

Volume 3 Issue 3

business **essentials**

Aurora Pharmaceutical, Inc.
Innovative Products Backed
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Business Essentials Inside


MWI - Simple Solutions Seminar — pg 3

Generic Animal Drug Benefits — pg 5

Butterball's Senior Veterinarian — pg 10

Through Our Work — pg 15

Christensen Farms - Industry Visionaries — pg 17



LEARNING TO WORK IN NEW WAYS AMIDST COVID-19



Bob Rehurek,
Director of Sales and Marketing
Aurora Pharmaceutical, Inc.

The current challenges that we face are undoubtedly creating a myriad of complications for many in the workforce. Work and life are being impacted in a variety of ways. During times like this, Aurora and many of our veterinary and distribution partners and clients are forced to develop new habits and routines to meet their responsibilities to clients and customers. The silver lining is, it is during times like this that we find ourselves in positions to create new ways of working. Methods for adapting to the current environment in ways that help us achieve our collective and individual goals despite the dynamic environmental conditions that we find ourselves in.

Here are a few things to consider:

Develop and align around explicit expectations.

Those organizations that are unfamiliar with working remotely will likely find themselves, both individually and as a group, experiencing frustration in this new environment. If not today, give it a few weeks. Setting aside time right from the start to align your team around expectations of work in this new environment can help to minimize the rub and frustration that you and others may begin to feel over time working in these new ways.

Get familiar with technology. Thankfully, over the last decade, technology has advanced to the point where many workers can stay fully productive working remotely. Video conferencing technology, project management software, and applications like Zoom, Slack, etc., really close the space between people who must collaborate to get their work done. With team members all over the country, the OSR/ISR teams at Aurora have become accustomed to collaborating remotely using technology. Even though we are very comfortable operating in this way, some of our clients are struggling to identify the right technology to adapt their work to be able to thrive with a remote workforce, and to engage with their customers effectively and efficiently.

Get creative. They say that necessity is the mother of invention. You are going to have to experiment to figure out what works and what doesn't. Keeping focused on the customer and being open to exploring, testing and refining the ways you work together will help to ensure that frustrations are kept to a minimum.

Rethink meetings. There are a few best practices that will help you keep on task in this new environment. First and foremost, have an agenda. Provide people with a clear understanding of why you are meeting, what you need to walk out with, and what decisions need to be made. Second, ensure that someone is assigned to actively facilitate the process. Facilitating remote meetings is an art and someone with skill should be present to ensure that everyone is engaged throughout. Third, be sure that the team leaves with clear next steps and timelines. This is especially important in remote meeting environments where people tend to go into their "holes" to work after meetings. Keeping them focused on what's most important is key.

A perfect example of this forward-thinking meeting environment is MWI Integrator's team *Simple Solutions Seminars* (see article on **page 3**). Aurora has joined them in helping educate integrators and their staff on the proper use of spray equipment and water medications.

Give and ask for some grace. These are trying times for many people. At one point or another, things might get a little tense. People are navigating a lot more than just trying to figure out how to work remotely. Give yourself and others the benefit of the doubt. Provide them with whatever support they may need and ask the same of others as you find yourself encountering challenges.

Take care of yourselves and each other and see this as an opportunity to build new ways of working.

Happy New Year!



Kate Bielfelt, MWI Animal Health's Integrator Business Director, grew up on a beef cattle ranch in North Dakota. After graduating from NDSU with a degree in Ag Economics, the natural step would be to gravitate towards the beef industry. However, as many "best laid plans" often do, life took a turn and in 2003 put her into a sales territory in Iowa calling on swine accounts with Elanco Animal Health.

"At that time," Bielfelt recalls, "Elanco would try to take you out of your comfort zone to make you a better salesperson. To this day, I will be forever grateful for that job and move. They taught me the swine industry and introduced me to producers who remain friends (and customers) still today. I had some great teachers throughout my career, some of them industry colleagues and some of them my customers."

After working with Elanco for a few years, Bielfelt transitioned into a consulting role with Global Vet Link and Iowa State University on a National Pork Board-funded project addressing online prescription platforms. She joined IVESCO in 2009, who was later purchased by MWI Animal Health.

Now her position is on a national level making sure MWI's integrator customers



are taken care of on a daily basis. "With larger, more complex customers, we do a lot more one-on-one account management with them, including how they order, special needs product procurement, inventory planning, etc."

According to Bielfelt, she oversees an Integrator Support Team that is focused entirely on their integrator business. "This is a group of individuals who specialize in customer and rep support. In the integrator business, everything is fast-paced and getting orders filled correctly is critical," she outlines. "This team troubleshoots order issues and manages inventory so our customers' expectations are met. We make sure they are receiving the products they want exactly when they need them. I also oversee our Technical Services team who provides expertise in the areas of pest control, water quality as well as cleaning and disinfection."

According to Bielfelt, her team is also responsible for specific marketing and educational training to this integrator



Kate Bielfelt, Integrator Business Director

This is a group of individuals who specialize in customer and rep support. In the integrator, business everything is fast-paced and getting orders filled correctly is critical.

Kate Bielfelt, MWI Animal Health's Integrator Business Director

Continued on page 20

Much as generics have changed the face of human healthcare – making drugs more affordable for Americans – the timely availability of animal generics will allow pet owners access to lower cost medications, so they can treat their pets that are considered members of the family.

GENERIC ANIMAL DRUGS FACTS & FIGURES

- 37% of U.S. households have dogs, and 31% have cats; there are approximately 70 million dogs and 75 million cats in the U.S.
- Of the top 20 human drugs that lost patent protection between 2005 - 2007, 100% went generic; the top 20 veterinary companion animal drugs, only 20% went generic
- Pets are living longer and experiencing health issues associated with old age that require chronic medications (arthritis, kidney disease, metabolic disorders)
- Pet owners pay out-of-pocket for medications; less than 2% of pet owners have pet insurance
- 77% of dogs and 53% of cats have been medicated in the past year
- 86% of FDA-approved animal drugs do not have a generic version



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Revolution is a registered trademark of Zoetis.

