



# Aussies Draw

By Tina Caparella

An impressive number of Australian and overseas industry representatives traveled to the beautiful Gold Coast in Queensland, Australia, in late July to attend the Australian Renderers Association's (ARA) 6<sup>th</sup> International Symposium. The ARA also played host to the second annual general meeting of the World Renderers Organization (WRO).

The three-day event opened with ARA President Andy Bennett, Talloman, welcoming over 200 registrants and addressing the tough times renderers have been facing over the last two years.

"We've never seen prices for both our major products depressed at the same time for so long," he commented. Bennett added that the industry needs to research alternative uses for rendered products but at the same time not give up on traditional uses. He encouraged renderers to support and get involved with regulatory agencies, including the Codex Alimentarius Commission (Codex).

"We need to write the rules and not have them written for us," Bennett said.

Mike Langenhorst, chairman of the National Renderers Association (NRA) and president of the WRO, followed next with a discussion on various situations that have affected North American renderers this year and the Office International des Epizooties (OIE) classification categories for bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE), of which Australia is classified a category one, BSE-free. Langenhorst said that currently the OIE has classified the United States as a category two, which means the country is

provisionally BSE-free with no indigenous cases. However, there is concern the OIE may reclassify the United States as a category three, which means there has been at least one native case.

"There have been no indigenous cases of BSE in North America," Langenhorst stated. "Theoretically, we should be BSE-free. We do not have BSE in the United States at this time."

Langenhorst also shared how U.S. renderers are meeting with their elected representatives to educate them and their staff on the industry. He discussed the U.S. industry's domestic marketing, which includes customer education, alternative fuel usage, and third party certification for Food and Drug Administration (FDA) feed ban compliance.

"What we are trying to do is make sure that the FDA, USDA [U.S. Department of Agriculture], federal government, as well as our customers, are comfortable with our product," Langenhorst said.

Langenhorst congratulated Australian renderers for increasing their exports to Indonesia, a market once dominated by Europe. He then presented statistics on BSE, stating that 99 percent of cases have occurred in the United Kingdom (UK), with the remaining one percent coming from other European countries. He went on to state that 66 percent of UK cow herds have never had BSE and 10 percent of herds that have had more than four cases account for 75 percent of all cases in the world. Of the beef cattle herds, 84 percent have never had the disease.



*Doug Ward, right, incoming WRO president, thanks Mike Langenhorst, outgoing WRO president, for his two years of dedicated service to the association. "I think Mike will be a difficult act to follow," Ward stated.*



*Robin Edwards and Dirk Sindermann, from left, Westfalia Separator, discuss rendering operations with Andy Bennett, Talloman, Australia, at the meeting's trade exhibit.*

# World Audience



With BSE still on their minds, attendees heard next from Doug Ward, Argent By-Products Group, UK.

“One thing that needs to be said before I start is Europe certainly doesn’t wish to impose any of our legislation anywhere else in the world,” Ward began.

“In the UK, where the BSE problem started, I have spent the last 10 or 12 years involved in the industry pleading with everybody throughout Europe, throughout America, throughout the world, please keep an industry for us to come back to,” he continued. “We’ve always believed we would eventually get rid of BSE.”

Ward explained to the group how the European Union (EU) is composed, including the political make-up of the organization. He stated that other countries want to join the EU and will more than likely be admitted within the next three to four years.

With regards to Europe’s renderers, Ward pointed out that, “there is a great rendering industry, we believe.” He presented the best statistics available, including over 16 million metric tons of raw material generated in 13 EU countries.

“What that breaks down to when you start to render it, is a significant amount of various proteins generated,” Ward said. Currently, however, most meat and bone meal in Europe is either land filled or incinerated. He also addressed theories about what caused BSE.

“There is no one answer,” he stated. “We are in the realm of opinions.”

