



Spring 2010 Newsletter



Executive Director Comments

“I Appreciated the Feedback”

Mike Simpson, Executive Director

**Our Purpose/Mission...**

is to promote the humane treatment of animals through education and certification of animal auditors, as well as the review and certification of animal audit instruments, assessments and programs.

This is the second of our planned quarterly newsletters to certified PAACO auditors and auditors-in-training. After the first issue was e-mailed to you in March, I had some feedback and suggestions. Here are a few that were suggested to me:

- “...provide resources for welfare auditors to speak to community groups.” Obviously, PAACO is not staffed or structured to do this directly. However, if you are interested in this area, I would direct you to your state’s land grant university and their veterinary or animal husbandry departments. These groups, as well as national groups like the Animal Ag Alliance, have resources that would apply and be helpful if you are interested.

- “...profile of course instructors”. This is an area I take too much for granted. For the most part, our instructors serve without compensation and are the most qualified and highly respected people in their areas. A big thanks and recognition are due these folks. We will try to work in some of their stories in future newsletters. For this time, make sure you see the film biography of Temple Grandin for her story.

- “...states are going to (or may) need certified or well-trained auditors.” I have no special insight on this. As you know, more states are passing legislation/regulations impacting animal care standards. As government becomes more involved in welfare, we would hope well-trained auditors are a part of this in order to make sure there is no unnecessary negative business impact on the production sector.

- “...calendar of events that includes activities that could apply to continuing education.” It seems most of these comments were from customer-type individuals or auditors affiliated with professional audit companies. While we are pretty broad in the types of activities that apply toward continuing education, it is a struggle for this audience to find these opportunities. Later in this issue I will refer to some sites for ideas, but generally we accept programs that have animal and poultry husbandry topics covered or strict auditor protocol courses applicable to all types of auditing.

Again, your feedback and ideas for future newsletter content is welcome.

**Calendar** .....

**SEPTEMBER**

28-30: Poultry Welfare Certified Auditor Training, Raleigh, NC

**OCTOBER**

26-27: Meat Plant Welfare Certified Auditor Training – Location to be determined

**NOVEMBER**

(TBA) – PAACO Board of Directors Meeting



**PAACO** was formed in 2004 when leaders of the founding organizations identified a need to promote and advance sound animal auditing through standards for auditors in education, training and experience.

## Two Programs Gain Special Designation

Since the last newsletter was published, we were very pleased to grant “accredited” program status to the American Meat Institute Foundation’s Meat Plant Welfare Guidelines and Audit. This designation indicates that the audit instrument, auditor training and auditors meet or exceed our minimum standards for these areas. One other program – Validus Dairy Cattle Welfare – earned this designation a couple of years ago.

Also, a few weeks following the AMI announcement, we awarded the American Humane Certified Cage Free Layer Welfare Audit our “certified” status. This means that their audit instrument meets or exceeds our minimum standards for an audit instrument.

## Frequently Asked Questions .....

**“In shadowing, do I need to do all aspects of what the training covered?”**

This question frequently comes from poultry trainees because the course essentially covers from the hatcheries to dead. The comment I get is that “I am only involved in production or slaughter and not in the other areas.” The answer is YES. No matter what training you take, you are expected to be shadowed on the entire scope of the training. One exception that may be allowed is that not all poultry operations include a hatchery in their company production. In this case, we ask that the hatchery welfare criteria be covered verbally in the shadow and the supervisor is comfortable that the trainee understands that area.

**“What counts or is required for my annual continuing education activity requirement?”**

First of all, 12 hours of contact time are required. That contact time may be met by any combination of the following:

- Auditing with another certified PAACO auditor. A maximum of 4 contact hours is allowed, no matter how many might be involved. (Shadowing of PAACO trainees does not count.)
- Courses or conferences related to animal or poultry husbandry offered by international, national, state or regional organizations. This is a very broad category and subject matter does not have to be specifically welfare, but should be husbandry-oriented.
- Courses in auditing. These do not have to be specific to animals, but the principles taught must apply to animal welfare auditing.
- Up to 8 hours in any of these areas where courses are offered can be in a distance learning format.

## Quick Notes .....

- 1) Check your certification expiration date: Auditor certifications expire at the end of calendar quarters (March 31, June 30, Sept. 30 and Dec. 31). This means that several of you will have your certifications expiring very soon (June 30). Please be prompt with recertification requirements of continuing education documentation and the \$125 annual fee.
- 2) Shadow responsibilities: For trainees in the fall 2009 meat plant and poultry welfare auditor courses, the 12-month timeline for shadowing is fast approaching. It takes time to coordinate and set up these shadows, so it is critical that you attend to this now to comply.