GENERIC ANIMAL DRUGS

THE BENEFITS ARE MOUNTING

In the rough and tumble, give-and-take of the animal health marketplace, generic products have made significant inroads. Thus, generic products are taking a healthy and expanding market share primarily with a pricing strategy that is often up to 60% less than the original patented product. This competition has spurred the pioneer product manufacturers to develop a variety of tactics and strategies in response that include:

- Price reductions
- Bundling programs
- Rebates
- Attempting to create doubt and confusion regarding quality and efficacy
- Creating/marketing their own generics
- Litigation

According to Bob Rehurek, Director of Sales and Marketing for Aurora, as with other human and animal drugs, generic animal drugs must comply with the Federal Food, Drug and Cosmetics Act and applicable Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations.

"To market a generic animal drug, a company must first obtain approval of the drug from FDA Center for Veterinary Medicine (CVM), via an Abbreviated New Animal Drug Application (ANADA). To obtain approval," Rehurek explains, "the generic animal drug must have the **same active ingredient** as the pioneer drug. A generic animal drug typically also has the **same strength, dosage form, and route of administration as the pioneer**. A generic drug is required to have the **same labeling as the pioneer drug**, including warnings and safety information, with the exception of information that is specific only

to the generic drug, such as the product trade name and the manufacturer's name."

"As veterinarians, we should embrace the use of FDA-approved veterinary generic drugs because they are bioequivalent to their brand-name counterparts – thus they are as safe and effective – and they cost less than brand medicines," says Gary Edelson, DVM, '08 St. George's University School of Veterinary Medicine, Grenada) owner of Imperial Point Animal Hospital of Delray, Delray Beach, FL.

"If we are able to purchase the equivalent product, we pick generic products," he adds. "Our #1 goal is to be able to provide the highest quality medicine and with generic medications, it makes it more affordable for pet parents. From a business perspective, it allows better markups to bring out cost of goods sold down to 20-21%."

According to Dr. Edelson, the pharmacy aspect of veterinary medicine makes up much smaller percentage of clinic sales compared to 5 years ago. It's critical that wherever they can have a lower cost with a higher markup using generic products, it will make a hospital more profitable.

"In this day and age where everyone is online shopping, it's important to lead with a generic product because it allows pets to receive treatment that may not be given with the more expensive pioneer products," Dr. Edelson notes. "As far as safety and efficacy, we fully believe they are just as safe and effective as the more expensive pioneer products. Bringing on

Revolt® (selamectin) will be our clinic's first use of a generic heartworm/flea product. We've always relied on the pioneer, Revolution®, in the clinic. However, if we see the same level of control and no issues, we will only stock the Revolt product moving forward. We don't stock

multiple brands of the same medicine to keep cost of goods low, but also, if we believe in the generic, we'll only prescribe the generic."

According to the Generic Animal Drug Alliance (GADA), veterinary generics must undergo rigorous FDA review before approval – just as generic drugs approved for use in people must be reviewed. Like pioneer animal drugs, a generic animal drug must satisfy the rigorous manufacturing methods, processes and quality controls to obtain FDA approval.

"As with human drugs, the manufacture of pioneer and

generic animal drugs must meet the standards of current 'Good Manufacturing Practices,'" outlines Kevin Bell, Aurora's Production Manager. "The FDA Office of Regulatory Affairs, the same office that inspects human drug facilities, conducts inspections of pioneer and generic animal drug manufacturing facilities. CVM will not approve a drug application unless the manufacturing facility passes inspection. As with pioneer animal drugs, the generic animal drug ingredients and finished product must meet U.S. Pharmacopeia (USP) specifications, where applicable, or other stringent specifications as applied to the pioneer product and approved by CVM."



Gary Edelson, DVM
Imperial Point Animal Hospital of Delray,
Delray Beach, FL



LOCAL FOCUS

WITH NATIONAL EXPOSURE

HELPS INDIANA VETERINARIAN STAY RELEVANT

Like so many rural veterinary practices, Randy Bush, DVM (Purdue '85), owner of Bush Veterinary Services, Flora, IN, focuses on working with medium-sized regional swine and beef clients. And like his veterinarian father, John Bush, (ISU '54), who opened the practice in 1954, the practice continues to evolve to stay relevant in a highly competitive market.

"I joined the practice in 1990 and have transitioned from an employee to a partner to an owner," says Dr. Bush. "While our small animal business continues to grow, I devote almost all my time to swine and beef clients."

Dr. Bush says he now has 1-½ veterinarians working with small animal clients 100% of their time. He works on food animal, with swine being about 60% of that. Dr. Bush says they have family operations that he enjoys working with, but that segment is declining. He and his staff have helped transition many of those farms from just farrow-to-finish, one-site farms, over to grow-out or contract locations. They also have clients who have direct relationships with packers (some in Co-ops) and others who do custom feeding and finishing.

However, Dr. Bush notes quickly, one thing rings true in the practice – their independent producers are changing rapidly, and they expect him to stay ahead of the curve to help them make sound management decisions.

"My role as a veterinarian has changed dramatically from when I got out of veterinary school," he emphasizes. "My skill set is being able to help my clients stay viable. That may

mean helping them transition their operations to helping them market pigs more economically. This type of education is not taught in veterinary school. I encourage veterinary students to intern with practices that are doing more than just production medicine. It is this type of skill set – along with production medicine and veterinary skills – that will allow you as a veterinarian to remain viable in today's rapidly changing environment."

A perfect example of adjusting his business to meet the changing needs of his clients was the designing and building of a large animal haul-in facility he completed 15 years ago. According to the veterinarian, it has changed his service role to our beef animal producers dramatically.

