

2024 AABP Recent Veterinar Graduate Conference Keys to Unlocking Longevity

FEBRUARY
9-10, 2024

KNOXVILLE,
Tennessee



AABP Recent Veterinary Graduate Conference Provided “Keys to Unlocking Longevity”

AABP members who are recent veterinary graduates were inspired to confidence at the 2024 7th Annual AABP Recent Graduate Conference held Feb. 9-10 in Knoxville, Tenn. In-person attendance was limited to AABP members who graduated veterinary school eight or fewer years ago. Supporting the theme of “Keys to Unlocking Longevity”, keynote speaker Dr. Marissa Hake (also known as Dr. Hake – Calf Vet on her popular Facebook page) discussed “Good Husbandry of the Cow Vet”, and how to support the human side of cattle veterinary medicine.

The conference offered 15.5 RACE-approved CE credits, and sessions for general interest, beef and dairy, clinical skills, practice management, and small ruminant/swine sessions were offered, in addition to four preconference seminars. A milk quality preconference seminar was held at the University of Tennessee dairy, the University of Tennessee beef farm was the site of the hands-on bull breeding soundness seminar, and the University of Tennessee College of Veterinary Medicine was the site of the lameness protocols/hoof-trimming seminar. Also offered was a practice management seminar on starting a practice or buying in/buying out.

The program committee, consisting of Dr. Nick Shen (Program Chair and AABP Emerging Leader), Dr. Ryan Wood (dairy), Dr. Rachel O’ Leary (dairy) and Dr. Andy Harding (beef), matched the demographic of attendees. “The 2024 AABP Recent Graduate Conference was a great success,” said Shen. “We had a record number of attendees, delicious meals sponsored by great companies, lots of companies represented at the trade show, a phenomenal speaker line-up that went over hot topics under the radar for recent graduate bovine veterinarians.”

The 2024 RG Conference program committee's theme and ultimate goal was to provide attendees “keys” to unlocking longevity in bovine practice, Shen added. “To accomplish this, we kicked the conference

off with Dr. Marissa Hake's ice-breaking abilities followed by various different presentations on how to tap into this longevity.” Throughout the conference, various topics were discussed to allow attendees to learn and take home skills that can be implemented immediately in both beef and dairy



2024 AABP Recent Graduate Conference Program Committee, L-R: Dr. Andy Harding (beef chair); AABP Emerging Leader Dr. Nick Shen (chair); Dr. Rachel O’Leary (dairy co-chair) and Dr. Ryan Wood (dairy co-chair)

practice that will benefit their clients.

“This conference continues to get better each year, both in terms of the great CE offered but also attendance by our recent graduate members,” noted AABP Executive Director Dr. Fred Gingrich. “Our goals for this conference each year is to provide AABP resources targeted to newly graduated members, connect them to AABP, provide networking opportunities for their peers, and inspire them to remain in bovine practice.”

The conference closed with insightful presentations on disaster management from Dr. Tera Barnhardt who has been in the trenches on the national stage. “This was a great lead into our final presentation by Dr. Blaine Melody who allowed us to humble ourselves down, reflect and learn that any obstacles that we run into as new graduate bovine veterinarians are not new,” Shen said. “We are not alone in this profession. The sacrifices we make on a personal level can be great to say the least, but we

The American Association of Bovine Practitioners is an international association of veterinarians serving society as leaders in cattle health, welfare and productivity.

have each other as colleagues to fall back on when we need each other. We, as veterinarians, have each other's back."

Conference stats

This year's conference stats were impressive. There were 213 conference attendees who were recent graduates, 31 speakers, 40 exhibitor personnel representing 24 companies/organizations, plus AABP leadership and VIPs for a total of 258 in attendance. As far as the attendees' demographics, 72% of attendees graduated in 2021-2023, 75% were female, 25% were male, and the University of Wisconsin had the most alums present (second was the University of Tennessee).

The Recent Veterinary Graduate Conference was launched in 2018 as a result of the different needs of AABP members who are recent graduates, many of whom are unable to attend the AABP Annual Conference in the fall. "Energy and excitement emanated from the attendees of this year's Recent Grad conference," said AABP President Dr. Michael Capel. "The planning committee did an excellent job with the program, and the theme 'Keys to Unlocking Longevity' was spot on. I applaud their forward thinking in selecting presentations that addressed physical, mental and practice health issues." Capel added that preconference seminars provided practical, hands-on knowledge that could be incorporated quickly into practice and were topics that pushed the audience to think more deeply. "This conference is an excellent place for recent graduates to reconnect with former classmates and to forge new friendships," he said.

