



PIG VETERINARY SOCIETY

A message from the PVS President

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Dear Member,

Re: PVS meeting Dublin Thursday 10th May (11.00am start) – Friday 11th May (13.00pm finish)

I can't quite remember the last time we held our meeting in Dublin, but I think it was in the late seventies. The topic was the 'farm visit' and we split into small groups and visited a number of pig units and then had to discuss, what we saw and offer advice. I was accompanied by the forthright characters such as the late Doug Forsyth, Prof Dick Penny and Bill Smith but can't remember too much about it. Our Irish hosts were extremely friendly and hospitable.

So to the new meeting, the programme has been assembled by Susanna Williamson and Pat Kirwan, assisted by Guy Wade-West, who got together an interesting array of topical and interesting subjects for you (see enclosed programme). The conference is in the middle of Dublin at the Burlington Hotel, so I hope you will enjoy the venue and the hospitality.

We do not need to pre order our conference dinner choice at this hotel, as their preference is to take your main meal choice on the night, so there will not be an option within this pack to return to Jenny.

We have also introduced a new system of payment by credit card, due to demand and to cut down delays in payment by cheque, which some members found difficult, please see attached form.

There are few major issues to report at the time of writing this letter (fatal last words). Avian influenza has struck the turkey industry, but does not appear to have spread further or involved any pig farms. DEFRA/SVS have developed contingency plans for several notifiable disease outbreaks, including Swine Fever and Foot and Mouth Disease and this preparation was demonstrated with the recent AI outbreak. Hopefully, there will be no more notifiable disease outbreaks in the near future.

Welfare has dominated the consultation list of topics and several executive members have been involved, responding and attending meetings on your behalf to make some sense of it all. Hopefully, sensible welfare initiatives will be introduced into the quality assurance schemes and inspections in due course. Thanks must go to Derek Armstrong and David Chennells for this.

Further environmental/pollution restrictions are likely to be forthcoming, and from the workshops, I think the concern expressed by everybody over sustainability and viability of the industry, was driven home to DEFRA. What political developments will come from it, in relation to the industry's carbon foot print etc, remains to be seen?

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On the health side, the Pig Health (slaughterhouse) Scheme is performing well; the Pig Health Plan is up and running in a pilot form; NADIS is continuing to throw up some surprises; ZAP remains a dog in the manger. This is causing some concern in the industry, as the EU will be calling for further reductions in scores in 2008. BPEX/NPA will be calling for the producers to do more and the support of the vets is requested. Many of the hygiene/control procedures are not under veterinary control and are already in the producer's hand, but we will have to help them to achieve these reductions. It is early days, concerning the effect the Knowledge Rollout Team is having but hopefully they will also prove effective in due course. MLC/BPEX are going through a management, structure and function change, which is hoped will make it stronger and more effective in focusing research funding for the UK pig industry, rolling out the development and supporting the marketing of pig meat. I, personally, have some issues over pig meat quality (boar taint) in the UK, and would like to see an exemption for producers to castrate piglets if they wish and still remain in the pig quality assurance schemes, but there is currently no movement on this.

Michael Doherty, from the University of Dublin, will be our guest speaker at the Conference Dinner. We will also be holding a raffle during the evening in aid of VIVA which stands for Volunteers in Irish Veterinary Assistance, their website is www.vivaid.ie

Finally, I would like to thank the executive for all their support and advice. Stan Done has been an outstanding honorary secretary, ably assisted by Janice Hellawell. Jim Rawlinson has had to stand down for business reasons and we are grateful for Paul Thompson of Garth Vet for taking over the reins and getting the finances and membership in order. I would also like to thank Jenny Murray and Ian Hands of Elanco for organising the meetings for us and our other generous sponsors for their continued support.

See you all in Dublin.

Yours sincerely

David Burch (President)

Extra Information from Jenny Murray

www.dublinfo.com/travel_info/airports is a very useful website for searching for which airline departs from which airport to Dublin

The same website also offers information on hotels, car hire, places of interest etc if you are planning on staying on in Dublin. ***If you intend to stay over in Ireland beyond the PVS conference, please make your own hotel reservations.***

The Burlington Hotel Porters are extremely helpful, friendly and knowledgeable people who are only too happy to spend time recommending places of interest eg The Guinness Brewery Tour, Boat Trips on the River Liffey etc and how to get there.

There are Tour coaches which stop outside the hotel, which can take you on guided tours of the coastal routes or City Tours, just ask the porters for the brochures or timetables.

The Air Coach runs from 5.30am until midnight every fifteen minutes, departing from outside airport arrivals, exit door 2, cross over the road then look for pick up point 5. The journey takes 30minutes and drops you off outside The Burlington. The cost is 8 euros single journey or 11 euros return. A taxi costs approximately 23 euros.

The dialing code for the UK is 00 44 (0) drop the zero add remainder of telephone number. To dial into the Republic of Ireland the code is 00 353