"Like a lot of veterinarians, we have a handful of clients that have hundreds of beef cows, but we have hundreds of clients that have less than 30 beef cows. We couldn't figure a way to service those clients that was equally effective for them and economical to us," Dr. Bush outlines.

"Building the haul-in facility transferred the transportation time and expense from us and put it on them. Having this state-of-the-art facility with proper lighting, heat in the winter, plenty of available water and nice chutes, has allowed us to effectively expand our practice area to 90-minute service area. We have people come from hours away because we offer specialty services. We could not have done this much business in the past with trucks on the road. Our original goal was to use it twice a week or 100 times a year. Now we average around 5 times a day," he smiles.

But Dr. Bush knew he could not fill that

fast-paced educational gap quickly enough by himself. It was after several phone calls and a ton of emails, he and several like-minded rural veterinarians formed Innovative Veterinary Solutions (IVS). "Like many small clinic owners, I needed the educational and working experience of colleagues to really make a difference on a local client level. I learn something new with every conference call or meeting.

"Now IVS practices in 7 states (Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Ohio, Minnesota, & Kansas), is licensed in 12 states (Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Oklahoma, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin) and our team has consulted in multiple countries around the world," says Dr. Bush. "We oversee about 200,000 sows and impact over 3.1 million pigs produced a year. We work with over 76,000 dairy cows, 18,000 cow/calf pairs and 30,000 feedlot animals. We also own or manage over 26,000 sows and 140,000 pigs. But through it all, we firmly believe our clients are the real winners of this alliance."

In conclusion, Dr. Bush (who continues to serve as President of the group) says he and the founding members formed IVS to better serve their client base with veterinarians who are passionate about and committed to the farms, families and livestock that rely on their services.

Their united focus is on the consistent delivery of high-quality veterinary care, emphasizing animal health, animal welfare and sustainability. Bush Veterinary Services has been practicing just that for more than 60 years and counting.

A



BRINGING SPECIALIZED EQUINE MEDICINE TO THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST



Very few equine veterinarians can truly refer to their practices as “specialty shops.” This one has both a Board certified theriogenologist and sports medicine and rehabilitation specialist. Ryan Ferris, DVM (WSU, 2007) and Dora Ferris, DVM, MS (WSU, 2007), owners of Summit Equine Inc., in Gervais, OR, are a classic exception. After graduating from veterinary school, Dr. Ryan Ferris went on to perform a residency in theriogenology at Colorado State University and became Board-certified in the American College of Theriogenology. Following his residency, Dr. (R) Ferris stayed at Colorado State University as a faculty member.

However, his wife, Dr. Dora Ferris, had a different passion and path. While pushed by faculty to pursue a surgical residency, Dr. Ferris’ first passion was performance horse medicine and treating horses that traditional medicine was at a loss on. “I desperately tried to convince myself to focus on small animals so I could work 9-5 and be home on weekends and evenings and possibly start a family or ride my own horses,” recalls Dr. Ferris. “But in the end, I wanted to work with performance horses, especially in the newest rehabilitation therapies being offered. I felt physical therapy and similar areas of medicine were a key component missing for some horses.”

As fate would have it, Dr. Ferris was able to lock in a position at the Orthopedic Research Center at CSU and become the Resident Veterinarian for the ORC where she was responsible for the day-to-day care of horses going through the research center’s programs, both client and university owned.

“The position allowed me to be involved in cutting-edge research, work with top equine lameness clinicians, and I was also able to publish some research papers. It was just a short time after that they started the College of Veterinary Sports Medicine and Rehabilitation. I knew instantly

that was where I wanted to be and where I wanted to focus my practice. I was the first resident in the country through that program, and I became Boarded in Sport Medicine and Rehabilitation. The college (ACVSMR) now has several hundred members and many more university programs are offering residencies.”

After Dr. Ferris finished her residency, she had their first child. “Both Ryan and I had wanted to have children and maintain a close relationship with our families in Washington. That was difficult from Colorado, and we were always traveling back and forth to stay connected to our families. We started making some inquiries and were waiting for the right opportunity to present itself. Then one day Dr. Lisa Metcalf called and said she wanted to step away from her clinical practice in western Oregon and we both felt it was the exact fit we were looking for.” In January 2018 they opened Summit Equine to offer highly specialized performance horse medicine, state-of-the-industry rehabilitation, and reproductive services.

“We have a beautiful overlap between Ryan’s reproductive work and my sports medicine work,” Dr. Ferris notes. “As it works out, I have quite a few mares that are athletes being treated here that also have reproduction issues and fit Ryan’s expertise. It’s a great combination to have a reproduction specialist and performance horse specialist on the grounds. It’s not unusual to have a mare come in for rehabilitation work that the owner decides to have the mare bred or have embryos flushed, while she is here. Or working with stallions that have a pain issue that is affecting their repro-



Dr. Dora Ferris



ductive abilities. It's nice to have the facilities to do all the work needed on these mares and stallions."

Dr. Ferris offers customers and their athletes a full range of sports medicine services including lameness examination, digital radiography, advanced ultrasound and ultrasound/radiograph guided injections, shockwave therapy, laser, stem cell therapy, PRP, IRAP and other biologics as well as adjunctive care including acupuncture.

"Most of the rehab centers in the country are not veterinary-driven," Dr. Ferris notes. "We wanted to change that and offer veterinarian-driven rehab and sports medicine solutions." That focus, and Dr. Ferris' expertise in the equine athlete's neck and back, keeps clients coming in from all across the region.


"It's an area that we just don't focus on enough in vet school," she notes. "I've spent a lot of time on my own seeking out people who are pushing the borders of what we think we can do for the equine axial skeleton. CSU was really on the cutting-edge of science of some of the major regenerative and biologic therapies that are not used as often as they could be. Biologics are the new frontier of therapeutics and we are still on a huge learning curve with much of it."