Registrants and AABP members can access the RACE-approved recorded presentations as a free member benefit through the Beef Cattle Institute website accessible at <https://aabp.org>.

#2024RG

"Overheard" at Recent Grad

"Proper utilization of credentialed veterinary technicians can help improve practice productivity."

MegAnn Harrington, BS, CVT, VTS (PAIM) on using credentialed veterinary technicians in bovine practice

Preconference Seminars Offered In-depth Instruction

Four preconference seminars were well-attended to help attendees take home practical skills to put immediately into practice.

This year's offerings include Practice Ownership! Starting, Buying & Buying Into; Milk Quality; Bull Breeding Soundness Exams and Thinking Through and Practicing Lameness Treatment Protocols. AABP would like to also thank the wonderful instructors and the University of Tennessee dairy and beef farms as well as the University of Tennessee College of Veterinary Medicine for the use of their great facilities!

Practice Ownership! Starting, Buying & Buying Into

David McCormick and Dr. Nick Shen provided information on practice management financial resources to attendees who were interested in ownership. Practice valuation, buy in/buy out strategies, and evaluating practice financials were covered. Starting a practice, planning, inventory management, client communication, building a solo ambulatory practice from scratch, and work-life balance of sole ownership were also discussed.



David McCormick gives insights on business management at the practice management preconference seminar.

Thinking Through and Practicing Lameness Treatment Protocols Preconference Seminar

Preconference seminar Thinking Through and Practicing Lameness Treatment Protocols with Drs.



Dr. Pierre-Yves Mulon (right) assists an attendee in the lameness preconference seminar. Photo courtesy of Dr. Nicole Schielzo.

Pierre-Yves Mulon and Gerard Cramer took place at the University of Tennessee College of Veterinary Medicine. This seminar included a lecture and then hoofwork and trimming of cadaver feet.

Welcome Reception Kicks off the Conference



It was a fantastic kick off to the 2024 AABP Recent Graduate Conference at the Welcome Reception sponsored by Boehringer Ingelheim with a welcome from Boehringer's Dr. Jen Roberts.

Keynote Speaker Hake Addressed Caring for Yourself

Dr. Marissa Hake, CalfVet LLC and senior director of Animal Welfare and Sustainable Farming for fairlife, presented the keynote address, Good Husbandry of the Cow Vet. Hake spoke about caring for yourself.

"Highly successful people who are trying to do better and be better set goals," Hake said. She said writing down goals is important to help you reach them. "Put your goals on paper. Chase goals, not calves. It's been demonstrated that achieving a goal is 30-times more likely to be successful if you write it down, but only three percent of people do that." Hake said what has helped her is using a whiteboard

as well as jotting things down on sticky notes she puts all over her house and office.

Along with that, Hake said setting intentions is as important as setting goals. "Intentions are more flexible and they help manifest goals. How often are we setting our intentions on farm calls? It's important that we are moving with intentions."

Some intentions that Hake said apply to young veterinarians include:

- Realizing you belong here. "Let imposter syndrome go. You are a value to this profession. Expand your herd."
- Let go of insecurities. "The first 5-7 years is rocky. We have to trust the process and be comfortable with being uncomfortable."
- Take everything in and let go.
- Embrace the herd mentality. "Use this time to connect with and support others."

Some other tips Hake gave were:

- Decide which balls you are juggling are glass and which are rubber. "Glass balls are things like your marriage and kids – you don't want to drop and break those. Rubber balls are things that won't break if you drop them like getting the laundry done or getting groceries."
- Your time is valuable. Protect your time at all costs. Hake quoted Kim Garst: "If you don't value your time, neither will others."
- "No" is a complete sentence. "Get okay to saying no and setting boundaries," Hake said.
- When you're nervous and to help with stress, go into "cud-chewing" mode and practice Box Breathing – breathe in for 4 seconds, hold for 4 seconds, exhale for 4 seconds and hold for 4 seconds.
- You cannot pour from an empty cup, so take time to renew and recharge.
- Burnout – "There are signs when your check-engine light is on and truly knowing when the train is veering off the track for you." She noted that veterinarians and farmers more likely to experience burnout and compassion fatigue than others. "One in six veterinarians have considered suicide. We need to know we are at high-risk."



