

# Animal Science connects world to OSU

Web site provides source for breeds of livestock ... and so much more

Whether you are looking for an Angus or Angora, a Wooden Leg or Wagu, there is one place to find information about them all ... <http://www.ansi.okstate.edu>.

In July alone, the animal science Web site at Oklahoma State University received 9,000 visits per day, more than 100,000 hits per day, an average of 3 million hits for the month and hits from 100 different countries.

These numbers are proof the animal science Web site is one of the top sources for breeds of livestock in the world, said Larry Burditt, systems analyst for the animal science department and creator of the animal science Web site.

Although the Web site receives traffic from around the world, it started just a few years ago as one man's way to help OSU students.

"It's easy to get a consensus with a committee of one," said Burditt.

Burditt began constructing the site in 1994 after a newly introduced Web browser made the World Wide Web available to the public.

Although the Internet was a new concept, Burditt said

he was convinced it could be used to benefit students and make the animal science department more visible.

About two months into the project, animal science professor David Buchanan suggested a Web site on animal breeds could be useful.

"We started by sending letters to all of the breed associations requesting information," said Burditt. "Because the World Wide Web was so new, our letter had to literally explain what it was."

The breed associations sent limited information for Burditt to use on the site. Most of the information was the basic pamphlets used for all information requests. Several associations didn't send any information.

"A few years later we started getting phone calls from the breed associations wanting to know why the site didn't include their breed," he said.

A major advance came when Hilton Briggs, author of *Modern Breeds of Livestock*, turned all the rights to his books over for use on the Web page.

"There were several breeds of livestock on which we

## Test your breed knowledge

How well do you know your breeds of livestock? Name these breeds of livestock from around the world. Answers below (no cheating).



Answers to breed  
knowledge test  
(clockwise from top  
left):  
Hungarian Grey,  
Marwari,  
Byelorussian  
Harness, Ardennes  
and Herens.

Photos obtained from the OSU animal science Web site.

had only received a couple of paragraphs, and we were able to expand them to four or five pages," said Burditt.

Additionally, as Internet use became more widespread, people from around the world began to send information about breeds of livestock the site was missing.

Today, the Web page sees traffic from more than 100 different countries per month.

"In July alone, the site received more than 3 million hits," said Burditt. "It is amazing how the site has grown."

Hits indicate the number of times the page is brought up through a browser. Visits, however, are the number of times the home page is opened directly by using a known address.

Besides breeds of livestock, the site has other relevant links, including Horse Smarts, West Nile Virus, Research and Faculty.

"If you add up all the documents on the site, including databases, class files and research reports, the site contains over 10,000 documents," said Burditt.

With more than 5,000 of these pages dedicated to students, the additional information on the Web is used widely. More professors are making their class information available, including announcements, test information and class syllabi.

"My professor posts all of our class notes on the Web, and I really like that," said Brian Cunningham, agricultural education junior.

For many students the Web site is part of their class projects.

"In ANSI 4863, I have a group project that requires me to build a Web site that is linked to the animal science home page," said Pam Meador, animal science senior.

Brooke Golay, animal science senior, said she wants to work in animal research. She uses the Research link on the animal science Web site to see what projects are being developed and to find information for her future research.

The future of the animal science Web site is moving toward dynamic Web pages.

Dynamic Web pages are interactive and designed to remember individuals. A person can type in a password and a page will open a database with information pertinent to him or her.

Burditt and his staff are working with Oklahoma Beef Inc. and the Oklahoma Quality Beef Network on developing dynamic Web pages to be accessed through the animal science home page.

The OQBN dynamic pages are designed to help certified producers market their livestock. Certified producers for OQBN implement certain management practices and have met standards set by the OQBN. Some of these standards include whether the cattle have been dehorned, vaccinated and castrated.

"You go to a sale at OKC West [stockyards] sponsored by the OQBN," said Burditt. "This means the producers have been registered with OQBN and met the standards set."

Buyers recognize the certification and can access information about the pen of cattle through the Web site. Buyers also can locate other producers who are certified by the OQBN.

Not only is this a useful tool for the producers and buyers of cattle, but it is also great exposure for the OQBN and OSU.

The new joint venture with the OQBN is just one of the many projects driving advancements for the animal science Web site.

With feedback from others, the Web page will continue to help people find everything from Angus cattle to Wooden Leg goats.

*By Heather Hays, Burlington, Colo.*