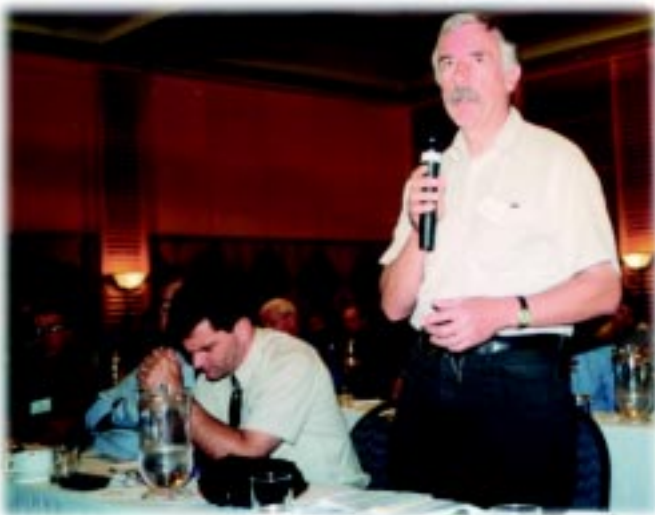
Ward next shared various legislative activities in

Europe, including a proposed rule that could be in place early next year allowing the reintroduction of animal proteins into animal feed for non-ruminant animals. The proposal places material into three categories with various uses depending on the type of material. Ward believes though that even if this EU legislation passes, some countries will continue to ban meat and bone meal in animal feeds.

Neil Thornycroft, Uncle Ben’s Australia, turned the meeting’s attention to pet food and the company’s Vendor Assured Program. He explained there are four million dogs and three million cats in Australia and that the majority of Uncle Ben’s suppliers have been with the company for at least 15 years, some as long as 35. Thornycroft emphasized that communication between vendor and supplier is key.

“You have to work with your suppliers instead of beating them up,” he stated. Part of that communication is looking at the renderers critical control points, which includes a visit to the plant. If the vendor sees potential problems, including whether overhead glass lights are covered to prevent possible glass contamination that can go undetected, they work with the supplier to correct the situation. Thornycroft added that the communication works in both directions, insisting that suppliers visit Uncle Ben’s plants to see how their products are used. He highlighted the critical control points his company looks for and the eight-step approach they take to ensure products are safe. Since

*Continued on page 12*



*Dr. Radulf Oberthur, SNP Lingen, informs industry leaders about current BSE inactivation studies in mice presently underway in Germany.*



*John Aird, Birirrk Associates, and Ron Hill, Ridley Agriproducts, discuss the Australian rendering market.*

the Vendor Assured Program was installed at Uncle Ben's, customer complaints have decreased.

Following him was Ian Macintosh, National Agricultural Commodities Marketing Association, Australia, who discussed contracts. He stipulated that parties must communicate their intentions very clearly in contracts and that it is worth the extra time and effort to understand them.

After a break for lunch, Dr. Annel Greene, Clemson University, addressed her findings using thermal processing in rendering systems to inactivate pathogens. She stated that the research was done on lab scale quantities and the next step would be to conduct research on industry-scale quantities.

Gary Pearl, Fats and Proteins Research Foundation (FPRF), presented the current biodiesel situation in the United States (see Tech Topics, August 2001 *Render*). His outlook for the use of animal fats in biodiesel and as burner fuels was optimistic.

"I look at fuels being a real opportunity in the future," Pearl stated.

To back-up Pearl's claim was Dr. Lewe Atkinson, Meat and Livestock Australia, and Dave Burbidge, Stanwell Corporation, with their discussion on utilizing biodiesel at Stanwell's power station that supplies 25 percent of Queensland's electric power.

"Stanwell Corporation, more specifically their green energy subsidiaries, has identified biodiesel as a real opportunity for the green energy market in Australia," Atkinson began. Burbidge explained the power generator's projects including one plant that is operating on any waste product with 50 percent or less moisture content. He added that utilizing biodiesel as an engine fuel is especially good news for ecologically sensitive areas such as the Great Barrier Reef where tourist boats frequent the waters. Burbidge said Stanwell is currently looking for biodiesel partners and pilot locations.

