

# Vet school dean looks at legacy

By PAULA MOHR

UNIVERSITY of Minnesota College of Veterinary Medicine Dean Jeffrey Klausner has accepted a job as president and CEO of the largest veterinary hospital in New York City.

Klausner has been dean of the U-M veterinary college since 1998. He starts his new job at the Animal Medical Center July 1.

When he arrived at U-M in 1974, Klausner figured he'd be here for four or five years doing research in veterinary internal medicine, and then he'd move on. Instead, he joined the faculty and helped shape the next generation of vet students. He later became department chairman and, eventually, college dean.

When asked what he is most proud of about his 30-plus-year career, Klausner's quick response is "my influence on the next generation of veterinarians." He notes that more women are enrolled in vet school now, and fewer students are choosing to become involved in food-animal-production medicine. The rigor of



JEFFREY KLAUSNER

vet school has also evolved. Entrance to the college of vet medicine includes interviews that focus on leadership and 11 defined competencies/behaviors. Plus, food-animal students must study more than just medicine.

"There has been a dramatic change in the quantity of knowledge for students," Klausner says. "They must study nutrition, infectious diseases, genetics, and know about electronic records systems." To help large-animal vet stu-

dents practice what they learn, they get hands-on experience with dairy cattle at the U-M Transition Management Facility in Baldwin, Wis. "Veterinarians are working more as consultants these days," he adds. "They are carrying computers rather than stethoscopes."

Biosecurity and transmittable animal diseases have also impacted the vet school. U-M offers vet students the opportunity to obtain a master's degree in public health while they work on their doctorate in veterinary medicine. "Veterinarians are really on the front lines between humans and animals," he says. "Seventy-five percent of the newly emerging diseases in humans come from animals, such as West Nile virus, monkey pox, avian influenza and mad cow disease."

To encourage students in food-animal production, the vet college offers a "fast track" program that shaves off one year of school for selected candidates. Freshman students who do well academically and want to be food-animal veterinarians are candidates for the program. They are interviewed, assigned mentors, and in their

senior year, they are accepted into vet school. Currently, 25 to 30 students are enrolled in fast track. In June, the program's first students will graduate.

## Strong relationships

Klausner is also pleased with the strength of the college's swine and dairy programs, and its interaction with various commodity groups. In the swine, dairy and poultry industries, the vet medical center has been instrumental in diagnosing, treating and/or managing diseases, specifically pneumovirus in turkeys, John's disease in cattle, and circovirus in pigs. In addition, the diagnostic lab has been busy with avian influenza and bovine tuberculosis.

"The diagnostic lab is our jewel," he adds. "We deal with a diversity of animals everyday — camels, alpacas, dogs, cattle, eagles. People forget that this is the best part of being a veterinarian — you're trained in all these species."

The overall challenge during Klausner's tenure has been fewer state dollars and less tuition, due to fewer students entering the vet profession. Since

the early 1990s, state funding has decreased every year. About 25% of the entire budget comes from the state.

As funds dwindle, vet college researchers look to federal grants and other sources of income to do necessary projects. Livestock and poultry groups have stepped up and are involved in funding and research discussions. Recently, Klausner and the deans of U-M Extension and the ag college met with commodity groups and decided to develop a strategic plan that will outline research priorities for the next 10 to 15 years.

For his successor, Klausner offers this advice: "Take advantage of the enthusiasm of the faculty and students. There is a great faculty and staff here at Veterinary Medical Center. The people really care about animal and human health."

Klausner adds that he had intended to retire at U-M, but the vet hospital in New York made him an offer he couldn't refuse. "I loved my time here in Minnesota," he says. "The hardest part will be leaving."

Klausner's last day as vet college dean is June 30.

# MFU begins carbon credit program

By PAULA MOHR

FARMERS who are concerned about global warming can voluntarily reduce carbon dioxide emissions with certain cropping practices such as no-till and long-term grasslands, and they can get paid for enrolling that acreage in the Minnesota Farmers Union's Carbon Credit Program.

