

Science Does Matter

Efforts proceed for National Association for Advancement of Animal Science.

by **KINDRA GORDON,**
field editor

“There has been no single entity in Washington, D.C., to lobby for funding for animal research. There never has been,” Russell Cross, head of the

Department of Animal Science at Texas A&M University, told attendees at the International Livestock Congress—USA 2013 in Denver Jan. 15. As a result, critical



underfunding of animal research exists, said Cross.

To address this issue and advocate for increased federal investment in animal science to support future animal-related research, the National Association for the Advancement of Animal Science was formed during the summer of 2012, Cross explained. He serves as president of the new association.

Today, the association has representation from 30 animal, dairy and poultry science departments from colleges and universities across the country. The association has been established as a 501(c)6, which allows lobbying. Cross explained that most professional societies — such as the American Society of Animal Science — are 501(c)3 entities, which cannot lobby.

Cross noted that with the growing global population and the prediction that food production will need to double in the next 40 years, new technology and strong science will be critical.

“What’s in the regulatory pipeline scares me to death,” he said, noting the animal industry faces many challenges ahead. “We need science and have got to be prepared.”

Cross also shared that current federal funding for animal and plant agricultural research has not been equal. Currently, 71% of federal funding goes to plant-related research and only 29% goes to animal-related research. Why? Cross said he believes it is because “they (plant researchers) have been more focused and better organized.”

Cross emphasized that the intention of the National Association for the Advancement of Animal Science is not to take money away from plant research. Rather, he said, “We want to make the pie [for research] bigger over time.”

He concluded, “We should be very concerned about the numbers being seen from states and Congress [for animal research]. It’s time for all of us to get in the game before it’s too late. We’ve seen it happen to poultry and dairy.”

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Russell Cross, president, explained that the purpose of the National Association for the Advancement of Animal Science is to advocate for increased federal investment in animal science to support future animal-related research.

PHOTO BY KASEY MILLER

The association's officers and board of directors are:

- ◆ Russell Cross, president, head of department of animal science, Texas A&M University;
- ◆ Maynard Hogberg, vice president, chairman of department of animal science, Iowa State University;
- ◆ Kevin Pond, secretary, head of department of animal sciences, Colorado State University;
- ◆ Janice Swanson, treasurer, chairman of the department of animal science, Michigan State University;
- ◆ Ron Allen, associate dean for research and director of the agricultural experiment station, College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, University of Arizona;
- ◆ Larry Berger, head of department of animal science, University of Nebraska-Lincoln;
- ◆ John Carey, head of department of poultry science, Texas A&M University;
- ◆ Wayne Greene, head of department of animal science, Auburn University;
- ◆ Gerald Horn, head of department of animal science, Oklahoma State University;
- ◆ Ronald Kensinger, chairman of department of animal sciences, Ohio State University;
- ◆ Mike Lacy, head of department of poultry science, University of Georgia; and
- ◆ Ken Odde, head of department of animal sciences and industry, Kansas State University.

For more information on the association or to join, contact Cross at hrcross@tamu.edu, Walt Smith at wsmith@lockelord.com or Lowell Randel at Lowell@therandelgroup.com.