

Veterinary Research News

Legislative Actions

Approved animal drugs to increase under new law

Congress passed legislation July 20 that will increase the number of approved animal drugs for species and ailments for which treatment options have traditionally been limited.

The Minor Use and Minor Species Animal Health Act offers pharmaceutical companies incentives to develop drugs for uncommon diseases in major animal species and diseases in minor species.

Minor species encompasses thousands of animal species, including fish and sheep. Minor uses are drug treatments for animal diseases that occur infrequently or in geographic areas in any animals.

Once signed by the president, the legislation will authorize the Food and Drug Administration to promulgate regulations allowing drug applications for minor species and minor uses to receive conditional approval when the drug is demonstrated to be safe and have a reasonable expectation of efficacy. This conditional approval, evaluated annually, would be limited to five years, until full approval is achieved.

The bill establishes a category of index drugs that can be used to treat nonfood minor species in cases when conditional approval is not economically feasible. Of most importance, the legislation makes it legal for veterinarians to use such drugs.

The bill was presented to President Bush July 23.

Terror tactics circumvent statute against animal rights extremists

A federal statute aimed at curbing violence by animal rights extremists is ineffective against new strategies of targeting customers, employees, and

vendors of companies using animals for research and other purposes. Moreover, violent rhetoric and actions by some elements within the U.S. animal rights movement have recently escalated.

Such were the observations of federal law enforcement, research, and restaurant industry officials testifying before the Senate Judiciary Committee. The subject of the May 18 hearing was the emergence of a radical brand of animal rights activism.

The Animal Liberation Front and Earth Liberation Front have shown themselves to be a serious domestic terrorist threat, said John E. Lewis, deputy assistant director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Counterterrorism Division.

In recent years, ALF and ELF have become the most active criminal extremist elements in the United States. The FBI estimates ALF, ELF, and related groups have committed more than 1,100 criminal acts in the country since 1976, resulting in more than \$110 million in damages.

Despite the destructive tactics of ALF and ELF, their operational philosophy discourages violence against people and animals. Lately, however, a growing number of extremists are abandoning this precept.

Since May 2003, Chiron Corp. has experienced a campaign of intimidation, harassment, and extortion from animal rights extremists, said

William Green, Chiron's senior vice president and general counsel. Two pipe bombs exploded on the company's campus in August 2003. Four weeks later, a bomb exploded at the Shaklee Inc. headquarters in Pleasanton, Calif.

Chiron and Shaklee were targeted for their business ties to Huntingdon Life Sciences, an international research firm headquartered in the United Kingdom with an office in East Millstone, N.J. The animal rights group Stop Huntingdon Animal Cruelty has been trying to force Huntingdon out of business for several years.

Two other witnesses accused People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals of engaging in a similar campaign of threats and coercion. Jonathan Blum, senior vice president of Yum! Brands, the world's largest restaurant company, accused PETA of engaging in "corporate terrorism."

Blum, along with Richard Berman, executive director of the Center for Consumer Freedom, a coalition of restaurants, food companies, and consumers, said PETA's tax-exempt status should be revoked. In a letter to the Senate committee, Berman listed several instances he says prove PETA has encouraged and funded violent activity.

One tool for fighting animal rights extremists is the Animal Enterprise Protection Act of 1992. The statute makes it a federal offense to cause physical disruption to an animal enterprise by intentionally stealing, damaging, or causing the loss of property exceeding \$10,000. Violators face fines and imprisonment, with enhanced penalties if death or serious bodily injury occurs.

McGregor W. Scott, U.S. attorney for the Eastern District of California,

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said the Department of Justice supports amending the law to increase penalties and allow electronic surveillance and monitoring for investigations of animal enterprise terrorism.

From the AVMA

Highlights from the AVMA convention

An estimated 9,000 people attended the 141st AVMA Annual Convention in Philadelphia, July 24-28.

Incoming AVMA president, Dr. Bonnie V. Beaver, College Station, Texas, called on the AVMA to show leadership in the area of animal welfare. Dr. Beaver has proposed establishing a Division of Animal Welfare within the AVMA.

The AVMA House of Delegates elected Dr. Henry E. Childers, Cranston, R.I., as president-elect, and Dr. René A. Carlson, Chetek, Wis., as vice president for 2004-2005.