Hake encouraged young veterinarians (and all veterinarians) to embrace the herd mentality and do things like sending a colleague, no matter how far away, a text just to check on them or trade some silly conversations. “Be super intentional about the relationships you’re making,” Hake suggested. “Be brave and take chances. Its lonely out here and we need a herd. Do not be afraid to look stupid!”

We are more than cow veterinarians, Hake said. “This profession is not our whole identity. This job and career should not take the most important things in my life from me.”

Follow Hake on Facebook at Dr. Hake - Calf Vet.

Consulting on Calf Autofeeders

Dr. Gabe Middleton discussed consulting opportunities for veterinarians with clients using calf autofeeders. He said



it’s important to know their motivation for using them. “If the producer is implementing autofeeders to improve nutritional plane, increase growth and capitalize on labor savings, the results will likely be positive,” Middleton said. “If autofeeders are

utilized so that the farm no longer needs to focus on feeding calves and calf management, the autofeeder system is destined for suboptimal results or failure. As in any calf management system, prevention of disease, particularly respiratory disease, is paramount to success.”

Middleton added that autofeeders can deliver nutritional precision, but oversight and consulting expertise is required.

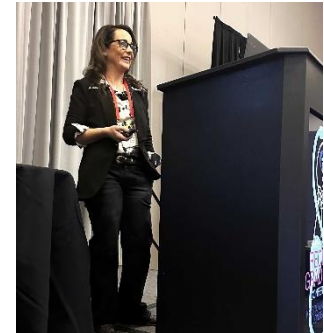
Utilizing Credentialed Technicians in Bovine Practice

MegAnn Harrington, BS, CVT, VTS (PAIM), presented information on using credentialed, licensed veterinary technicians in food animal and mixed-

animal practice. In certain jurisdictions, credentialed staff can act as “providers” of care as an extension of the supervising veterinarian for various veterinary services. This model also promotes the best utilization of a credentialed veterinary technician’s education and skill set while simultaneously alleviating excessive strain on the veterinarian’s patient load.

“Ask your credentialed technicians what they need to remain successful, and give them professional growth,”

Harrington suggested. “Let them develop so they don’t get stagnant and leave. Ask them how they can be better utilized. If your jurisdictions allow for certain activities, train them and allow them to do those tasks to free you up for being a veterinarian. Advocate for them.”



Harrington added that it’s important to support your credentialed technician in their continuing education to allow them to gain more skills as well as keep their licenses current. Empowering and trusting credentialed veterinary technicians to perform assigned duties within the scope of practice provides a unique opportunity for the profession to address many of the current challenges encountered.

“Overheard” at Recent Grad

“Checking in routinely will help reduce stress and anxiety over a formal annual review. When things are discussed over the course of the year, no one should be caught by surprise.”

Dr. Meg Skeffington on performance reviews

Understanding Financial Statements

AABP Treasurer Dr. Brian Reed spoke on understanding financial statements. He said the three basic financial statements used widely across all businesses are the balance sheet, income statement and cash flow statement.

When creating or examining a balance sheet for a veterinary business, assets may include bank accounts, accounts receivable, inventories of products, vehicles, equipment and real estate. Common liabilities will include accounts payable, credit card balances, payroll due, trade credits, line of credit balances and loan balances for vehicles, equipment or real estate.

The income statement, also known as a profit & loss statement, is a summary of revenues and expenses incurred over a period of time. An income statement measures the true profitability of a business over a period of time, not just the cash flow of transactions.



A cash flow statement reflects what can be loosely called checkbook accounting. It shows the movement of money in and out of a business, but does not equate with profit to the business. “However, the cash flow statement and cash

flow to any business is absolutely critical to understand,” Reed said. The source of cash inflows to a business can be customers paying for products and services, contributions from owners of the business, loan funds from banks for various things and a number of other things. Outflows can include regular business expenses, principal payments for loan obligations, distributions to owners and capital investments in equipment or real estate. “It is vital to understand these cash flows, however to make sure the business stays liquid and can meet its obligations.”

