a strong theme running through the meeting drawing on expertise from home and abroad. With continued interest within the industry in initiatives to improve pig health the Society aims, as always, to keep members abreast of latest scientific developments. There is also a long overdue focus on the male and his hormones and their impact on reproduction and meat quality. Unlike Jamie Oliver and Rebecca Loos there will be no opportunity for practical sessions. However, as David Chennells reminded me **CLINICAL CLUB** is our forum for practical pig medicine – so if you've seen an interesting or intriguing case don't delay, get in touch with David today.

Professor Hank Harris has kindly agreed to deliver the **Tom Alexander Memorial Lecture**. A long-time friend and collaborator with Tom the Society was honoured that Professor Harris accepted the invitation. Tom's input to both the scientific and social elements of meetings will be missed but he will not be forgotten.

Please come and enjoy what should be a lively and interesting meeting. As always Members' guests who can contribute to the scientific debate are welcome but please let them know that there are now **non-member registration surcharges** of £25 per day. The surcharge was introduced because it is the significant voluntary contributions from Members of the Society to the organization of meetings that enables PVS to keep meeting registration fees at a reasonable level when compared to costs of similar events.

2009 got off to a positive start with Jamie Oliver trying to help save the industry's bacon by highlighting the higher welfare standards in the UK. The recognition was welcome but is also a responsibility. Farmers and vets working with pigs cannot rest on their laurels but face the challenge of meeting the expectations of those consumers who are prepared to pay a premium for meat from animals raised to higher welfare standards. It is another area that resonates to the theme I chose for my year as President in that "**it's not about how good you are; it's about how good you want to be**"; with the added complication that it is difficult to achieve a consensus on what is "good welfare".

The financial climate may be uncertain but changes in the exchange rates have underpinned firmer prices and there is some scope for optimism that the pig industry should see some investment in the medium-term. There will be an opportunity for the Society to play a positive role if it wishes to engage in the regional initiatives for **pig health improvement**. There is a wealth of expertise and experience within the Society and the challenge for PVS will be to channel that capability most effectively to yield long-term benefits for the whole membership and the industry we serve.

Notice of a proposed resolution to **adopt a new constitution** for the Pig Veterinary Society at the Annual General Meeting is enclosed. The Executive of the Pig Veterinary Society has completed a review of the PVS Constitution since the last AGM and the key changes are highlighted in the Notice. The key areas revised and the reasoning behind the changes will be outlined at the AGM. There will then be an opportunity to discuss the document from the floor prior to a vote on its adoption. The current Constitution can be downloaded from the Members area of the PVS website – www.pigvetsoc.org.uk. Members are encouraged to read the Constitution and enter into the debate at Bristol. The notes of the last AGM will be posted in the members area of the website along with the draft accounts for 2008, as soon as these have been prepared.

The Pig Veterinary Society is **your Society** and the Annual General Meeting is an opportunity for you not just to raise any issues of concern but also to suggest how the Society might be more effective in the future. A society that is not living and evolving needs to be careful that it is not dying. I would encourage you to think actively about the Society and if you would like to suggest any matters that you think should be discussed, please let me know so we can include them on the agenda for the AGM.

I look forward to seeing you all in Bristol,

Best wishes,



Derek Armstrong
PVS President 2008-09