

sample was also fixed with 10 per cent formalin for electronic cell counting.

Small  $\beta$  haemolytic colonies on blood agar plates incubated aerobically and small pinpoint colonies on the chocolate blood agar incubated in an atmosphere of 10 per cent carbon dioxide were observed after 24 hours growth. These colonies increased in size to produce larger yellow pigmented colonies after 48 hours. Subculture improved the growth of the isolate on the chocolate blood agar after 24 hours but not on the blood agar. The organism was a pleomorphic Gram-negative coccoid rod, was catalase negative, oxidase positive, it reduced nitrates and was positive for hippurate hydrolase. On testing by the API ZYM system the isolate was positive for alkaline phosphatase, leucine arylamidase, valine arylamidase, phosphoamidase and  $\beta$  glucuronidase. This pattern fits well with those produced by other *H. somnus* strains isolated in this laboratory from other bovine sources, eg, lungs and reproductive tracts.

The antibiotic sensitivity pattern of the organism showed it to be sensitive to streptomycin, tetracycline, cloxacillin, novobiocin, erythromycin and furazolidone and resistant to framycetin and neomycin. The milk had a cell count of  $6.2 \times 10^6$  ml.

Mastitis has been a problem in this herd but no investigation of this case followed due to the prompt successful treatment of the infected quarter.

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#### References

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## ETEC-like strains from cattle

From Dr P. Pohl and others

SIR. — Two thousand seven hundred and twenty-five *Escherichia coli* isolated in Belgium from calves with systemic or enteric colibacillosis were examined by DNA colony hybridisation using several gene probes for heat-stable and heat-labile enterotoxins (STaP, STaH, STb and LT) and adhesins (K88, K99, F41 and 987P) of enterotoxigenic *E. coli* (ETEC), for more recently described LT-IIa and Shiga-like I and II (SLT-I, SLT-II) toxins, for the adherence factor of enteropathogenic *E. coli* and for enteroinvasiveness properties of enteroinvasive *E. coli*. Among *E. coli* positive with one or more of these gene probes were 20 isolates that hybridised with the LT-IIa probe but not with other gene probes. Twelve of these 20 LT-IIa+ *E. coli* adhered to isolated intestinal villi after overnight growth on Minca medium (Girardeau's test 1980). The LT-IIa+ adherence+ isolates belonged to serogroups O121 (four isolates), O8, O19, O157 (one isolate of each serogroup), or were not typable (five isolates). Adherence factor(s) produced was (were) also serologically different from Att25 (FY, F17) and Att111 adhesins.

As these *E. coli* may represent a new class

of ETEC from cattle, we would be interested in hearing of any other cases involving this type of ETEC-like bacteria.

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## LVI fees

From Mr P. J. Clark

SIR. — The Mid-West Veterinary Association expresses its concern over the Ministry of Agriculture's delay in offering a satisfactory rate for LVI fees.

At least one practice in the division is considering reducing in size by one vet, stopping all LVI work, and as a result increasing practice profitability. There must be other practices looking at this option, especially as assistants are becoming harder to find, and more expensive.

As the ministry does not have the staff to carry out LVI duties, and in some parts of this division there is active tuberculosis, implications are serious.

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## Behavioural consultants

From Mr K. Cheetham

SIR. — I would like to comment on Mr Dowie's letter (*VR*, August 12, p 162) and subsequent correspondence from others regarding the appointment of Mr Peter Neville as consultant in feline behaviour at Bristol veterinary school.

I, like Mr Neville and Dr Mugford, have no paper qualification in behaviour therapy (none exists). However, I do have a particular interest in the subject, having been in charge of police dog and handler training for some years, taken part in working trials and trained dogs for many purposes.

Animal behaviour is largely related to the environment in which it is observed and there is no similarity between the real life behaviour of a pet with its owners in the home and that of experimental animals observed within the artificial confines of the laboratory. At the present time there are behaviour therapists who claim superiority based upon academic achievement. This is absolute rubbish.

Peter Neville is one of a small group of professional behaviourists who are trying to add a little science to what is essentially an art. This is being done through the newly formed Association of Pet Behaviour Consultants, for which I am honorary veterinary adviser. The five members all have proven practical ability in the field and four of those members have won various working trials awards. One of the main aims of the association is to set, maintain and, where possible, improve

knowledge and standards of therapy. Membership is restricted to professional behaviourists with proven ability, working regularly on referral from veterinarians.

I, and the members of the association, would be pleased to be involved in a formal, practically orientated qualification in behaviour therapy. However, until such training is available, a behaviour therapist is as knowledgeable and as capable as he or she proves, both to his or her clients and to the referring veterinarian. What is needed as a follow-up is a university willing to give scientific research facilities to a person who has first proved his mastery of the art of behaviour modification.

Progress will not be made by trying to do it the other way round, as is currently the practice.

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Letters may be shortened for publication

## Postscript

### Unsaturated bliss

IN the battle between the haves and have nots, and the dos and don'ts, the tide of advantage swings first one way and then the other.

Eat less butter and switch to polyunsaturated fats, as contained in margarine, and your cholesterol concentrations will fall, and correspondingly the risk of heart disease. Now, according to new evidence, it is claimed that polyunsaturated fats are more likely to generate free oxygen radical molecules which, in turn, affect cholesterol-rich substances posing potential risks of damage to arteries. Cigarette smoking is said to have the same effect, whereas adequate supplies of antioxidative vitamins, such as E and C, diminish free radical production, as do fresh fruit and vegetables which should be consumed along with mono-unsaturated fats such as olive oil.

Of course the manufacturers of margarine are somewhat miffed about all this. For example, one report has it that 'polyunsaturated fats of the kind usually found in low fat spreads, used to replace butter, have a molecular structure which includes double bonds and their metabolism potentially generates many free oxygen radicals, thereby causing greater oxidation of low density lipoproteins.'

This and probably all information concerning the advantages and disadvantages of various dietary contents is mainly of use to food manufacturers and to the advertising media. As far as the individual consumer is concerned it is probably safer to ignore all advice and go one's own way. There is no individual control by which one can determine the real effect of any dietary intake and this is compounded by the long period over which a diet can have any effect; a period during which numerous other variables may introduce themselves.

The subject is somewhat reminiscent of the rhyme:

Man is very generally a fool,  
When it's hot he wants it cool,  
When it's cool he wants it hot,  
Always wanting what is not,  
Never liking what he's got.

'TOTALISER'