Check out our web site:  
[www.animalauditor.org](http://www.animalauditor.org)

## Policy Updates

The board of directors met in May and adopted the following policies that you need to be aware of as they may affect you:

**1) Recertification fee:** Effective Jan. 1, 2011, the annual fee for auditor recertification will go from \$125 to \$150. The current fee of \$125 has been in place since 2006 when auditor training began.

**2) Late recertification:** Effective immediately, the following policy for late recertification was established. Hopefully, this is viewed as an incentive to stay current because follow-up on late activities is time-consuming for a limited staff.

Auditor Recertification – Late Recertification by auditors after expiration date:

- < 3 months – \$30 late fee penalty
- >3 - < 6 months – \$60 late fee penalty
- >6 months - < 1 year – retested on the species recertification; \$150 late fee
- >1 year – Retake the course including testing and shadowing

**3) Audit certification:** While this is not relevant to many of you, it is valuable to you to be aware of the quality criteria that PAACO's board has established where we certify

audit instruments. Most likely, currently there is only one audit instrument that PAACO-certified auditors may be utilizing and that is the AMI meat plant welfare audit. PAACO's training for meat plants is specifically against that audit instrument. In poultry, we are aware that there are many audit instruments out there that are used and we base our training of auditors on those criteria found in broiler, turkey and layer audits. Here are the criteria that "certified audits" and "accredited programs" must meet:

- Good breadth and valid measurable areas of welfare
- Inspection of animal conditions and performance, including measures of injury and morbidity by direct examination
- Documentation of mortality and/or euthanasia
- Housing conditions and capabilities to provide protection from environmental insults appropriate to the geographic location
- Caregiver and standard operating procedure capabilities to provide day-to-day care as well as respond to contingencies of disease and injury through euthanasia and treatment if appropriate
- Existence of methods to reduce the likelihood and effects of catastrophic events

- Methodology to minimize errors and bias in measurement
- Criteria within a range of standards from known research and application
- Presents a good standard for the industry
- Demonstrates a commitment to ongoing reinforcement of and attention to animal welfare criteria between official third party audits
- Program qualification criteria clearly separated from animal welfare criteria in the audit tool and information
- Audit instrument is written in a clear, concise format and information (supplement) provides auditors instructions/guidance on how to audit each criterion and standard

Our hope is that more audit instruments in the future will be submitted to PAACO for third party peer review based on these standards. In turn, auditors who use them also will be able to do a quality job of verifying the standards due to the quality of the audit instrument.



## PAACO ..... Officers/Directors

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## Update Planned for Meat Plant Welfare Auditing

The May 2010 meat plant auditor training course was based on the AMI's newly released audit, which contains a new and substantial section on transportation. Because AMI- based audits will now incorporate these transportation criteria and guidelines, we are organizing a distance learning instruction for those of you who are certified meat plant auditors or those in training who took the course prior to May 2010. **Your participation in the course will be mandatory if you are to maintain your certified status.**

While the details of how this will be conducted have not been completely worked out, the board approved a

reasonable cost to be assigned and three continuing education credits will be awarded.

In general, I envision us organizing an activity where you sign in on the Internet and take the instruction. There may be an open period of perhaps one month in order to accommodate your schedule. Following the lecture a true-false, multiple choice test would be administered online and graded on a pass/fail basis similar to our on-site trainings. Look for more information in the coming months.

## Website Calendars .....

As mentioned elsewhere in this newsletter, we want to provide you some resources as to where there may be meetings of interest to you and which may fulfill your continuing education requirements for recertification. Following are a few sites which list upcoming meetings for your use. The list is not complete, as others are out there, but this covers a lot.

- All Species** – <http://www.meatingplace.com/membersonly/calendar/init.aspx>
- Poultry** – <http://www.wattagnet.com/events.aspx?taxonomyid=162>
- Cattle** – [http://www.beefmagazine.com/cattlemans\\_calendar/?cid=resources](http://www.beefmagazine.com/cattlemans_calendar/?cid=resources)
- Swine** – <http://www.nationalhogfarmer.com/calendar/?cid=resources>
- Science** – <http://www.fass.org/index/asp>