As veterinarians practicing in rural and semi-rural areas, it is very useful to have a good understanding of the concepts associated with and the proper use of financial statements. There are many instances of using this with food animal clients along with production medicine concepts to offer more robust consulting services. “From a personal finance perspective, it can help you understand and improve management of business ‘you’,” Reed said. “There are also many boards of director opportunities where this knowledge is very useful including school boards,

municipal elected positions, church councils and for-profit and non-profit businesses.”

Two Great Years in Knoxville!



L-R: 2023 Recent Grad Program Chair and 2023 AABP Emerging Leader Dr. Tommy Ware, guest Caroline Jones and 2024 Recent Grad Program Chair and 2024 AABP Emerging Leader Dr. Nick Shen

The stellar programming of the last two years in Knoxville, Tenn., for the AABP Recent Graduate Conferences is largely due to the efforts of (and of their great program committees!) the program chairs. Thanks for all of your hard work!

“Overherd” at Recent Grad

“No” is a complete sentence. “Get okay to saying no and setting boundaries.”

Dr. Marissa Hake on self-care of the veterinarian

Rock Stars of Recent Grad



All of the Recent Grad speakers were amazing, but some of the rock stars of the conference delivered important and self-reflective messages. Those came from Drs. Blaine Melody (left), Marissa Hake (center) and Tera Barnhardt (right).

Humane Euthanasia of Cattle

For stockman, farmers, veterinarians and animal caretakers who choose to work with cattle there are many rewards, but there is also the responsibility to provide the animals in their care with a good a life, and when that is no longer possible, to alleviating the suffering of a slow and painful death. This is not just between farmers and their cattle it is also part of the social compact farmers have with consumers to produce the food that consumers purchase for their families in a way that is ethical.

Understanding and improving euthanasia practices on farm is complex and challenging. “Fortunately, the veterinary profession is well positioned to work with their clients to build clear on-farm protocols and training programs to help provide more timely and humane euthanasia,” said Dr. Meggan Hain, who spoke on humane euthanasia of cattle.

Hain, who is the chair of the AABP Animal Welfare Committee, noted that veterinarians understand the complexities of the decision-making,



the realities of economic and logistics on farm, clinical indications, and prognosis and proper humane euthanasia methods.

Veterinarians also understand the humans who are involved in humane euthanasia and

the realities of the human-animal bond, moral disquiet of euthanasia, and compassion fatigue.

Cattle veterinarians are in a key position to assure the welfare of cattle on farms specifically by improving timely euthanasia to prevent unnecessary suffering. The *AABP Guidelines on Humane Euthanasia of Cattle* provide a great starting point for veterinarians who are working with their cattle clients to develop farm specific protocols, training and on-going support.

You can find the *AABP Guidelines on Humane Euthanasia of Cattle* at http://aabp.org/Resources/AABP_Guidelines/EUTHANASIA-2023.pdf.

Advanced Reproductive Technologies

Considering adding advanced reproductive technologies (ART) such as embryo transfer into your practice? Dr. Ashley Swenson gave tips on some things to consider:

- Make a “pros and cons” list – does adding an ART service make sense for you and what you enjoy doing?
- Ask yourself – do you have a passion for the work or are you romanticizing the idea of a value-added service?
- Ask your clients – do they truly have a need for you to perform these ART services?
- Ask your clinic/partners – can the clinic handle more services? Are they willing to support the time and financial commitment it takes to develop proficient ART skills?

“Overheard” at Recent Grad

“How can we help and provide support to our colleagues? Mental health is so important. Check in on each other. Build your support group.”

Dr. Blaine Melody’s ending keynote

Practice Tips Offered Some Sage Advice!



Practice tips always make a meeting! Program Committee shared some of their practice tips with the attendees.

AABP 2024 Emerging Leader and Program Chair Dr. Nick Shen shared a few of the little things that make life easier in his solo mobile practice. For breeding soundness exam efficiency, Shen

said once a bull is restrained, he measures the scrotum, then uses the probe and starts the ejaculator, trims the hair, takes a trich sample, collects the bull, assesses motility and gives an OK to let the bull out. While he is staining and storing the slide to look at morphology later, the next bull is restrained and ready to go.

Beef Chair Dr. Andy Harding noted that, “While we work on animals, we work for and with people.” He offered the four “Ps” of the “C” word – communication. They are: be prompt, be practical, be



polite and practice one’s skills! One of his suggestions for those wanting to improve their communication skills is to choose the communication you’re uncomfortable with to practice on, whether that’s social media, public speaking or speaking another language like Spanish.