She adds, "We are definitely using more of the upper end, cutting edge therapies on some of our equine patients. We've seen some amazing results in patients that were not responsive to other more conventional therapies. I'm using some products that are just in the developmental stages that I hope can help more horses. A good example is an equine allograft, RenoV6®, I've been using that represents an advancement in regenerative veterinary science and medicine utilizing minimally manipulated equine



amniotic tissue. Amniotic tissue possesses intrinsic anti-inflammatory, anti-microbial, anti-fibrotic and regenerative properties that make it attractive for use in veterinarian and human applications. This product is believed to fight inflammation, break down scar tissue, and encourage healing."

According to Dr. Ferris, the biologics, which often provide natural growth factors, etc., represent a huge opportunity for sport medicine. "Just because you inject something, and the horse is moving better, doesn't mean you've addressed the underlying issue with that patient. We have to look deeper, and we have to use modern science to resolve some of these issues that today's old stand-by treatments are just not addressing. And when you put pencil to paper, the use of these biologics, are oftentimes less expensive than the continued failed treatment protocols we have become so accustomed to using that may not be as beneficial to the patient," she believes.

In conclusion, Dr. Ferris adds, "It is sometimes a challenge leaving the university research setting where you have all the tools and minds concentrating on one animal or one problem. I attend a lot of CE meetings and maintain an unbelievable network of fellow equine practitioners, researchers, clinicians, diagnostic experts, etc. That is really a nice position to be in when I can bring all these experts to bear on a problem athlete. The winner is the horse." 

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Butterball's Senior Veterinarian Celebrates ... A Career Built on Listening, Learning and Sharing Knowledge

After 34 years as Butterball's Senior Veterinarian, Eric Gonder, DVM, MS, PhD (ISU, '74, U of MN, '76, NCSU '91) is nearing retirement. A second-generation turkey producer, Dr. Gonder wore many hats for Butterball, ranging from responsibility for bird health and welfare encompassing three breeder divisions, three hatcheries, four slaughter plants, a NPIP approved laboratory and over 600 contract farms in five states to purchasing of pharmaceuticals, disinfectants, insecticides and vaccines. He also was involved with welfare training and auditing, diagnostics and disease control, transportation input, control of condemnations, biosecurity training and emergency management.

In his "spare time," Dr. Gonder authored more than a dozen scientific publications, presented numerous presentations and is highly active sharing his knowledge via lay publications. As an Adjunct Professor at NCSU College of Veterinary Medicine and occasionally, a lecturer at the Prestage Department of Poultry Science, one would think he would slide into retirement content. But anyone who knows Dr. Gonder, knows he has a lot more to give to the industry he has helped fashion.

Dr. Gonder has devoted his life to the turkey industry and is always willing to provide educated counsel and expertise on industry issues. "I have learned so much from my colleagues and friends over the years, I still feel like I have a lot to give back," says Dr. Gonder. "My role at Butterball has been in preventive health programs, mainly in turkeys in North Carolina. I have spent a lot of my career working on diagnostics and biological tools for the prevention of diseases vs. treating them. Diseases like salmonella, fowl cholera, mycoplasma, turkey coronavirus, hemorrhagic enteritis, etc., can ruin an operation if not prevented or controlled. My job was to assure that happened. Part of that overall threat assessment also included the development of emergency management plans including building collapses, hurricanes, fires, etc."


Dr. Gonder went to work for Butterball in 1986 as a staff veterinarian in charge of turkey health at Goldsboro Milling Company (GMC). Through a series of transactions, GMC acquired Butterball's live production operations and is currently a 50/50 owner of Butterball in conjunction with Seaboard Foods.

"I spent a lot of time reviewing field reports and looking at possible 'trends' in those reports," says Dr. Gonder. "I especially enjoyed looking at live production trends and figuring out how to improve various areas of production. I also enjoyed interacting with the Service Techs and growers. They have the best handle on production and their insight has always been a valuable component of our health programs. I especially enjoyed working with the younger service techs. They are eager to

learn, and I enjoyed sharing knowledge with them. They are like sponges. That's why I sincerely feel our industry is in good hands moving forward."

Another area Dr. Gonder was instrumental in developing is Butterball's Live Operations disaster response. "Making sure everything is coordinated and no one gets hurt during building collapses, hurricane response, fires, accidents, etc. is critical in our company," says Dr. Gonder. "We needed to address depopulation/euthanasia techniques for disaster response. As a Welfare Officer in the company, animal welfare was always an important management factor. We put protocols in place way back in the early 1980s to make sure the birds were being taken care of, advanced grower training to assure welfare issues were being adhered to on the farms, and if we have to depopulate, making sure it is being done correctly. This included comprehensive training on euthanasia techniques, third party welfare audits and working with the National Turkey Federation on developing and enhancing their welfare audits. It's paramount to our industry to have these systems in place."

When visiting with Dr. Gonder, it's not diseases, building collapses or fires that concern the veteran turkey specialist the most – it's the industry's inability to access needed capital for improvements. "Turkey consumption in the U.S. on a per-capita basis has been relatively flat for the past 15-20 years and the turkey business overall has not been particularly profitable over that period," shares Dr. Gonder. "That has made it difficult to find assets to replace/repair aging facilities and make necessary improvements. I think the answer is in developing more markets and more products to sell. For instance," he continues, "dark meat products are something I've been interested in for many years. Increasing the value of that product will most certainly improve the value of the entire bird. As it is now, most dark meat products are exported as a commodity. As an industry, we must do a better job of promoting the value, taste and uses of the dark meat."

In conclusion Dr. Gonder notes, "Upon leaving Butterball, I would love to continue to consult in some capacity. I really miss traveling and interacting with producers. A lot of the industry's innovation didn't come from big companies, but rather smaller, independent producers. For example, auto loaders, CO2 stunning, tunnel ventilation and brood-and-move were all from innovative family producers. That's who I enjoy working with. Once travel restrictions are lifted, I plan to make myself more available and hopefully share turkey and poultry production knowledge on a more regular basis. I still have a lot of interests to share." 