In June, the Executive Board elected Dr. Janet D. Donlin as AVMA assistant executive vice president. She assumed that position at the conclusion of the AVMA convention, filling the vacancy left by the retirement of Dr. Arthur V. Tennyson. Previously, Dr. Donlin was associate executive vice president. Also in June, Dr. Bruce W. Little was reelected AVMA executive vice president.

At its first meeting of the 2004-2005 Association year, held July 28 in Philadelphia, the AVMA Executive Board elected Dr. Roger K. Mahr, who had been vice chair, as its chair. Dr. Mahr represents District VI and owns a small animal practice in Geneva, Ill. He also announced his candidacy for AVMA president-elect in 2005-2006.

The board also elected Dr. Robert E. "Bud" Hertzog, District VII, as vice chair. Dr. Hertzog is managing partner in a practice in Lee's Summit, Mo.

On July 24, the AVMA House of Delegates passed a resolution introduced by the Texas VMA during the HOD session acknowledging that the AVMA has attempted to work with the American Association of Veterinary State Boards to establish an autonomous organization to adminis-

ter a process to certify the educational equivalence of veterinarians who have graduated from veterinary colleges not accredited by the AVMA. The resolution states it appears those efforts have been rendered ineffective by the outcomes of a July 15 meeting where AVMA and AAVSB representatives were unable to reach agreement on the fundamental issues. "Therefore, the AVMA should continue unabated and with deliberate haste its efforts to improve the certification process," the resolution directed.

The Executive Board on July 22 had given its consent for two such enhancement activities. First, the board approved, in concept, exploring the potential of developing a temporary Clinical Proficiency Examination site, possibly to test ECFVG candidates in Las Vegas prior to the final development of Western Veterinary Conference site. The board also approved a new AVMA staff position in the Education and Research Division for an ECFVG testing coordinator. This individual will, among other things, oversee quality assurance and development programs for the assessment tools used to evaluate veterinary knowledge and skill levels of graduates of nonaccredited schools, schedule examinations, collect fees, and communicate with candidates.

The AVMA online Veterinary Career Center, www.avma.org/vcc/default.asp, has added a new service to make it easier for employers and job seekers to meet at veterinary conferences. The Membership and Field Services Division debuted the online Career Fair service, sponsored by Bayer Animal Health, at the AVMA convention.

Web-based mentoring center launched

A new, Web-based mentoring program designed to enhance personal and professional growth of AVMA members of all ages was launched at this year's AVMA Annual Convention in Philadelphia.

The AVMA Mentoring Center is a

tool to help AVMA and Student AVMA members build professional networks. It will support the long-term health of the profession as one generation of veterinarians guides and passes knowledge and wisdom to another.

The Web site, mentoring.avma.org, is now available to members who are interested in becoming mentors, and an intensive effort is under way to sign up prospective mentors. In the coming weeks, when the program has been adequately populated with mentors, individuals who want guidance or assistance will be encouraged to sign up as mentees and choose their mentors.

Individuals can fill out an online form indicating their areas of interest and the number of veterinarians they are willing to guide and assist. Mentees will access the Web site and complete a form indicating the skills they would like to learn. The program will then search the mentor database to find a suitable match. Enrolling in the program takes about 10 minutes. AVMA and SAVMA members can enroll as mentors, mentees, or both.

Education council schedules site visits

The AVMA Council on Education has scheduled site visits to colleges of veterinary medicine at five colleges for the remainder of 2004.

Site visits are planned for the University of Prince Edward Island, Atlantic Veterinary College, Sept. 18-22; Purdue University School of Veterinary Medicine, Oct. 2-6; Western University of Health Sciences College of Veterinary Medicine, Oct. 16-20; Tufts University School of Veterinary Medicine, Nov. 6-10; and University of California-Davis School of Veterinary Medicine, Dec. 3-8.

The council welcomes written comments on these plans or the programs to be evaluated. Comments should be addressed to Dr. Donald G. Simmons, Director, AVMA Education and Research Division, AVMA, 1931 N. Meacham Road, Suite 100, Schaumburg, IL 60173-4360. Com-

ments that are not signed by the person submitting them will not be considered.

The Veterinary Community

National Phi Zeta research awards presented

Phi Zeta, the national honor society of veterinary medicine, recently presented two awards based on research manuscripts submitted by the Phi Zeta chapters at 27 U.S. veterinary colleges. The annual awards recognize outstanding scholarship and research in matters pertaining to the welfare and disease of animals. Each award consists of a plaque and a \$750 check.

