



Newsletter No. 9 – May 2011

Introduction

Hello. Welcome to another in our occasional series of newsletters.

There was not one last year, as many of us (me included) could not get to the FVS meeting in Edinburgh due to the volcanic ash cloud (although Peter Scott told Benni Laxdal he thought it was the Icelanders burning all the money!). If you remember, this caused travel chaos around Europe, and resulted in a group which had met in Bergen travelling back across the North Sea on the *Staatsgard Lehmkuhl*, the Norwegian sail training ship!

Things are going well for the Salmon farming industry, with good prices. ISA has abated in Chile, and has not occurred in the new intake in Shetland (not yet, anyway). Lice seems to be in better control, and we continue to make progress in sorting out the “PD group” of diseases.

On a more negative note, the Institute of Aquaculture are to lay off 17 staff, although they will still retain their four key areas. This seems a short sighted move by Stirling University.

The Fish Veterinary Journal is being prepared as I write, and should come through your letterboxes in June sometime.

Our new constitution can be seen on the web site, so remember to have a look.

Fish Veterinary Society meeting, Norton House Hotel, Edinburgh. 19th & 20th April 2011

This year, we have changed our long standing arrangement of having two one day meetings annually to holding one two day meeting. It was decided to hold this in Edinburgh, at a new venue near the airport – Norton House Hotel. A wide variety of topics were covered. There was a good attendance, from Ireland to Iceland.

Proceedings started off with Chris Wallace telling us about Marine Harvest’s experience with a feed additive called Bio-Mos®. They found that it had benefits during lice treatments, giving better medicine uptake, less settlement post treatment and less skin damage. The fish produced more mucus (measured by scraping the mucus with a certain bank’s credit card – maybe a better use for them than running up bills that you can’t afford!) They also found reducing mortality from Winter Sores.

Andrew Grant next told us about sea lice sensitivity bioassays. He raised some different questions about standardising procedures, and the range of concentrations used.

After lunch, Pål Nilsen from Norway told us about his teams work in identifying the virus (a Totivirus) which causes Cardiomyopathy Syndrome (CMS) They propose to name it Piscine Myocarditis Virus (PMCV). They had done a lot of work on this disease, which kills a lot of salmon in Norway and elsewhere. They described the signs, culture and identification, and clinical trials.

They had satisfied River's postulates (which I found out more applicable to viruses than Koch's postulates at the meeting).

Next we moved to Ireland, to hear about the role of jellyfish in gill disease from Emily Baxter. She had done field studies and tank trials with mashed up jellyfish. She found that it did not take as many jellyfish to cause damage as previously thought.

After tea, Ralph Bickerdike and David Cockerill told us about the use of blood biochemistry to manage Pancreas Disease (PD). Three enzymes were used – Creatine phosphokinase (CPK), Alanine transferase (ALT) and Aspartate Transferase (AST). Taken together, these could give a picture of the spread of the disease through a site.

Finally, at the end of the day, we had a new spot – Clinical Club, where anyone could bring topics to be discussed. Topics included withdrawal periods, eels, and “fish treatment” tanks to clean up people's feet. There was some lively discussion, so this seemed to be successful.

Day Two kicked off with Steve Feist from CEFAS telling us about Emerging Diseases. New diseases are turning up, and existing ones are moving into new areas, new hosts, and changing their virulence. Steve gave us some examples, such as Gyrodactylus salaris and Crayfish Plague, as well as a single case of Amoebic Gill Disease in Rainbow trout. He also told us about CEFAS monitoring system.

He was followed by Nigel Hewlett on the New Live Movement Scheme for England and Wales. There are to be two permits, one held by the Fisheries owner/occupier, the other by the supplier. This should cut down on paperwork, and control fish movements better.

Next, Sandra Adams told us about her work with Mycobacteria, much of it in Thailand with snakeheads and Siamese Fighting Fish (and people who work with them). When they started, it was thought that there were only three aquatic species, but they had revealed that there were many more than that, using often very sophisticated techniques. She also thought that it was a potential hazard of recirculation salmon hatcheries.

Up next was Neil Robertson, who told us about good and bad vaccination practice, and gave us some results of both. His talk was enlivened by the use of chocolate to reward correct answers to his questions. A novel approach!

After lunch came the important business of the AGM. We did not have one last year, due to the Icelandic ash cloud. The new constitution was discussed, and Willie told us about the new computerised procedures for new members. The society made a healthy surplus last year.

Finally, David Fraser a somewhat depleted audience about Disease Surveillance at Marine Scotland. Sites are to be visited annually, biannually or triannually, according to the level of risk, and there is to be more “passive surveillance” (which means they wait to be notified of diseases).

There was a conference dinner in the hotel on the Tuesday night, attended by nearly forty delegates. The food and service was excellent. The hotel slipped up by double booking two delegates (which seemed to be the only complaint) but they provided a bottle of white and a bottle of red for each table in recompense.

All in all, the meeting seemed to go well. Attendance was good, and everybody seemed to enjoy it. I suggested that we reconvene outside, as we had good weather, but that would probably have made the power point screens difficult to read! In view of the success of the meeting, the plan seems to be to repeat the format at the same place next year, so we can all look forward to that! See you there!