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Seth K

"HE DIDN'T DISLIKE PIGS, HE JUST DISLIKED THE PIGS HE WAS RAISED AROUND." SETH KRANTZ, DVM

At an early age, Jimmy Tosh, CEO Tosh Farms, Henry, TN, was drawn to agriculture. In the sixties, he acquired a small number of sows and began purchasing local feeder pigs. In the seventies, Jimmy built the family's first pig barn on the site where Tosh Farms' current feed mill sits today.

Since then, Jimmy recognized that the swine industry was changing rapidly and knew that he needed to follow suit and make changes within his own operation. He quickly established contracts with area

veterinarian, yet alone enough pigs in Tennessee to warrant one," smiles Dr. Krantz. "As an undergrad, I took an animal science class that included touring a hog farm. It was clean, they used augers to feed the animals and the pigs looked happy and content. It wasn't anything like I was familiar with growing up where my dad had a few sows that were mean and tried to bite me at every chance."

After touring the hog farm, he quickly realized he didn't dislike pigs, he just disliked the pigs he was raised around. "My whole

THERE WAS NO TURNING BACK

pig producers, built his first nursery, signed a contract with Bryan Foods and constructed a commercial-sized feed mill. There was no turning back. Jimmy continued to purchase sow sites and along with his two sons, Jamey and Jonathan, established partnerships with other pig producers.

Today, Tosh Farms has continued to grow and thrive, and presently consists of 18,000 acres of farmed land, 36,000 company-owned sows on 10 sow farms that produce over 1 million market hogs each year. They have more than 420 employees, over 85 contract growing partners and one veterinarian, Seth Krantz, DVM (2010 U of TN).

"To be honest, I never thought there was such a thing as a pig

world changed and when I entered vet school, my mind was made up that I was going to be a pig vet," he adds. "After graduation, I practiced with swine veterinarians in Illinois for a few years. When Tosh Farms wanted to open a new research facility and hire a fulltime veterinarian to oversee that facility and their growing business, I jumped at the offer and the chance to come back home to Tennessee."

In the eight years Dr. Krantz has been at Tosh Farms, they've added an additional 17,000 sows, and now have 36,000 company-owned sows in production. One of the biggest reasons Jimmy Tosh wanted a veterinarian-run research facility is that unlike most (if not all) swine production facilities, Tosh Farms relies on unique,

TOSH FARMS CELEBRATES



alternative feed ingredients in their rations and healthy pigs are paramount.

"Because of where we raise pork, we don't have a lot of disease threats, consequently, I don't spend a lot of time putting out fires," stresses Dr. Krantz. "I mostly focus on preventative medicine and training. I'm heavily involved in our animal welfare and care programs, as well as the research component.

"I really enjoy designing the trials, and then analyzing the results. It's extremely rewarding to find answers to problems (or potential problems). We analyze vaccines – not their efficacy, as we rely on the vendor to do that – but the timing and dosing that provides the best protection in our herds and in our production environments. But my role seems to sway heavily in working with people, training and welfare/safety education," he adds.

In northwest Tennessee, the operation doesn't experience the wide corn basis and cheap feed compared to hog operations in the Midwest. Instead, they have supplemented feed rations with non-traditional ingredients and even manufactured a system to process these ingredients into feed pellets.

"Jimmy started with excess pet food, and then has added in donuts, wontons, candy bars, peanut butter, fortune cookies, cake mixes, etc. We have invested in a lot of de-packaging equipment (a lot that was designed in-house by

Jimmy) that takes expired (but still good) food products out of packages and blends with other feed ingredients," Dr. Krantz outlines.

THEY HAVE SUPPLEMENTED FEED RATIONS WITH NON-TRADITIONAL INGREDIENTS

"We get mislabeled, out-of-date products that are perfectly good alternative food sources for our pigs. Also, when these companies develop new products, they are required to do trial runs, etc. That excess comes right to us," he continues. "It seems like many food and pet food companies have zero landfill initiatives, and Jimmy provided them with a win/win alternative to landfills. Needless to say, our nutritional staff has a unique job of figuring out how to feed these various ingredients in a way that pigs convert into protein. It has worked really well for us."

Being the first veterinarian on the payroll had its growing pains. "The biggest eye-opener for me stepping into this position was the animal pharma side of the business," he explains. "I was never taught how to work with vendors on pricing, volumes, scheduling, etc. That area of the job was all new to me. As a young vet, how do you make those decisions?

at home with these decisions."

But according to the swine expert, the most difficult challenge was earning the respect of the people who had been there since the beginning. "Convincing them that I knew what I was doing, why changes (such as removing human pharmaceuticals, vaccine

timing, the use of pain medications, etc.) needed to be made and how much better production and animal health would be once

some of these simple items were implemented, took time and effort," notes Dr. Krantz. "Being able to effectively communicate is critical. Dealing with resistance in a positive manner is also critical. However, building trust and confidence is key." **a**



OUR NUTRITIONAL STAFF HAS A UNIQUE JOB OF FIGURING OUT HOW TO FEED THESE VARIOUS INGREDIENTS IN A WAY THAT PIGS CONVERT INTO PROTEIN

For me, there was a lot of trial by fire to start with, but overall our vendors worked with me to

70 YEARS OF RAISING PIGS IN TENNESSEE

AURORA PRODUCTS HELP KEEP ANIMAL WELFARE ISSUES IN CHECK AT TOSH FARMS

For several years, Dr. Krantz and Tosh Farms have been utilizing Aurora's product line to help with pain mitigation, breeding and heat stress.

BARRIER® "After using them, I'm a believer that they mitigate some of the pain associated with processing, i.e., castration and tail docking specifically. We use that on all of our pigs."

