



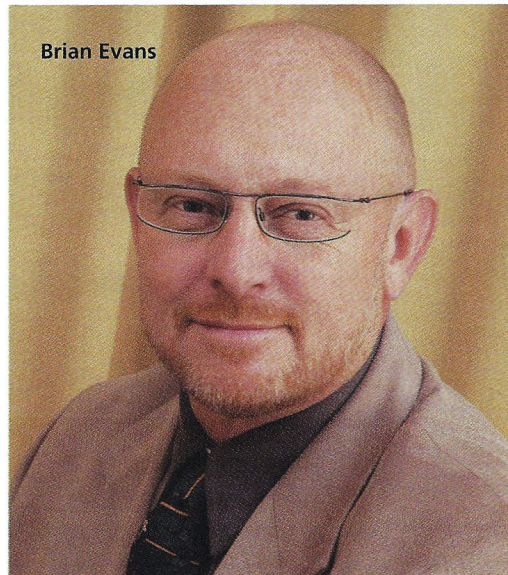
## OVC Research News

### CRC SUPPORTS ZOO NOTIC RESEARCH

**S**cott Weese, DVM '96 and D.V.Sc. '00, will receive \$100,000 a year for five years as a Tier 2 Canada Research Chair (CRC), awarded to researchers considered as potential world leaders in their field. A pathobiology professor and member of the Centre for Public Health and Zoonoses, Weese holds the CRC in Zoonotic Diseases, learning about diseases that can spread from animals to humans. More than 70 per cent of new infectious diseases that threaten human health are zoonotic.

Other CRCs are held by **Dorothee Bienzle**, DVM '88 and M.Sc. '92, Pathobiology, and **Allan King**, M.Sc. '75, Biomedical Sciences.

## OVC ALUMNI CONTRIBUTE TO H1N1 KNOWLEDGE



Brian Evans

**A**S CONCERNS ABOUT the H1N1 pandemic swept across the world, Canadian veterinarians and OVC were at the front lines of public health efforts to manage the spread of this new virus here at home. Recently, several Guelph grads discussed their roles in this crisis and the crucial roles veterinarians will play in the future.

Brian Evans, DVM '78 and B.Sc.(Agr.) '74, executive vice-president of the Canadian Food Inspection Agency and the Canadian delegate to the World Organization for Animal Health, points out that Canada was the first country to identify the H1N1 virus in a swine population. He explains his efforts to share this information: "We were trying to ensure a convergence of approaches with some understanding of what the discovery of this virus in swine really meant as an emergent zoonotic disease." With H1N1 playing on an international stage, Evans says co-ordinated research is crucial: "This was the first time that, given the level of diagnostic

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techniques we now have, we were able to see a disease walk around the world in real time."

Other vets saw the pressing need for accurate communication. Prof. Cate Dewey, DVM '79, M.Sc. '88 and PhD '92, chair of the Department of Population Medicine, says part of her role was interacting with the media: "I tried to help them understand how pigs and pork were — and weren't — involved in the story. I also worked with people in the swine industry to help them understand both the role of pigs in this pandemic and what they could do."

Holy Akwar, PhD '03, an epidemiologist with the Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion (OAHPP) adds: "It's very easy for non-vets to use words loosely. But when people started calling this 'swine flu' it was the vets who recognized the effect this might have on the swine industry and said, 'Hey, you have to get this right. We need to be calling it H1N1.'"

Dean Middleton, DVM '87 and M.Sc. '95, senior public health epidemiologist at OAHPP, has been primarily involved in planning and coordinating surveillance of the H1N1 influenza as it spreads. He says: "I think it is a credit to public health that we have so many vets in this field because it's a healthy cross-fertilization between animal medicine and human medicine. The resources of the Centre for Public Health and Zoonoses at OVC have been invaluable."

Prof. Zvonimir Poljak, M.Sc. '02 and PhD '06, Population Medicine, who has studied how viruses behave in swine during this pandemic, says "we are going to see more zoonoses in the future, and the strengths that vets bring to these issues will be increasingly important. A lot of the