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Australian Government

Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation

Dr. Paul Presidente

It's with considerable sadness that RIRDC notes the sudden death of Dr Paul Presidente on 29 December 2008, at age 64.

As many members will be aware, Paul had had a long and influential association with the Australian Deer Industry, with an involvement that commenced in its earliest days, and he was also a stalwart of the RIRDC Deer Program R&D Advisory Committee.

Paul came from the USA to Australia in 1975 as a well-respected veterinary parasitologist, and it's arguably in this role that he made his major contribution to the industry. One of Paul's earliest interactions with deer in Australia came from his study of the wild population of hog deer that had been released on Snake Island and Sunday Island in Victoria by acclimatization societies in the 1850s. From there, his involvement with deer in Australia grew until he became a key point of reference for the industry on all matters relating to deer parasites.

Of particular note was Paul's major input into the process of protecting the Australian industry from the threat posed by *Elaphostrongylus cervi*, a significant parasite of deer in other parts of the world, which also has the potential to cross-infect cattle.

Paul was instrumental in the development of quarantine policies that enabled the safe importation of live red deer and other materials from New Zealand free of *E. cervi*. He also identified the only known quarantine breach in Australia in 1986, and was involved in the subsequent successful effort to eliminate the parasite. The absence of this dangerous parasite from deer in Australia can truly be viewed as one aspect of his legacy to the industry. Further, his development of parasite monitoring and treatment protocols also provided a key enabling element for live deer exports from Australia to Asia.

In addition to his "hands-on" input, Paul was an industry-nominated member of RIRDC's Deer R&D Advisory Committee for many years. In this role, he was widely acknowledged as a strong contributor in all matters scientific, and as a meticulous and fastidious "details" man in reviewing experimental design methodology and analysis. Paul had recently accepted a re-appointment to the Committee for a further term, and his contributions in this role will be greatly missed.

Finally, above and beyond his professional role, Paul was very highly regarded as a colleague and as a person. Mention of his name routinely brings forward descriptions of a polite, good-natured and considerate person, who was unstintingly generous with his time and help. We acknowledge Paul's life, his scientific work and his contributions across so many aspects of this industry, and once again express our condolences to his wife and family.