CLARITY® A.I. LUBE "We use a lot of the AI lube when we're doing all of our post-cervical AI, and it is used on most of our sow farms. Besides the superior formulation, the price is excellent. When you're breeding upwards of 140,000 sows a few times a year, price is always a strong benefit. The people who are doing the breeding are happy with it, so I am, too."

BALANCE "Raising pigs in the south where humidity and heat are always a concern, we have come to rely on BALANCE Stress and Dehydration Aid in heat stress situations. It's easy to administer, and you see the pigs respond almost instantly. We have especially liked using it prior to loading big pigs on the trucks. Growers report when they use it 24 hours prior to loading the pigs, they don't seem to get as fatigued and have more energy to get on the truck. Many report that it takes the stress out of loading when they're calm and gentle. As part of our research, we've used it on sows in farrowing houses and have seen some increases in water and feed consumption, critically important when we are in our hottest seasons."

Seth Krantz, DVM



Winbak Farm, harness racing's largest standardbred nursery, was founded in 1991 by Joe and JoAnn Thomson. The farm was originally Winfield Farms, home of the legendary Thoroughbred, Northern Dancer. In 2019 alone, Winbak graduates had 2099 wins and earnings of more than \$21 million.

Winbak Farm of Maryland stands as one of the finest facilities in the sport to breed and raise standardbreds. Located in Chesapeake City, the heart of Maryland's great horse breeding tradition, the farm sits on more than 3,000 acres of lush farmland and serves as Winbak's headquarters. Winbak Farm of Maryland is home to four stallions that have each sired several stakes winners.

Some of the most prestigious races won by Winbak graduates in North America include the Art Rooney, the Battle of Brandywine, the Breeders Crown, The Cane Pace, the Hambletonian, the Kentucky Futurity, The Little Brown Jug, The Meadowlands Pace and the New Jersey Classic. Three of Winbak's 13 Millionaires, Muscle Hill, No Pan Intended and Rainbow Blue, have received U.S. Horse of The Year honors.

The Maryland location is the largest of the farms, which includes racehorse, foaling and yearling divisions as well as a stallion barn. Winbak also has farms in New York and Ontario, and a stallion station in Delaware as well.

Winbak's breeding and foaling operation is active from January to July, this year over 300 foals are expected at Winbak Farm of Maryland. They come from some of the best families

WINBAK•FARM

WINNING TRADITION IS EARNED EVERY DAY



Winbak veterinarian, Sarah Mackie.

in harness racing. Winbak's yearling manager and his staff work year-round to prepare the athletic yearlings for the fall sales. As soon as one crop is sold, the next crop is weaned.

Making sure the 400 mares are bred on time and the 300 foals are ready for the next generation of winners, is Winbak senior veterinarian, Sarah Mackie, DVM (VA Tech '04), associate veterinarian Jenny Hamilton, DVM (VA Tech '19) and veterinary assistant Melissa Diamond, BS (U of DE).

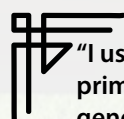
"I actually started working for Winbak when I was a teenager," Dr. Mackie recalls. "When I was in veterinary school, they asked me to come back when I graduated, so I did. With anywhere between 1,000 to 1,200 animals on the farm at one time, the job is very interesting and very challenging."

Dr. Mackie, who works six days a week all year, says every other day is dedicated to breeding. "I spend a lot of time calling in semen orders from all over the area and Canada. The rest of the days are following up the breeding, including uterine treatments, pregnancy checks, embryo transfers (8 days post ovulation), vaccinations, health issues, etc. Working with the mares is by far my favorite part of the job, any aspect of breeding, whether it be ultra-sounding to foaling. I also love the embryo transfer work. It's amazing to see masses of cells which could one day develop into the next Millionaire," she smiles.

There are two foaling barns on site, each manned with a 24-hour, seven-days-a-week staff to make sure the valuable foals are completely taken care of and assured the best care. "All of the foals, regardless of birthday, are weaned at the same time in October," says

Dr. Mackie. "They are turned out for a year and then prepped/trained for 6-8 weeks before their sale. We usually retain 50+ foals to train ourselves for various races."

When Dr. Mackie isn't in the barn, she enjoys hiking, kayaking, gardening and trail riding with her retired Standardbred mare. "Even though I work a lot of hours in the breeding and foaling season, I always try and find time for myself," she concludes. "The veterinary industry is starting to realize that burning out doesn't help anyone. We have to have time to decompress, so we can better do our jobs. Employers are starting to realize that more," she concludes.

 "I use a lot of EQUISUL-SDT® (Sulfathiazole/Trimethoprim), especially when I have placentitis issues or general infection I just can't clear up. It is easy to use and from a compliance standpoint, it works really well. We have had no issues with it at all and lean on it more and more." **Sarah Mackie, DVM**

EQUISUL-SDT is a registered trademark of Aurora Pharmaceuticals, Inc.



CHRISTENSEN FARMS ... **INDUSTRY VISIONARIES**

With Firm Focus On Production Excellence



Photos provided by Christensen Farms





Mike Eisenmenger, DVM



When Robert “Bob” Christensen started raising pigs back in 1974, terms like “biosecurity,” “all-in, all-out” and “animal welfare” hadn’t even been invented. However, Bob Christensen was an industry visionary and initiated his own version of biosecurity protocols early in his business. And he brought in outside experts – veterinarians, nutritionists, genetics reps, building experts, etc., – because, as he often said, he always wanted to have “smarter people than him” in the room when big decisions needed to happen. And even though the patriarch passed away in 2012, his vision, entrepreneurship, animal welfare focus and innovative management style is still alive and prospering at the Sleepy Eye, MN, food production system.

Today, Christensen Farms has built one of the largest family-owned pork production operations in the country with nearly 1,000 employees and 1,500 contract partners. Christensen Farms recognized early in their development, if they wanted to improve their company’s sustainability, they needed to expand their operation across the pork value chain – from farm to fork. This desire for a more integrated production model led them to become the largest shareholder of Triumph Foods, a producer-owned primary pork processing plant in St. Joseph, MO. Triumph Foods also holds a 50% partnership in another primary pork processing plant, Seaboard Triumph Foods LLC of Sioux City, IA.