Co-Dairy Chair Dr. Rachel O’Leary gave some tips on “Hernia Repair for Dummies”. Assessing should be done in a stepwise fashion, with first determining if a lump is a scrotal or umbilical hernia. It also needs to be known what the age of the animal is and the goal of the animal (breeding, beef, show animal). She recommends to palpate then use ultrasound. If it’s a scrotal hernia, your choices are surgery or culling. For umbilical hernias, you can wrap, do surgery or cull. She suggests if the hernia is too big, to not attempt a fix and it’s better to humanely euthanize.



Co-Dairy Chair Dr. Ryan Wood tackled knowing your limits. “A work-life balance is balancing more than just work and a house,” Wood said. “It’s family,



your personal needs, your community.” He said everyone needs a team whether it’s using AABP discussion groups, Facebook, email, classmates, colleagues or your workplace team. “Use these people,” he said. “Nobody knows everything but

everyone has their own strengths.” He also said it’s important to ask for help whether it’s properly restraining an animal, help with a new procedure or help with an outbreak. “We need to stay safe. We are expensive wranglers! Live to work another day. You can say no!”

Woolums Talks Vaccines

Vaccination is an important part of cattle medicine, and getting calves off to a good start in life means strategic vaccination of calves and dams. Dr. Amelia Woolums spoke on vaccines for all stages of a bovine’s life. Here, she discusses vaccination and calf diarrhea.

In the specific case of calf diarrhea, which is most severe in the first month of life, vaccination of calves



is unlikely to be very helpful to prevent disease, Woolums said. “Instead, vaccination of cows in late gestation, to increase concentrations of antibody to calf diarrhea agents in colostrum, is more likely to be effective.” Of course, she added, calves need to consume colostrum to receive this benefit.

“However, one of the limitations of vaccinating cows to prevent neonatal calf diarrhea is that colostral antibodies have their most important effect in the intestinal lumen, and after the cow is producing milk instead of colostrum, intestinal luminal antibodies may decrease to concentrations inadequate to prevent disease.”

Woolums added that the limitations of vaccination to prevent calf diarrhea led to the development of management practices such as the Sandhills Calving System to more reliably prevent this problem (get Sandhills Calving Information at <https://beef.unl.edu/beefreports/symp-2007-17-xx.shtml>).

AABP members can view the AABP Vaccination Guidelines at <https://aabp.org/committees/resources/VaccGuidelines2021.pdf>

Job Board Overflows with 83 Opportunities

Need a job? There were 83 job postings submitted by AABP members on the job board. Most of these are also on the AABP website (<https://aabp.org>) under the Classifieds tab, or go directly to <http://aabp.org/jobs/jobs/default.asp> where you can sort by job type, location, etc. If you sent in a job

board notice for Recent Grad, make sure you have your job posted on the website as well! Posting jobs



on the AABP classifieds page on the website is a free member benefit!

Thank you, Axiota, for sponsoring the job board!

Thanks for Lunch, Vaxxinova/ Newport Laboratories!



Thank you, Vaxxinova/Newport Laboratories for sponsoring Friday's fantastic lunch! Dr. Jason Shumaker addressed the attendees.

Trace Minerals in the Beef Herd

Dr. Dave Rethorst spoke on "The 'Why' and 'How' of Assessing Trace Minerals in the Beef Cow-Calf Herd". The energy, protein, mineral, trace mineral and vitamin status of cattle serves to modulate nearly all physiological processes in the body, including the



immune system. This immune modulation serves to influence the health and reproductive performance of cattle. Micronutrients modulate immune responses through their role in enzymatic processes, thus a micronutrient

deficiency or excess can alter immune system function. These abnormalities can alter antibody

responses, cell-mediated immunity, and natural killer cell activity.

"All of us associated with the cow-calf segment of the beef industry should pause and ask what we could do differently to improve immune function in cattle at the ranch level, the stocker/backgrounder level, and the feedyard," Rethorst said. "A nutrition plan that evaluates energy, protein, minerals, trace minerals and vitamins beginning at conception plays a major role in optimal immune system function."