Anton Reiter, Swan Hill Abattoir, next shared the experience of constructing a new ovine and bovine rendering facility using upgraded technology to separate materials. He explained that the cost of the six-ton per hour processing plant was approximately \$4.5 million Australian, which should see a payback within three years.

Rounding out the first day of the meeting was a variety of presentations by suppliers, including Brian Young, Food Science Australia, with an introduction to Znose, a rapid measurement of odors, Wilhelm Hammer, BDI Anlagenbau Ges m.b.H., Austria, discussing biodiesel plants currently operating and in construction, Tissa Fernando, Flo-Dry Engineering-New Zealand, who addressed biofilters, and John Hemale, Spirac Engineering, Australia, with a presentation on shaftless screws.

## A Global Industry

The second day of ARA's symposium began with the World Renderers Organization Board of Directors meeting. Langenhorst discussed challenges faced by the world rendering industry.

"We are no longer the invisible industry," he stated.



*Dr. Karen Dazo, Bureau Animal Industry, Philippines, shares the activities the Philippine government is doing in regards to BSE.*

"Good or bad, people know who we are." Langenhorst recalled that the greatest change he has seen in the last three years is how the rendering industry has come together like never before.

"In North America, the NRA at this time represents the largest percentage of renderers and highest volume of raw material in its history," he said, adding that in the EU, two rendering organizations have merged as one to become stronger. "In Australia, as you know, the ARA is also at record levels of participation and this meeting proves that." To date, 18 countries have joined the WRO. Langenhorst thanked members for putting their confidence in him over his term as WRO president.

"My goal was to leave things a little better than I found them and I hope I have accomplished my goal," Langenhorst said.

The board took care of some business, including deciding to hold the next WRO meeting in conjunction with the European Fat Processors and Renderers Association (EFPPA) gathering next year in Rome, Italy, and then heard a presentation from Freddy Ib, daka a.m.b.a., Denmark, on various meetings WRO representatives have attended in the past year. He encouraged renderers to lobby those who affect the industry, including politicians, farmers, suppliers, the feed sector, end users, consumers, and especially the media.

"Inform them [media] when you have something positive to report," Ib said.

Don Franco, vice president Scientific Services, NRA, explained that the long awaited Harvard Risk Assessment Study was currently being reviewed a second time to ensure results are not misconstrued. He added that the study is meant to examine whether or not the U.S. government has instituted all safeguards to preclude a BSE incident in the United States.

Langenhorst shared a presentation given to the World Health Organization (WHO) and Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) by Stephen Woodgate, a consultant for NRA. He explained that without the establishment of the



*Andy Bennett, right, Talloman, congratulates Paul Stenzel, Gardner Smith Pty., Ltd., on his election as ARA president.*

WRO, the rendering industry could not have been represented at world organization meetings such as the WHO and Codex. Langenhorst stated that globally, there are 125 million tons of animal products of which 70 million is actually processed.

New issues were addressed, including an FAO meeting in Bangkok, a BSE symposium the Thailand government is attempting to organize for later this year, and the election of new officers. Doug Ward, representing EFPRA, was nominated as WRO president, Andy Bennett, ARA, became first vice president, and Doug Anderson, NRA, was elected second vice president.

Representatives from the various country members gave reports on challenges they are currently facing. Klemens Rethmann, SARIA Bio-Industries Ag and Co., Germany, explained that specified risk material (SRM) must be burned as waste and that vehicles using biodiesel must be classified as "waste incinerators."

Niels Nielsen, daka a.m.b.a., presented activities in Sweden and Denmark. He said the capacity to burn SRMs is quite low, with only one plant in operation for both countries. Nielsen added that in Denmark, no compensation is being given to farmers for cattle lost to BSE.