The Carbon Credit Program is timely, says Bruce Miller, MFU's membership director. Global warming, renewable energy and high-priced fuels are consistently in the news, making consumers more aware of their impact on the Earth's environment. Plus, the Chicago Climate Exchange, North

## Key Points

- Farmers may get paid for carbon credit practices.
- Carbon prices doubled in 2006 on Chicago Climate Exchange.
- In Minnesota, 44 counties are eligible to enroll in program.

America's only greenhouse-gas emission registry, reduction and trading system, has seen carbon prices double in 2006.

When farmers plow the soil, carbon is released into air, Miller says. Certain agricultural practices can lock it in the soil and improve organic matter.

"Soil matter is the most important repository of carbon," Miller says. "It can be either a source or a sink." Between 75

million to 208 million metric tons of carbon per year could be sequestered in the U.S., he adds.

Farmers may participate in a number of ways, Miller says. They could convert to no-till; seed long-term grasses; enhance range, wetland, forestry and manure management practices; or grow switchgrass. "This is not a government program; there are no taxpayer dollars involved; and information is not recorded at the courthouse," he adds.

In Minnesota, 44 counties are eligible to enroll in the program. Geographically, those counties are located south of U.S. Highway 10. However, Miller encourages any farmer not located in an eligible area to contact MFU as some land is being accepted on a case-by-case basis. He expects the program to eventually go statewide.

## How program works

MFU is in the process of enrolling producer acreages of carbon into blocks of credit that will be traded on the CCE. Eligible land must be capable of being cropped, even though it currently may be in a harvested grass or forage crop. It must be designated as "cropland" on Farm

Service Agency maps. Carbon credits for no-till will be issued at the rate of 0.5 metric tons of carbon dioxide per acre annually to farmers who commit to continuous conservation tillage on enrolled land through 2010. Carbon credits for seeded grass or forage stands will be earned at a rate of 0.75 metric tons per acre annually, even if harvested for hay or enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program.

To enroll, farmers must visit the MFU Web site. They must complete and submit a signed contract, a copy of FSA maps of enrolled land and a FSA 578 form. Farmers who are not MFU members can become members when they sign up for the program. The deadline for the soil-offset contract is Aug. 15.

From the contracted agreement, MFU will collect 10% as a service fee as aggregator; 10% will be held in escrow and paid to the farmer at the end of the fulfilled contract. Credit prices per metric ton of CO<sub>2</sub> have been in the \$4 to \$5 range, up from \$1.50 to \$1.75 when the program started.

For more information, call MFU at 651-639-1223 or 800-969-3380. Or, visit the MFU Web site at [www.mfu.org](http://www.mfu.org). It contains a list of frequently asked questions and a carbon-credit income estimator.

## NewsWatch Briefs

### Century Farm program looking for families

Minnesota families who have owned their farms for 100 years or more are encouraged to apply for the Minnesota State Fair's 2007 Century Farm program. The Century Farm program recognizes family farms that are at least 100 years old according to authentic land records, in continuous family ownership for at least 100 years, and at least 50 acres. Applications are available by e-mailing [fairinfo@mnstatefair.org](mailto:fairinfo@mnstatefair.org); by calling 651-288-4446; by writing Century Farms, Minnesota State Fair, 1265 Snelling Ave. N., St. Paul, MN 55108, or by going online at [www.fbmn.org](http://www.fbmn.org). The application deadline is June 1.

### CHS opens grain office in Hong Kong

CHS has opened a grain-marketing office in Hong Kong. "This office is an important step for CHS in enhancing service to our Asian customers, gaining market information and promoting CHS as an attractive grain-supply source to new customers and the industry," says Rick Browne, senior vice president, Grain Marketing. CHS marketing in the region has previously been handled through agency agreements.