Human Resources Lessons Learned

One of the keys to maintaining a positive culture in your practice is employee appreciation. An employee who feels valued is more productive as well as more loyal to the business. A simple "good morning" or "how is it going" goes a long way, said Dr. Brandon Scharping when discussing human resources.

"Frequent communication touch points with employees displays that their upper management is engaged and truly cares about them," he said.

Scharping added that unanticipated acts of appreciation such as randomly providing lunch or sweets for the team can boost morale. Handwritten thank you notes are a genuine way to express gratitude to team members. Team building activities outside of work such as a clinic Christmas party or summer cookout is another way to exhibit employee appreciation and build comradery. "If an employee is going above and beyond their expected job performance, recognize it and reward the extra effort."

Carry All of That Great Information!

Thanks, Elanco for the great bags modeled here by Recent Grad Co-Dairy Chair Dr. Ryan Wood.



Zoetis Provides Friday Night Dinner

Thank you, Zoetis, for again sponsoring the Friday night dinner and entertaining panel discussion! Dr. Dick Wallace from Zoetis noted that since 2016, through product sales Zoetis has donated over \$1 million dollars to the non-profit Folds of Honor program which creates educational scholarships for the families of those lost or injured in combat.



Following dinner, an entertaining and thought-provoking panel discussion included Dr. Dan Cummings, Dr. Marissa Hake, Dr. Tera Barnhardt and Dr. Blaine Melody. One of the questions posed to them was how do you know when it's time to leave your practice?

Melody: Start asking yourself how you feel every morning before you go to work.

Cummings: Set goals of where you want to be and see if you're making them. Lean on your support situation to assess where you're at.

Hake: When you don't feel like you are being challenged anymore.



Barnhardt: My first practice stopped aligning with why I got up in the morning. You have to look at your personal "why" and my practice stopped aligning with that. Your

practice needs to be aligned with what makes you tick and makes you want to go to work every day. It doesn't make the clinic necessarily wrong, but if it stops fitting with your needs you need to consider that.

"Overherd" at Recent Grad

"Recognize what stress looks like in you and the people who matter to you. Take care of yourself before you take care of others."

Dr. Tera Barnhardt on Consulting Through Crisis

Conference Trade Show Offered Valuable Information



The AABP Recent Graduate Conference once again held a successful tradeshow that offered table top exhibits. Breaks and

social hours were held in the trade show area for maximum exposure of attendees to exhibitors. Attendees were able to spend time and learn about the exhibitors' products. We thank all of our exhibitors!

Thank You, Merck for Sponsoring the Saturday Lunch!

Thank you, Merck Animal Health, for once again sponsoring the Saturday lunch.

Merck's Dr. Dave Sjeklocha greeted attendees and discussed Merck's product line.



Vet Schools Represent!

University of Minnesota (top photo) and University of Tennessee-Knoxville (bottom photo) alum gathered for photos – what a great opportunity to see old friends and classmates!



What's on Dr. Melody's Mind?

What is your definition of a hero? At the 2024 AABP Recent Graduate Conference it might've been two of our closing speakers. The definition of a hero might be someone who is held in high regard, seen as an expert in their subject matter, confident, willing to help others, but then, unexpectedly, displays a vulnerability that makes them ultimately so very human. That's exactly what Dr. Tera Barnhardt and Dr. Blaine Melody did in their ending remarks at the conference.

Barnhardt spoke about "Consulting Through Crisis" and dealing with a very emotionally-charged

mass cattle death event in 2022 due to heat stress where she was thrust on a national stage discussing what happened and the after effects. "Recognize what stress looks like in you and the people who matter to you," Barnhardt said. "Take care of yourself before you take care of others." She encouraged those in attendance to find those friends and colleagues to keep in touch with and send regular texts or emails just checking in on each other.

Melody, who was also the 2021 Recent Graduate Conference dairy chair, gave a sobering and thought-provoking reminder that bovine veterinarians matter as individuals and people – not just cow doctors. In his presentation "What's on Dr. Melody's Mind", he addressed what can affect longevity in practice for recent graduates, echoing the conference theme of "Keys to Unlocking Longevity".

"What does Longevity mean to you?" Melody asked. "Taking care of yourself and your own personal longevity is important. What got you interested in veterinary medicine? Why are so many exiting bovine practice if we love it so much?"

