

Vet school developing area

Aquatic bacteria identified

The Aquatic Animal Medicine Laboratory is churning through mostly uncharted waters, trying to get information on bacteria and parasites that infect animals in marine and fresh water.

"Aquatic microbiology is still an undeveloped area," explains Dr. D. H. Lewis, project researcher from the Microbiology Department at the College of Veterinary Medicine. "We don't expect to discover anything earth-shaking here, but we're laying the groundwork for someone else," agrees Dr. R. R. Bell, team member and head of the Parasitology Department. "What we're doing here is for the future."

Knowing the importance of controlled conditions in any experiment, one of the first major goals of the project has been to establish a lab in which both marine and fresh water animals can be maintained and tested.

"Aquatic animals have a more variable environment—the quality can change suddenly and drastically. So we had to have a lab in which we could control and observe the environment," explains Lewis.

But that is just part of the work. Since the program began to develop in 1970, the researchers have developed methods to find and identify aquatic bacteria and parasites.

Dr. R. A. Bendele, pathologist, and Dr. B. J. Camp of the physiology and pharmacology department are also team members on the project, funded through the Sea Grant Program by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

One result of the groundwork is publication of a bibliography of existing research material on fish and shellfish compiled by the team while poring over literature and interviews in preliminary studies.

Tools and procedures are being developed on campus, relying where possible on the same or similar methods used with warm-blooded animals.

"We have found that certain fish and shellfish produce antibody-like materials in a way similar to higher forms of animals," Lewis says.

But what about other kinds of aquatic life? How do the cold-blooded aquatic animals respond to disease? How does the disease process compare with that of the warm-blooded animal? How does repair or production of body defenses compare?

"These are all questions about which very little is known," he says. Tools and procedures are still only part of the picture.

Treatment is another thing, say the researchers. Certain drugs may

work fine on warm-blooded animals and kill the fish. Or treatment working fine in the lab may fizzle in the field.

"I can show you something that might work in the lab, but not in the field. But there are very few things that work in the field that won't work in the lab," notes Bell. "That's why labwork is so important."

Because of the virtually untapped information fish diseases and bacteria in the aquatic environment, any new chance to gain knowledge or view disease first-hand is jumped at by the team.

To that end they usually respond when called in to investigate large fish kills.

Most of the bacteria or parasites that would kill a fish or invade the "herd" on a fish farm are not particularly harmful to man or the higher animals.

"Some tend to equate disease in fish with disease in other animals. Transmission seems rare from an aquatic animal to a higher animal or man," Lewis explains.

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MY AUTOBIOGRAPHY

In High school I majored in agriculture (I was a Lone Star Farmer (the state's highest award), also mathematics, and science. However, in the university, I realized that modern farming was not complete with out engineering, so in the university that I attended, before I went into the military service 1943-1945, I took electrical engineering for about 3 years 1940 - 1943. My age at that time was 18 to 20.

After being in the service, I was discharged October 1945, I became interested in the operation of a large company, which I worked for 1945-1964. This gave me actual experience working with large companies as well as labor. A very valuable experience in government concerning this section of the economy.

However, at this time, 1964, I realized that the whole economy had to be coordinated together, so I established my own business of Economics, Financial Management, which does include all the engineering including energy engineering, money management for big and small companies, for individuals, and all other phases of the economy. It is my opinion that the world of economics consist of more than supply and demand, but the use of money for instrumentation of coordination of big companies, small companies, individuals, and all others in the nation.

I was the Republican nominee for the U. S. Representative in the 1972 election of the 6th Congressional District, which I received about 38,000 votes, or about 27% of the votes of the 6th Congressional District. I believe that I can pick up the other 23% of the votes to win in 1974.

By Carl A. Nigliazzo
Candidate for
U. S. Representative
6th Congressional District