To support further pork processing for specialized items such as bacon and other premium pork products, Triumph Foods members own 50% of Daily’s Premium Meats.

Through key packer and partner relationships, Christensen Farms owns more than 140,000 sows, markets over three million hogs per year and has a diverse geographic grow-finish (nursery, wean-to-finish and finish) territory encompassing more than 30,000 square miles.

“We have internal staff veterinarians and contract veterinarians – the best of both worlds,” says Mike Eisenmenger, DVM (ISU, ’83), Swine Vet Center (SVC) in St. Peter, MN.

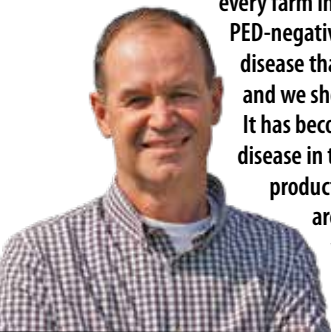
“This long-standing relationship is somewhat unique in that it allows internal focus, but still allows us a connection to an outside set of people that have a completely different perspective that benefits the entire system and company. Bob Christensen believed that when you look at the same thing every day, you can become engrained in a thought pattern that can be unhealthy to the overall picture. Bringing in outside veterinarians allows us to bring new ideas, a different perspective to a problem and innovative thoughts that benefit the system. Bob always wanted to get the best and brightest minds he could find and discuss problems or opportunities before making a decision. That process is now a part of the management style at Christensen Farms,” says Dr. Eisenmenger, 2017 American Association of Swine Veterinarians Swine Practitioner of the Year.

According to Dr. Eisenmenger, health goals in a system that has 143,000 sows or 1,200 sows, is pretty much the same. “We have the same goals and management issues. We all want to make sure the animals are healthy and treated correctly. The challenge of working in a big system vs. a 1,200-sow operation,” he adds, “is not to look at the goals of the individual farm, but rather the system, and then work yourself back to the individual farm. If I start at the farm level, I can get lost on the farm and forget about what’s right for the system.

Continued on next page

Our health goals, like most systems, is to reach and maintain 100% negative for PRRS, Mycoplasma and Porcine Epidemic Diarrhea (PED). We track these every day and report the results to the company on a weekly basis. We never want to lose focus on the value of our health goals.”

Regarding PED, Dr. Eisenmenger firmly believes every farm in the Midwest should be PED-negative. “It is a devastating disease that should not be here, and we should not allow it in. It has become mostly a winter disease in the grow-finish phase of production, especially when we are selling a lot of pigs and we have trucks and pigs constantly moving. Our challenge is to make sure it doesn’t go from grow-finish back



Dr. Mike Eisenmenger

into the sow farms.”

The swine practitioner adds, “We realized transportation was a big biosecurity issue for the system, especially when moving weaned pigs off a sow farm. We built multiple truck washes, added high-heat drying bays to those facilities, and then we upgraded to the Bio-Dri System (allows heat as high as 160°F for 15 minutes to kill bacteria),” he outlines. “Our goal was to have a trailer that was perfectly clean when we were done. Now every designated trailer goes through there before they back up to a sow farm or nursery. The return for this investment is easy to see. We see an extremely low percentage of pigs that are positive for our three health reference numbers – PRRS, Myco and PED. When you can generate an extremely low number of PRRS-positive pigs on a weekly basis, all of a sudden, the system’s death loss is lower, the antibiotic usage is less, the pigs grow faster, we see better feed conversion and our contract producers are happier. It’s a huge win for our system.”

The Christensen Farms health team consists of four veterinarians and a comprehensive services and

operations team that’s in contact with contract and company growers on a regular basis. “We spend a lot of time with the Service Techs and their contract producers,” outlines Dr. Eisenmenger. “We know their sites, management skills and make sure we are an asset they utilize when needed. Regardless, they all follow company rules on health, feeding, animal welfare, etc. This is especially true when it comes to biosecurity and animal welfare. We want everyone to follow the same playbook.”

As impactful as they can be, Christensen Farm management and employees continue to increase their efforts to tell their story, including how they care for their animals, but also the environment and the communities they live, work and play in. The people who physically care for our animals to all the other folks on the team directly and indirectly supporting the overall mission of responsibly producing pork to feed a growing population, all play a critical role in that venture, every single day,” says Amber Portner, Communications Manager at Christensen Farms.

“First and foremost, we are concerned with delivering upon our responsibilities pertaining to animal well-being, people safety, food safety, environmental stewardship and community support. When we do all these things right,” she adds, “we can confidently and transparently tell the good story our organization has to share which continues to be imperative as the gap widens between consumers and where their food comes from, including pork.”

Dr. Eisenmenger adds, “There’s been a stigma in our industry that ‘big is bad.’ When we go through any veterinary or facilities procedures, animal welfare is foremost. How we build facilities is always improving. Better ventilation, improved pen space, better feed and water systems, etc. We have a very active internal (and external) audit team that only focuses on welfare. Every farm has to pass this audit process to stay in the Christensen Farm system. They assure these factors are always improving and evolving. It’s never stagnant; it’s always improving.” On top of this, there are randomized welfare audits that go through



Amber Portner, Communications Manager

every sow farm in their system. According to Dr. Eisenmenger, the auditors are not looking for ways to produce more pork or find production shortcuts, they are specifically there to assure the animals are being raised with animal welfare in the forefront.

“I’m very proud of the health status of this company,” outlines Dr.

Eisenmenger. “PED blindsided us as an industry. However, it showed us we needed to have plans in place that covered not only transboundary diseases like PED, but also the threat of foreign animal diseases. We have spent countless hours and hope to be able to make the right, well thought out moves, if we ever have a foreign animal disease threat.”