Melody said there are three bottlenecks, especially for younger bovine veterinarians:

- Where you live – Are you in a rural community? Is it a tough climate? Are you isolated?
- Who do you or do not live with – What are your family needs? Are you single vs. married? Do you have children, elderly or disabled people in your family?
- How do you live – Do you have poor pay/benefits? Are you doing a lot of ER work? Long days? Facing burnout? In an unsupportive workplace? Have cultural differences? Suffered an injury or disability?

"How can we help each other and encourage longevity?" he asked. By thinking about the next generation.

Think about some place you can help the next generation. Be on an AABP committee. Be the support group. Get contact information from people you met here at the conference before you go. We can't fix the culling issue without addressing replacement management simultaneously."



Melody discussed his personal and professional struggles with a health issue and the side effects of medication. "I had chronic back pain, broke my foot and then re-injured my back," he said. "I wondered if I could do food animal practice anymore." He says he left one practice, and considered leaving the profession. "Attending the Recent Graduate Conference was one of the reasons I stayed," he said.

His struggle with side effects of a medication, however, continued to plague him both physically and mentally. "Even though we are well-trained in medicine, I wasn't taking care of myself. I had internal suffering that no one knew. But my support structure helped me." Melody says investigation into the side effects of the medication led him to understand what was going on and make some changes.

He adds that we can't face these struggles alone. "How can we help and provide support to our colleagues? Mental health is so important. Check in on each other. Build your support group."

Heritage Vet Partners Sponsors Closing Reception

Thank you, Heritage Vet Partners, for the lovely closing reception! The excitement of the attendees and speakers was still evident even after these very busy and thought-provoking days! A lot of previous connections were renewed and a lot of new friends, colleagues and contacts were made.



Post Conference/CE

The conference offered 15.5 RACE-approved continuing education credits. Access your CE certificate by logging onto the AABP website at <https://aabp.org>. Hover your mouse over your name in the upper righthand corner, select My CE Certificates and view/download/print certificate.

All AABP members can access the RACE-approved recorded presentations as a free member benefit through the Beef Cattle Institute (BCI) website accessible at <https://aabp.org>.

Beef on Dairy and Sexed Semen Strategies

The use of sexed dairy semen and beef semen on dairies as tools to generate genetic progress and expand revenue has evolved tremendously over the past decade to the point these tools have become integrated as part of a finely managed process often referred to as the "sexed and beef" model. Dr. Mitch Hockett said continued improvements in gender-sorting techniques and increased fertility of resulting products have enabled this model to evolve to become standard operating procedure for the bulk of commercial dairies.



"Planned use of gender-sorted semen allows for controlled and targeted creation of an ideal number of heifers from a specific genetic source," he said. "Reproductive programs that improve fertility of these matings in conjunction with gender-sorted product that leads to high dairy heifer ratios, leads to the opportunity to utilize beef semen to expand revenue potential of crossbred beef x dairy calves above that of a dairy counterpart."

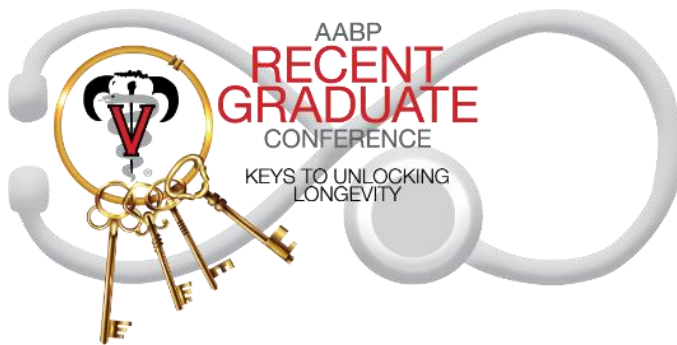
He said accurately calculating the number of sexed semen matings to meet the ideal number of dairy replacements from the top genetic animals in the herd is key. "Utilizing sexed semen in animals

with top genetics on services of highest fertility will both reduce semen costs and speed genetic progress. Sexed semen products that yield higher female ratio further decrease the number of sexed dairy doses required and expand the opportunity to create additional beef x dairy crossbred calves.”

2025 Recent Graduate Conference

The 2025 Recent Graduate Conference will be held February 14-15 in Norman, Oklahoma.

AABP post-conference newsletter created by Geni Wren, AABP Director of Marketing and Communications



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