TECHNICAL WORKSHOPS

FOCUS ON FOOD SAFETY
23rd August, 2004, University of Sydney

More than 50 delegates from 25 organisations attended a Faculty workshop on Food Safety and Farmed Animals held on 23rd August 2004, convened by Professor Richard Whittington. The seminar was a tangible demonstration of the Faculty’s commitment to producing graduates and researchers able to meet the needs of Australia’s future production animal industries. Australia’s red meat industries alone could lose $AUD billions per annum in the event of a crisis in consumer confidence, and in the last ten years worldwide, human disease, sometimes in outbreak form, causing death due to exposure to animals or consumption of animal products has been observed. Examples include BSE or mad cow disease (bovine spongiform encephalopathy), Nipah virus in pigs, E. coli O157 in ground meat and hepatitis A virus in oysters.

Keynote speaker was Professor Will Hueston, Director, Centre for Animal Health and Food Safety, College of Veterinary Medicine, University of Minnesota. Other internationally-recognised experts included Professor Ian Gardner, Professor of Epidemiology, Department of Medicine and Epidemiology, University of California, Davis, Dr Bob Biddle, Australian Deputy Chief Veterinary Officer, Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Australia, Canberra and Mr Ian Jenson, Food Safety Program Manager, Meat & Livestock Australia.

The workshop provided the Faculty with a clear message that it has a significant impact in ensuring the well-being of the community through the role of veterinarians in food safety. The workshop was sponsored by the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Meat and Livestock Australia, Rabo Bank, Australian Meat Industry Council, Australian Biosecurity CRC and the Faculty’s Veterinary Public Health Management Program.

ACHIEVING SUSTAINABLE RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT & EXTENSION OUTCOMES WORKSHOP: IDENTIFYING, UNDERSTANDING AND ASSESSING METHODS
1st September 2004, University of Sydney

An interactive workshop, attended by 20 participants from six organisations, designed to identify, understand and assess specific methods that enhance the achievement and sustainability of research, development and extension outcomes in agriculture was hosted in the Faculty by Dr Jenny-Ann Toribio. Presenters included Dr Alberto Taveros, Dr Agnes Taveros, Dr Fe Gabunada and Mrs Elenita Espinosa, Leyte State University, Richard Clark, Queensland DPI, Dr Fay Rola-Rubzen, Curtin University.

The workshop was based on presentations from researchers involved in the Leyte Livestock Improvement Program (LLIP). This is an ACIAR-funded program working with smallholder farmers in the Philippines to improve and innovate their pig and chicken production systems, in order to increase their outcomes in profit, environment and efficiency. The workshop presentations focused on three aspects of the LLIP work: the methods used; results achieved; and the contribution of methods to sustaining outcomes after project completion. Throughout the workshop time was allocated for participants to question the methods presented, offer suggestions for improvement and evaluate their potential application in other agricultural research settings.

Hosting of this workshop by Farm Animal Health demonstrated the interest in and ability of our group to contribute in innovative and applied ways to research, development and extension that will achieve sustained outcomes for livestock enterprises in developing countries.
AQUACULTURE IN THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY WORKSHOP
12th August, 2005, University of Sydney

The College of Science and Technology hosted a strategic planning workshop organised by Professor Richard Whittington with representatives from NSW Department of Primary Industries, the School of Aquaculture University of Tasmania and the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry. Guest speakers Dr Geoff Allan and Dr Barbara Nowak, outlined the state of development of the aquaculture sector in Australia and internationally and outlined opportunities in teaching and research. Activities and capacity at the University of Sydney were presented by academic staff from The Faculties of Veterinary Science, Agriculture Food and Natural Resources and the Schools of Biomedical Sciences and Biological Sciences. The outcomes of the workshop included a commitment to work with other organisations to develop complementary streams in undergraduate teaching for markets in Australia and overseas and collaborative research. Pathways of study will be developed at the University of Sydney to cater for students with an interest in aquaculture and fisheries.

MLA OJD HARVEST YEAR CONFERENCE
8th – 9th December, 2005, Adelaide

The Faculty assisted Meat and Livestock Australia (MLA) in the planning of the MLA OJD Harvest Year Conference, Adelaide, December 8-9 2005. The organising committee met at Camden on many occasions to create a major event with industry to showcase the outcomes of the 1998 – 2004 national research program. The Faculty’s post doctoral researchers, post graduate students and academics were prominent among the many scientific and industry presenters at this meeting.

Producers from each of the states enthusiastically supported the opportunity to discuss the latest technological developments with senior scientists, young researchers and representatives of government agencies.