But what keeps the veteran swine practitioner up at night is market volatility and protecting trade agreements. “We have to stay on top of all this. So, keeping our systems producing the best, disease-free pigs, will be huge. Anything that will change the consumer confidence to purchase pork products – including animal welfare issues, overuse of antibiotics, sudden health issues, etc. – can be devastating to our industry. We focus on this daily in everything we say, do, produce and ship. It’s everyone’s responsibility in our industry to do the same.”

In conclusion, Bob Christensen wrapped it up best when he said, “You clearly have to be on the leading edge; but first and foremost, you need to understand the difference between the leading edge and the bleeding edge. Sometimes that’s a real fine line. Take the time to understand the cause and effect all the way through. Good times never last and bad times never last. Be proficient enough at what you do so that you’re there towards the end.”

To his credit, Christensen Farms remains in capable, forward-thinking hands, totally focused on bringing high quality pork to family tables. **a**



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By: Mike Strobel, DVM, MS,
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FINAL THOUGHTS

Aurora Pharmaceutical and Veterinary Practices are Meeting the Challenges of 2020

The veterinary community has been very successful in navigating the challenges of Covid-19. Curbside pickup, masks and social distancing have added challenges along the way. What I have seen in our and other practices is a consistent effort to provide exceptional service to our clients, and I applaud our veterinary community for maintaining an exceptional level of service in these challenging times. Aurora Pharmaceutical is doing all we can to assure consistent supply of product to your practice. We appreciate the ongoing support we are seeing for our products, and we are excited to introduce Revolt® (selamectin), our first approved canine and feline heartworm, flea and tick product into the market.

Aurora is expanding our physical plant to allow us to continue to add products, both proprietary and generic, to our offering with 50,000 square feet of space added in 2020. The FDA and USDA approval process takes a long time. It requires persistence and planning and a view toward the long term to be successful. Our dedicated team at Aurora is up to that task and over the next five years, we hope to add over a dozen new FDA and USDA approved products to give you choices that you currently do not have.

In addition to developing new products, Aurora is also committed to doing ongoing research on current products to give veterinary practitioners better information on which to base therapeutic decisions. Recent examples of this include:

- ◆ Supporting research at Colorado State University on Equisul-SDT® use in foals in regards to dosing and safety.
- ◆ Supporting research at the University of Maine and Louisiana State University on the uterine levels of sulfadiazine and trimethoprim achieved in mares which showed we can achieve therapeutic levels in the uterine lining.
- ◆ Supporting research at the University of California, Davis into sensitivity of *Streptococcus equi* and *zooepidemicus* to Equisul-SDT confirming sensitivity on 99% of historical isolates tested.
- ◆ Research on Balance showing its effect on stomach pH in adult horses. This showed its ability to increase pH over 4.0 for an extended period simply by adding it to the horse's water.
- ◆ Research on Clarity® AI Lube in horses at Texas A&M on the positive effect it has on sperm compared to other products on the market.
- ◆ Research on Oral-Pro® Liquid Sodium Salicylate compared to 12.5% Blue Aspirin given orally to pigs with the achievement of therapeutic blood levels for the Sodium Salicylate and not the Aspirin.

This work and other ongoing studies are a reflection of our commitment to the veterinary community. We want to be your partner in the advancement of the practice of veterinary medicine. I graduated from the University of Minnesota in 1982, and I believe in the veterinary profession and all that we do to help our animal patients and their owners. I am going to do all I can to continue to support the veterinary community now and into the future. Hopefully as you read this, we will have begun vaccinating for Covid-19 and the challenge this pandemic has brought to the world will begin to recede, so that we can meet with clients face to face again, and get back to a more normal time where we continue the important task, we all have, of helping others.

From all of us at Aurora, I want to wish everyone a healthy and prosperous 2021, and thank you again for your support and confidence in us the past year.



DVM Business Essentials
Aurora Pharmaceutical, Inc.
1196 Highway 3 South
Northfield, MN 55057

Aurora Pharmaceutical, Inc.
Innovative Products
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For full prescribing information for EQUISUL-SDT®, Altren®, SwineMate® or any Aurora product, please see the package inserts on our website, www.aurorapharmaceutical.com

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Stephanie Beard, Integrator Account Coordinator

Continued from page 3

group. That's where Stephanie Beard, Integrator Account Coordinator, steps into the picture.

"One of the pieces that differentiates MWI from other distribution partners is our ability (and desire) to help train and educate integrators, their employees, veterinarians and marketing staff on how to use various products correctly," outlines Beard, who has been with MWI since 2012 and earned an Animal Science degree from the University of Arkansas. "In this day of being able to bring value to our customers, the training we provide at the Simple Solutions Seminars

focuses on helping the integrator, and we are able to deliver on their expectations of quality service."

According to Beard, the integrator team at MWI collaborates with territory managers and product vendors to bring a hands-on approach to training. "We want to make sure the integrator and their personnel are not just using the products we offer, but using them accurately, efficiently and safely. We cover such things as sanitation, water management, vector control points, surface spraying, water medicator use and calibration, etc. The training we put on with our fantastic vendor partners, including Aurora, is intended to help the



user of the product optimize application and usage."

"We've done this type of training for the past few years," adds Bielfelt. "It originally started out as in-person training, however, the current work environment pushed us to advance our offering. We are getting ready to formally launch (1st Quarter 2021) Virtual Simple Solutions Seminars training which will provide learning opportunities to more people. That's what our integrator partners wanted."

In conclusion Bielfelt notes, "What our customers want most, and this is especially true during the pandemic, is for us to remain consistent, despite the changes. They want the same items from us, even though some (especially PPE and cleaning and disinfectants products) are hard to come by. That's when good vendor partnerships really payoff. Our team went the extra mile to find these products and sources. We took on some extra inventory knowing we would need it to fill customer demand. But that's our focus; work hard with the goal to always bring value to our customers."

