Addressing Societal Needs – Developing Meaningful Solutions

The school acts as a major food animal health resource to not only create new knowledge but also share it widely to proactively address societal issues. For example:

A group of 22 faculty engaged in a wide range of production agriculture projects participated in a half-day conference earlier this year to share the impact of their research programs with commodity representatives and leaders in the Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources. Topics included infectious disease transmission, microbial contamination of water, pre-harvest food safety, nutrition and nutrient management, animal well-being and much more.

In light of the current drought, faculty in the Western Institute for Food Safety and Security are working with dairy producers to anticipate and mitigate the devastating climate effects on California’s dairy industry. A drought-related outreach effort which will include workshops, assistance application sessions and on-line web based resources is ramping up with new information being posted regularly at: www.wifss.ucdavis.edu/?page_id=61T.

A recent article published in Pulse magazine detailed a number of drought related risks and health factors identified by toxicology faculty affecting dairy and beef cattle. Concerns included water and feed quality, mineral deficiencies such as selenium, copper and phosphorus, and vitamins A and E. There is also an increased incidence of plant poisonings, especially nitrate poisoning, as cattle eat plants available during drought conditions that they would not otherwise find palatable.

The California Animal Health and Food Safety Laboratory System helps to protect the health of livestock and poultry, thereby safeguarding public health with rapid and reliable diagnoses for animal diseases affecting humans. Each month an e-newsletter, CAHFS Connections, communicates the top projects and activities by species, pathogen, and disease outbreak to keep producers, and the public informed. www.cahfs.ucdavis.edu/about/publications/cahfs_connection.cfm

The Seven Strategic Goals

- Educate world leaders in academic veterinary medicine
- Perform high-impact transdisciplinary research
- Develop cutting-edge clinical programs
- Promote animal and human well-being
- Maintain school infrastructure and sustainable resources
- Retain excellent faculty and staff
- Promote academic, government, industry collaboration