"Our minister has been very arrogant about this," he stated. "She has said many times that we can't give any compensation to the farmers because this situation is the fault of the farmers themselves that fed animal proteins to the animals; therefore they have to pay the bill now.

"Of course we don't agree," Nielsen continued. "We have fed animal proteins to animals for 100 years in Denmark and always obeyed the law and we have been working very, very close with authorities all the time.

"We don't want compensation in Denmark, but we want fair competition," he concluded.

Trevor Arnold, Lowe Corporation, Ltd., next talked about New Zealand, where a rendering group was formed five years ago as a subcommittee of the meat industry. Currently, comprehensive legislation is being developed to ensure rendering plants have risk management plans in place

by June 2002.

Paul Stenzel, Gardner Smith Pty., Ltd., gave a report on Australia where the big issues currently are the government's ban of fish, poultry, and blood meals in feed, and commercial feedlots that are banning the use of tallow in feed for marketing reasons.

The Canadian representative gave thanks to the United States and NRA for helping to keep Canadian food authorities on the same track as U.S. regulators. Franco followed with his concerns about what impact new directives originating outside the United States, specifically outside the EU, will have on North America.

Although not WRO members, Dr. Karen Dazo, Bureau Animal Industry, Philippines, was invited to present activities in that country. She stated there was a "mad cow" scare a few months back but because the government took an educational approach, consumers are beginning to eat beef again. Dazo emphasized that her office is working hard at keeping a complete ban of animal proteins from occurring.

Another non-WRO member asked to speak was Sverre Golten, A and S Thai Works Co., Ltd., Thailand, who said that because 70 percent of Taiwanese are low income (\$100 U.S. or less per month), animals are slaughtered at night and the fresh meat is sold the next morning and eaten the same day. Golten went on to say that most of the rendering in Thailand is of poultry feathers.

Neville Chandler, NRA regional director for Europe, Middle East, and Africa, said actions taken by other countries in regards to animal proteins are often based on emotion.

"The EU influence on other countries is very strong," he stated.

The morning session concluded with a humorous debate between two teams on whether over-regulation was killing the rendering industry.

### Consistency is Key

Nutrition was the topic of discussion in the afternoon, starting with Paul Feick, bi-pro Marketing, Ltd., Canada, who informed attendees that pet food manufacturers are demanding "quality assurance of the products they're buying." He said renderers need to reduce product variability, ensure consistence of animal protein ingredients, and avoid contamination. Feick encouraged Australian renderers to seize the opportunity of being designed BSE-free by OIE.

Wouter Hendricks, Massey University, New Zealand, gave an overview of his research project on using near infrared technology for measuring meat meal quality. He reiterated that the biggest problem with meat meal is variability.

"Nutritionists are turning more to soy meal because of its consistency," he warned. He also touched on the variables that should be measured, such as color, crude protein, and ash.

Philip Lambeth, Kemin Asia, next educated the audience on oxidation of rendered products. He stated that

*Continued on page 14*

oxidation cannot be prevented, but with antioxidants, it can be slowed down. Lambeth added that antioxidants should be applied as early as practical.

David Smith, Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization, Australia, covered research currently ongoing on utilizing meat meal for low cost fish feeds. He said manufacturers are concerned about the lack of consistency in meat meal and the transmission of disease. Smith feels that for low cost feeds, there is an opportunity for meat meals with 51 to 52 percent crude proteins, adding that Asia and Latin America are promising regions.

Bill Spooner, Food Science Australia, discussed manipulation of meal specifications, presenting a spreadsheet he has created that helps determine yields of meat meal from various slaughter material.

The second day of the meeting wrapped up with additional supplier presentations, including Atlas-Stord's new Dyno-Jet hot air dryer that has been used with success in the fish meal industry. Keith Engineering and Abattoir Engineering discussed their new research and development projects, including a super heated steam dryer, Westfalia Separators presented information on blood plasma recovery, and Mjorud Stord AS shared their various cooker and drying equipment.

