

Educational Experience Report – Bovine Vet Conference

Jerry Bertoldo, DVM or Gerald R. Bertoldo, DVM

The annual conference of the American Association of Bovine Practitioners was held in Omaha, Nebraska on September 14-16, 2017. It brought together 2,029 individuals of which over 1,400 were veterinarians, veterinary students, graduate students or vet techs. This year's theme was "What We Know That Isn't So", a humbling proclamation for the veterinary world! This was probably the best AABP conference I have ever attended.

From the opening keynote address by Mark L. Gruber, MD, a noted pioneer in the study of human medicine diagnostic error, dozens of "myths" and long held "truths" were exposed and discussed throughout the three days. Scientific evidence repeatedly was used to explain why we need to leave our comfort zones and relearn what we believe at times.

Through general sessions, beef and dairy tracts, research summaries and poster sessions a mix of university faculty, graduate students and industry delivered a wide array of information on nutrition, reproduction, genetics, infectious disease, metabolic issues, vaccines, zoonotic disease, antibiotic stewardship and the human side of animal production.

The trade show was a great opportunity to be updated on new products and diagnostic technologies. Not being in veterinary practice for almost two decades limits my exposure to sales representatives and the parade of "new and exciting" things they detail. The networking with the players in the cattle industry at a venue of this scope proved as always to be quite valuable.

More immediate in impact to my Dairy Specialist position with Cornell Extension were the wide array of subject areas to consider for writing newsletters, developing or modifying on farm "dairy skills trainings" and subjects for discussion groups. One special bonus was the ability to hear presentations on topics that will be featured in a young stock focused conference that I am the annual chair of in December. Visiting in person with four of the speakers on the agenda of the upcoming meeting was very useful. Being up to speed on potential presentation content helps greatly in guiding presenters for continuity and learning objectives.

With tight budgets a universal concern, the NACAA scholarship program is a welcomed avenue to pursue for educational opportunities whether of a large and small nature. The Scholarship Fund enables us to leverage relatively small contributions into awards many times that dollar value. Just another great benefit of being a part of the National Association of County Agricultural agent's family!

The photo is one of my dairy colleague Libby Eiholzer and myself at our 2017 "Artificial Insemination & Bovine Reproduction" training that we do every year or so. It is part of the "Dairy Skills Trainings" series mentioned in the article. Even though it is not just of me, it is one of the better representations of on-the-farm-living and we are 'dressed' for the part.



April 2017, Jerry Bertoldo and Libby Eiholzer (Libby was the NACAA 2017 Achievement Award winner from New York), 2-day on-farm, hands-on training, photo by R. J. Anderson.