

SRF Travel Grant Report: Professor Bob Webb

9th international Ruminant Reproduction Symposium Japan, August 25-29 2014

The IRRS meeting was held in Hotel Nikko Northland, Obihiro, Hokkaido, Japan. I was involved in a range of the activities of the symposium. Importantly the attendees confirmed that it was a very successful meeting, also stating that it was seen as one of the premier international meetings for ruminant reproduction. SRF sponsored the symposia (including all the previous 8 symposia) in addition to other learned societies (SRD, SRB, ASAS, SBTE), together with a number of companies (e.g. Zoetis, Aloka, Zenrakuren), Obihiro City and the Obihiro University Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine. I was involved in a number of aspects of the symposium.

1. Organisation

Professor Akio Miyamoto (Obihiro University Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine), Professor Mike Smith (University of Missouri) and myself were the organizing committee, with Professor Miyamoto being the local organizing committee Chair with Dr Motozumi Matsui being the Deputy Chair. The proposal for hosting the symposium in Japan was initiated approximately 8 years previously and confirmed at the previous IRRS in a pre-meeting, which I chaired, in Anchorage Alaska (8th IRRS, 2010). At the current Symposium there were a total of 200 delegates with 35 invited speakers and 90 abstracts.

2. Proceedings

Proceedings have been published for all of the previous symposia, except for the inaugural meeting. This is a high quality publication, with in depth peer reviewed chapters that have global impact. 600-800 copies are usually sold following each meeting. Income from the sales of the proceedings is used to help fund subsequent symposia. The publication process entails the setting up an international committee to select the speakers for each of the sessions. There is also an international editorial board for selecting the referees and handling the papers. I was also one of the editors and handled 8 of the symposium papers. The target for the current meeting was to publish the proceedings (Reproduction in Domestic Ruminants VIII) so it was available to delegates at the meeting. Importantly this target was achieved and sets a precedent for future meetings. I also negotiated with the publishers (Context Publishing) that SRF will hold the copyright for the proceedings. This is important because the current aim is to publish the papers from this meeting, plus all the previous 7 proceedings on the SRF website, linked to the other sponsoring learned societies. As well as being an important archive of previous meetings for both scientists and students, it will ensure higher visibility for the most recent publications.

3. Presentations and Authorship

I was a co-author on one of the invited papers and associated review (Ovarian function in domestic ruminants: Mechanistic and translational aspects. B.K. Campbell, J. Hernandez-Medrano, A.S. McNeilly, R. Webb & H. M. Picton) and also on one of the abstracts (Using 3-dimensional positioning for estrous detection in dairy cows. EM Horner, O Ogundipe, Y Gao, X Meng, A Dodson, R Webb and PC Garnsworthy).

4. Session Chair

I was invited by the local organising committee to Chair one of the sessions, namely the Lamming Memorial Lecture. This is the premier paper of the Symposium and is in honour of Professor Eric Lamming, who was a leading ruminant reproduction scientist and a founder member of IRRS. He was also a founding member of SSF and the Journal of Reproduction and Fertility and over the decades had a major impact on the international standing both of the Society (now SRF) and JRF (now Reproduction).

5. Conclusions

The 9th IRRS was very successful in every sense in attracting delegates from over 30 countries, the presentation of cutting edge research and the publication of a high quality Proceedings. On a personal note I gained significantly both from attending all of the scientific sessions and meeting delegates. I would like to thank SRF for agreeing to offset some of my expenses as well as continuing to be the leading sponsor of the IRRS.