#### Last But Certainly Not Least

The final day of ARA's symposium was reserved for technical discussions on threats to the industry and environmental issues, including presentations by Franco, who gave an outlook for rendered products, and Pearl, who spoke about market implications of contamination risks.

"An incident anywhere, is an incident everywhere," Pearl warned the audience.

Stenzel followed with an overview of ARA's Code of Practice for Recycled Oils, which he said was written to be outcome based, not procedural.

"We must make consumers feel comfortable with the safety of our product if it's going back into the food chain," Stenzel stated. He explained the scope of the code, which includes traceability of the raw product, physically checking the oil, and mandatory testing of the product.

"This code was put together as a broad outline with minimum standards to be based around individual company's HACCP [Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point] programs," Stenzel said. "As a country with a number one rating in BSE terms, Australia needs to protect the ingredients we portray." He concluded by saying the industry needs to work together to encourage companies to adopt these types of programs.

Andrew Cupit, Department of Agriculture, Fisheries, and Forestry, Australia, recapped some of the food safety issues currently being faced, such as BSE, dioxins, genetically modified organisms, and foot and mouth disease. He stated that there are over 30 theories on how BSE developed and with 130 members in the OIE, developing rules and codes for international practice is difficult.

Cupit shared some of the recent EU legislation and how traditionally, the Australian rendering industry has not been

regulated but that has since changed.

"We [government and industry] have to work together," he said. Cupit added that Australian renderers must lobby all three levels of government as well as other industry groups renderers deal with. He encouraged the WRO to develop an international standard and reiterated that renderers should work at communicating with the general public.

"The public needs the rendering industry," he stated. "You're basically doing the public a service and you need to promote that."

Arnold, representing the New Zealand renderers group, shared how the country's renderers enjoy a \$15 to \$30 per ton premium over Australia on meat and bone meal exported to Japan.

"If you talk to the Japanese buyers, they will say that New Zealand 'almost' produces a *Salmonella*-free product," Arnold began. He added that one rendering plant's samples have shown negative results for *Salmonella* over the past three years. Arnold then explained the process three plants go through to ensure their products are free of contamination. He stated the common features of the plants include following meal drying regulation of sterilization, an enclosed meal system, daily or weekly cleaning and sanitizing of containers, and regular audits of process control compliance by the government including temperature profiles of their dryers. Arnold added that all the plants surveyed were wet rendering or low temperature systems operating since the late 1970s or early 1980s.

Greene made another appearance, this time sharing results of research funded by FPRF on evaluating rapid test detection kits.

The afternoon began with a presentation by Ray Clarke, Talloman, on the filtration of tallow. He later joined Andrew Westlake, Warnambool Stockfeeds, on a discussion about biofilters.

"I would recommend to anyone who has odor issues to consider biofiltration," Westlake said. Warnambool recently installed a biofilter to replace an outdated system built in 1965.

Clarke shared his company's experience with a new biofilter, who recommended stainless steel be used at all collection points and to build a system large enough to allow the odors to oxidize.

"I believe we would not be operating today without this biofilter system," Clarke concluded. Talloman is located two kilometers (1-1/4 miles) from the Perth airport.

Tim Juzefowicz, Peerless Holdings, Australia, followed with a talk about stickwater, which he explained is the water phase after the raw material is preheated. He said that renderers should consider stickwater as an intermediate material, like fats and solids, and a potential product.

Finishing up the day were two presentations by suppliers, Kemin and Austech Sterile Resource Recovery, and the general meeting of the ARA. After serving as president for four years, Bennett resigned his position, leaving Stenzel to step into the leadership role for the association, which currently has just over 100 members.

Because of the popularity of the meeting, the board of directors agreed to hold their next symposium, slated for 2003, at the same location. ❖