

Department of Veterinary Diagnostic and Production Animal Medicine Created

Mark Troxel[†]

In recent years, many institutions have had to address budgetary and environmental changes that compel the restructuring of programs and departments. It is generally believed that restructuring will create a more efficient program that will be better able to succeed in the future. To that end, the formation of the Department of Veterinary Diagnostic and Production Animal Medicine (VDPAM) was announced this fall by the College of Veterinary Medicine. The mission of the newly created VDPAM is "to assist veterinarians, their clients, and others responsible for animal health in the detection, characterization, control, and prevention of animal diseases and to provide programs in professional service, education, and research that optimize productivity and animal welfare in the food animal industries while sustaining the environment and assuring animal product safety."

The appointment of Dr. Nolan R. Hartwig to chair the department was announced by Dean Richard Ross, making Hartwig the first to lead the department. The department, formed by the merger of Veterinary Extension, Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory, and the Production Animal Medicine and Services section of Veterinary Clinical Sciences, is expected to facilitate interaction among the faculty of the newly created department. Additionally, the merger is expected to advance teaching, service, and professional practice within the department.

"These three areas are on the front-line of serving the specialized needs of the livestock industry in Iowa and the U.S.," Ross said. "By selecting Dr. Hartwig as chair, this vital department will continue to grow, and

as a college, we will realize our vision, which is to offer the very best in livestock teaching, research, and outreach."

VDPAM has 34 faculty and 100 staff members that are responsible for teaching veterinary students, conducting diagnostic and applied research, and presenting outreach and service programs that will benefit the livestock industry. It is hoped that, according to the new departmental vision statement, the merger will bring together "within the ISU College of Veterinary Medicine the premier professional service, educational, and research programs recognized for optimizing the productivity of the food animal industries of the state of Iowa, the U.S., and the international community."

"It really brings together the full package for production animal medicine," Hartwig explained. "Within the department of veterinary diagnostic and production animal medicine, we identify the problem from the diagnostic side, then work with the veterinary practitioner to provide solutions or remedies from the medicine side. But just as important are the management strategies and on-going information provided by our faculty, all of which affect the health of the herd and the producer's profitability."

"This is an exciting time for the College of Veterinary Medicine, and I can not think of a better place to be than in the leadership of this department," Hartwig said. "Our new structure emphasizes an interdisciplinary approach. By integrating team research, teaching and service programs, we already see that we are bringing a wider range of expertise to bear on disease and animal problems in the food production industry."◆

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