The 2004 National Phi Zeta Award in the basic sciences category was presented to Dr. Anna K. Rotting. Dr. Rotting's manuscript, which was submitted by the Mu Chapter at the University of Illinois, is titled "Effects of acetylcysteine and migration of resident eosinophils in an in vitro model of mucosal injury and restitution in the equine right dorsal colon."

In the clinical sciences category, the 2004 National Phi Zeta Award was presented to Dr. Erica C. McKenzie. Dr. McKenzie's manuscript, which was submitted by the Nu Chapter at Oklahoma State University, is titled "Effect of dietary starch, fat, and bicarbonate content on exercise responses and serum creatine kinase activity in equine recurrent exertional rhabdomyolysis."

Iowa State selects new dean

Dr. John Thomson, dean of veterinary medicine at Mississippi State University, became dean of the Iowa State University College of Veterinary Medicine, effective Aug. 16, 2004.

Provost Benjamin Allen appointed Dr. Thomson to succeed Dr. Norman Chevillie, who retired.

Dean Thomson earned his DVM degree from ISU in 1967, and was in private practice in Clearfield, Iowa, for 20 years. He was on the faculty of South Dakota State University from 1987-1997, serving as extension veterinarian, professor, and head of vet-

erinary science, and director of the South Dakota Animal Disease Research and Diagnostic Laboratory. Dr. Thomson was a professor and section leader of veterinary diagnostic and production animal medicine at Iowa State from 1997-1999.

A clinical epidemiologist, the new dean has conducted extensive research in several areas related to bovine production and health. He has served as an adviser to the World Health Organization on the assessment of brucellosis in humans and animals.

White to direct equine center

Dr. Nathaniel White, the Theodora Ayer Randolph Professor of Equine Surgery at the Virginia-Maryland College of Veterinary Medicine, has also been named director of the college's Marion duPont Scott Equine Medical Center in Leesburg, Va. He has been interim director since 2003.

Dr. White joined the center as assistant director in 1985. He will retain the Randolph professorship until late August, when, pending action by the Virginia Tech Board of Visitors, he will be named the Jean Ellen duPont Shehan Professor and Director. Dr. White is an expert in equine colic and musculoskeletal disorders.

A 1971 graduate of Cornell University, Dr. White holds an adjunct faculty appointment at the University of Maryland at College Park. Board-certified by the American College of Veterinary Surgeons, he has chaired the ACVS Board of Regents and served as president of the ACVS Research and Education Foundation. Currently, Dr. White is director of the ACVS Veterinary Symposium.

Abstracts Invited

Veterinary Orthopedic Society issues call for papers

The Veterinary Orthopedic Society has issued a call for papers for its 32nd Annual Conference, to be held in Aspen, Colo., March 5-12, 2005. The society invites practitioners, acad-

emicians, and researchers interested in large animals, small animals, and exotic species to submit abstracts of practical and scientific topics related to veterinary orthopedics. Abstracts must be received electronically by Nov. 1, 2004.

All papers should be clinically oriented, and the presentation should emphasize clinical applicability. The society encourages papers addressing results of controlled retrospective and prospective clinical studies, papers on innovative surgical techniques, and case reports describing unusual or difficult cases. In general, presentations will be 10 minutes long, followed by five minutes of discussion.

For more information, contact Maralyn Probst at P.O. Box 705, Okemos, MI 48805-0705; *phone*, (517) 381-2468; or *vosdvmsecretary@sbcglobe.net*. Information is also posted at www.vosdvm.org.

Informational Resources

New animal health Compendia online

The Compendia, an encyclopedia of animal and plant diseases and pests developed by CAB International, is available online and on CD-ROM.

The Compendia synthesize a range of scientific information useful to scientists and extension educators, particularly when called upon to provide fast and accurate information regarding newly emerging animal diseases and plant pests.

The regularly updated Compendia are comprised of peer reviewed and edited information from thousands of international specialists.

The Regional Integrated Pest Management Centers and the National Plant Diagnostic Centers are offering the three compendia to land grant university faculty and staff members free of charge at www.ipmcenters.org/cabi.

This is made possible by funding from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service. Everyone else can subscribe to the publication for a fee after logging on to www.cabi.org/compendia.