

USDA AND BOEHRINGER INGELHEIM EXPAND SUMMER RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES FOR VETERINARY STUDENTS

Veterinary Students Will Work with USDA Scientists to Research Emerging Diseases with Potential to Affect Animals and Public Health

DULUTH, GA and MANHATTAN, KS -- Boehringer Ingelheim and the Agricultural Research Service (ARS) of the U.S. Department of Agriculture are joining forces to offer veterinary students the opportunity to research diseases that could affect livestock and public health.

The collaboration expands the Boehringer Ingelheim-led Veterinary Scholars Program, which has provided stipends to more than 3,500 veterinary students in the last 30 years to pursue biomedical research.

The expansion will create opportunities for up to 12 students to spend the summer at one of nine USDA sites working with an ARS scientist on a research project in livestock infectious diseases. Boehringer Ingelheim and USDA will cover all costs for the students, including a monthly stipend and costs associated with traveling to and from their schools to the USDA centers.

“ARS employs world-renowned veterinarian scientists with a broad range of expertise in infectious diseases of animal and public health concern,” said Roxann Motroni, DVM, PhD, USDA Agricultural Research Service national program leader for animal health. “This allows us to be responsive to emerging One Health disease threats by quickly implementing research needed to inform emergency response. Through this partnership with Boehringer Ingelheim’s Veterinary Scholars Program, veterinary students across the country will have the opportunity to train with these leading veterinarian scientists.”

USDA’s funding for the program is part of the Agrosecurity Partnerships for Innovative Research, or ASPIRE platform, which aims to stimulate the entire bio and agro-defense research sector through strategic partnerships. The goal of this five-year partnership with the Veterinary Scholars Program is to enhance relationships with national and international veterinary schools by providing their students with collaborative research opportunities in ARS’s specialized facilities. These facilities include the Southeast Poultry Research Laboratory in Athens, Georgia, the National Animal Disease Center in Ames, IA and the National Bio and Agro-Defense Facility, in Manhattan, Kansas.

“The next generation of scientists tasked with protecting the agricultural industry and the U.S. food supply will need a broad array of expertise because we don’t know what the next global disease will be,” said Alfonso Clavijo, DVM, PhD, NBAF director. “By offering students experiences in biocontainment facilities, the U.S. can help develop veterinarians and prepare the nation for a multitude of animal and zoonotic diseases.”

The National Bio and Agro-Defense Facility, still under construction, will have biosafety level-2, -3 and -4 laboratories capable of holding large livestock with a mission to protect the U.S. against the threat and potential negative effects of transboundary, emerging and zoonotic animal diseases.

“In addition to developing real-world exposure to One Health – and the important intersection between animal and human health – we hope that this summer experience as Veterinary Scholars

at USDA will serve as a source of inspiration for students, motivating them to pursue work that helps protect our animals, public health and the food supply,” Motroni added.

After spending the summer conducting research and learning from USDA scientists, students will attend and present their work at the annual National Veterinary Scholars Symposium, to be hosted in 2022 by the University of Minnesota’s College of Veterinary Medicine in St. Paul, Minn.

The USDA will join Boehringer Ingelheim, the American Association of Veterinary Medical Colleges, the American Veterinary Medical Association and the National Institutes of Health to sponsor this annual symposium. It showcases research by several hundred veterinary students as part of their Veterinary Scholar Program internships at more than three dozen veterinary schools and agencies across the U.S.

“COVID-19, African Swine Fever and other recent outbreaks and pandemics have underscored the need for increased vigilance and understanding of transboundary threats to human and animal health,” said Caroline Belmont, head of U.S. Animal Health Innovation for Boehringer Ingelheim. “Today’s veterinary students will play a critical role in addressing our future challenges, and the hands-on experience, guidance and support we provide them now through the Veterinary Scholars Program -- in particular, these opportunities to work with USDA researchers -- represent an important investment in the future health of animals and humans.”

The **Boehringer Ingelheim Veterinary Scholars Program** was established more than 30 years ago to introduce first- and second-year veterinary medical students to biomedical research. At each participating school or agency, Boehringer Ingelheim Veterinary Scholars are assigned a mentor and laboratory. Each scholar conducts a hypothesis-driven research project. The research project is typically conducted over 10 to 12 weeks in the summer, with students presenting their work at the conclusion. Visit <http://veterinaryscholars.boehringer-ingelheim.com/> for more information, including links to applications.

The **U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Agricultural Research Service (ARS)** delivers cutting-edge, scientific tools and innovative solutions for American farmers, producers, industry, and communities to support the nourishment and well-being of all people; sustain our nation’s agroecosystems and natural resources; and ensure the economic competitiveness and excellence of our agriculture. To learn more, visit www.ars.usda.gov. An important area of focus for the ARS portfolio is basic and applied research on selected diseases of economic importance to the United States livestock and poultry industries and delivering effective solutions to prevent and control animal diseases that impact agriculture and public health.

Boehringer Ingelheim Animal Health

The lives of animals and humans are interconnected in deep and complex ways. We know that when animals are healthy, humans are healthier too. Across the globe, our 9,700 employees are dedicated to delivering value through innovation, thus enhancing the well-being of both. Respect for animals, humans and the environment guides us every day. We develop solutions and provide services to protect animals from disease and pain. We support our customers in taking care of the health of their animals and protect our communities against life- and society-threatening diseases.

Boehringer Ingelheim Animal Health is the second largest animal health business in the world, with net sales of \$4.7 billion (4.1 billion euros) in 2020 and presence in more than 150 countries. Boehringer Ingelheim Animal Health has a significant presence in the United States, with more than 3,100 employees in places that include Georgia, Missouri, Iowa, Minnesota, New Jersey and Puerto Rico. To learn more, visit www.boehringer-ingelheim.us, www.facebook.com/BoehringerAHUS or www.twitter.com/Boehringer_AH.

Boehringer Ingelheim

Making new and better medicines for humans and animals is at the heart of what we do. Our mission is to create breakthrough therapies that change lives. Since its founding in 1885, Boehringer Ingelheim has been independent and family owned. We have the freedom to pursue our long-term vision, looking ahead to identify the health challenges of the future and targeting those areas of need where we can do the most good. As a world-leading, research-driven pharmaceutical company, with around 52,000 employees, we create value through innovation daily for our three business areas: Human Pharma, Animal Health, and Biopharmaceutical Contract Manufacturing.

In 2020, Boehringer Ingelheim achieved net sales of around \$22.33 billion (19.57 billion euros). Our significant investment of over \$4.2 billion (3.7 billion euros) in 2020 (18.9% of net sales) in R&D drives innovation, enabling the next generation of medicines that save lives and improve quality of life.

We realize more scientific opportunities by embracing the power of partnership and diversity of experts across the life-science community. By working together, we accelerate the delivery of the next medical breakthrough that will transform the lives of patients now, and in generations to come.

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