The launch represented the culmination of four years work for Dr McGreevy, Professor Nicholas, Faculty Web Developer Federico Costa and Senior Lecturer Dr Peter Thomson. The Faculty’s students also contributed, assisting with the huge task of describing the various disorders in lay terms.

The LIDA on-line initiative was developed in consultation with the Royal New South Wales Canine Council (RNSWCC), the Pet Industry Association of Australia, the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA) (Australia) and the Animal Welfare League (NSW). It was funded by the Canine Research and Veterinary Foundation and supported by the RNSWCC.

LIDA will be an on-going project and there are now plans to include databases for other species such as cats, horses and cattle.

A number of crises in recent years of consumer confidence in the food industry worldwide, the Faculty of Veterinary Science initiated an innovative workshop to explore the issues facing Australia as a leading producer of plant and animal products for human consumption.

Held on 23 August and led by Professor Richard Whittington, the Faculty’s Chair of Farm Animal Health, the seminar was attended by over 50 people from 25 organisations. Keynote speaker was Professor Will Hueston, Director of the Centre for Animal Health and Food Safety at the College of Veterinary Medicine, University of Minnesota. Other internationally-recognised experts included Dr Bob Biddle (Australian Deputy Chief Veterinary Officer Product Integrity, Animal and Plant Health Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Australia, Canberra), Professor Ian Gardner (Professor of Epidemiology Department of Medicine and Epidemiology, University of California Davis) and Mr Ian Jenson (Food Safety Program Manager, Meat & Livestock Australia).

Group sessions and feedback discussion followed the presentations, resulting in some important recommendations for leadership in food safety - including forging greater links between public health, food and veterinary sciences in teaching and research.

The seminar was supported by the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Australia; Meat & Livestock Australia; Rabobank; Australian Meat Industry Council; Australian Biosecurity CRC; and the Faculty’s Veterinary Public Health Management Program.
As all of you would now know, Professor Leo Jeffcott will be starting as Dean of the Faculty of Veterinary Science on 5 October. It is going to be an exciting time and Leo brings with him a lifetime of experience and considerable knowledge and expertise. For the Faculty to continue its success and grow, however, Leo will need the support and commitment of all in the Faculty. He is already aware of the considerable talent throughout the Faculty and what we have achieved through our inclusive culture. The Faculty was given direction, drive and a belief in itself by past Dean Professor Reuben Rose, and this has continued to lead to further achievement and growth.

A new era begins, but the journey already has direction and optimism. I’ve no doubt that the existing loyalty of our staff to the Faculty and their trust in their colleagues will deliver even greater success.

During the past year, in the role of Acting Dean, I was given the honour and privilege of assisting the Faculty in its efforts to succeed. It has been an exciting and enriching time for me, and I have had the opportunity to work closely with many wonderful and talented people. The willingness to assist, often at some personal and professional expense, has been universal in the Faculty - this has been a truly humbling experience for me. I wish to sincerely thank everyone for their selflessness, wisdom and humour - it carried the Faculty through many difficult periods. All must take credit for our successes.

As Dean of the Faculty of Veterinary Science on 5 October. It is going to be an exciting time and Leo brings with him a lifetime of experience and considerable knowledge and expertise. For the Faculty to continue its success and grow, however, Leo will need the support and commitment of all in the Faculty. He is already aware of the considerable talent throughout the Faculty and what we have achieved through our inclusive culture. The Faculty was given direction, drive and a belief in itself by past Dean Professor Reuben Rose, and this has continued to lead to further achievement and growth.

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2005 research PhD and masters opportunities

Positions are available in a series of exciting new Faculty research projects for veterinarians and scientists looking to complete higher degrees (PhD or Masters). Projects commencing in 2005 cover a wide range of topics in farm animal health, wildlife and companion animals and include:

* Prevention and treatment of chlamydiosis and cryptococcosis in koalas - exploring the host-pathogen-environment interaction of these diseases to optimise treatment regimes for effective treatment.

* Elucidation of genes associated with nutrient partitioning for milk biosynthesis in the mouse and cow - involving a functional genomics approach to identifying genes responsible for the partitioning of nutrients to the mammary gland.

* Manipulation of hypothalamic feeding mechanisms and their impact on colostrum intake in the neonatal pig - investigating the link between gastrointestinal hormones and activation of the hypothalamic feeding mechanism.

* Studies on the molecular cell biology of lactation - involving a functional genomics approach to the identification of key genes involved in controlling the cellular processes that lead to epithelial cell secretions.

* Four PhD projects focusing on Johne’s disease in sheep - involving PCR, laser-capture microdissection and other techniques to produce new diagnostic tests for this disease, or to examine changes to immune cells in vaccinated and naturally infected sheep.

* Does phenobarbitone induced hypertyriglyceridaemia trigger seizures in epileptic dogs? - involving altering the dietary fat in those dogs with epilepsy and treated with phenobarbitone, to ascertain whether seizure frequency can be reduced.

Some projects are associated with a support scholarship for the designated duration if a full time higher degree is undertaken. Several University and Faculty scholarships are available - these are competitive and awarded on candidate merit. Further details are available on the Faculty website [www.vetsci.usyd.edu.au/study/2005PgOpportunities.shtml](http://www.vetsci.usyd.edu.au/study/2005PgOpportunities.shtml) or contact Faculty Research & Student Administration Officer, Ms Shirley Ray, on 02 9351 6932

new staff

Dr James Hart - Veterinary Registrar in Large Animal Medicine and Surgery, University Veterinary Centre Camden

Ms Helen Yoe - Administrative Assistant, Faculty Office

We want your feedback and contributions. Contact the newsletter team on email vsf@vetsci.usyd.edu.au, phone or Zara Gosson, VSF Project Coordinator, on 9351 8026.