



For immediate release

April 19, 2004

New AFAC Board Executive

The Alberta Farm Animal Care Association's board members elected executive officers, following the group's AGM, March 26, 2004.

- **Aart Okkema**, from Vermilion, AB, remains as **chairman**. He has represented the milk producers on AFAC's board for five years. He is also Director on the board of Alberta Milk and is chairman of Western Dairy Science Inc. Mr. Okkema runs a dairy and purebred Black Angus operation on 300 acres of cropland and 540 acres of pasture. Contact: (780) 853-2569.
- **Greg Ruzicka**, is **vice-chairman**. Greg represents the Wild Rose Equine Ranching Association. He and his family have a PMU operation with 103 mares on line. In total, the Ruzicka's manage 180 horses consisting of Quarter Horse, Belgian & Percheron breeds. The family farms close to 2,000 acres in the Viking area. Contact (780) 336-2224.
- **Craig Wilkinson, DVM**, joins Aart and Greg on AFAC's **executive**. Dr. Wilkinson is Director of Animal Care, with the Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry and Home Economics, University of Alberta. Craig teaches an undergraduate course in Animal Health and Welfare, develops and provides training for users of animals in research and ensures high standards of animal care are practiced in compliance with the guidelines of the Canadian Council on Animal Care.

The **Directors-at-Large** on AFAC's board, representing AFAC's Active Membership are: **Jim Abel of Stettler**, representing the **Alberta Auction Markets Association** and **Dr. Craig Wilkinson, University of Alberta**.

All three AFAC board executives represent AFAC on the **Alberta Livestock Protection System (ALPS) Management Group**. ALPS is a working partnership of AFAC, representing the livestock industry, the provincial government (Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development), and the Alberta SPCA representing the public concern for animal welfare.

Mr. Okkema will represent AFAC on the Alberta/Canada Livestock Welfare Research Partnership.

Formed in 1993, AFAC has a broad membership including livestock organizations, individual producers, processors, veterinarians and associated agri-businesses. Through AFAC, the livestock industry of Alberta works together to:

- promote responsible animal care;
- talk with the public about today's animal agriculture;
- participate in issues and legislation affecting livestock care;
- encourage relevant research.

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