



2021 AABP Recent Veterinary Graduate Conference Highlighted Resources and Resiliency

AABP members who are recent veterinary graduates learned a lot about resiliency in practice life at the 2021 4th Annual AABP Recent Veterinary Graduate Conference held Feb. 12-13 in St. Louis, Mo. Normally limited to AABP members who have graduated veterinary school seven or fewer years ago, this year those members could attend in person, but all AABP members, regardless of graduation year, were able to register for virtual attendance. Over 250 were in attendance including in-person, virtual, speakers, exhibitors and guests.

With a theme of “Building Resources for Life” and offering 15.5 RACE-approved CE credits, general sessions were included along with clinical and consulting skills and beef and dairy-specific topics. Additionally, three hands-on preconference seminars focused on DairyComp 305, hot topics in ruminant surgery and restraint, and dairy nutrition troubleshooting (which was also offered to virtual attendees). During Friday night’s dinner, attendees were welcomed to the stage to share stories of resiliency in practice.

The program committee, consisting of Dr. Aaron Pospisil (chair), Dr. Blaine Melody (dairy), Dr. Lesley Moser (cow-calf) and Dr. Julia Herman (feedlot), matched the demographic of attendees. “We chose to focus on creating tools that recent graduates could take home and put right into practice,” Pospisil said. “Topics ranged from some basic consulting skills to focusing on tips for career longevity in veterinary medicine. I’m ecstatic about how our speakers delivered exactly what we were looking for.”

Pospisil specifically called out AABP District 1 Director and speaker Dr. Liz Brock who tackled the topic of coping with stress in practice. “I found Dr. Brock’s honesty and vulnerability in her talk to be extremely inspiring and I will definitely take some of her tips and tricks back home into practice,” Pospisil

said. “My hope is our attendees left inspired to make change not just in their medical skills, but also in their mentality so they can continue growing into not just good cattle veterinarians, but great cattle veterinarians who are in it for the long haul.”

The Recent Veterinary Graduate Conference was launched in 2018 as a result of the different needs of AABP members who are recent graduates, many of whom are unable to attend the AABP Annual Conference in the fall. At the 2021 conference, topics included practitioner wellness, vaccination, tools such as ultrasound, sample taking, consulting skills, buying into practices, pain management, BRD therapy, clinical pharmacology and much more.



2021 AABP Recent Veterinary Graduate Conference Program Committee. From L-R: Dr. Blaine Melody (dairy chair), Dr. Julia Herman (feedlot chair), Dr. Aaron Pospisil, (chair), Dr. Lesley Moser (cow-calf chair) and AAABP Executive Director Dr. Fred Gingrich.

“As an organization, we appreciate feedback and hope to be able to continue offering this option for our younger colleagues,” said AABP President Dr. Carie Telgen. “The energy felt from these young practitioners was palpable during meals and breaks. One attendee specifically came up and thanked us for putting on this conference and said it wouldn’t be her last.”

Telgen said that even as a “seasoned” practitioner, she found herself taking notes during the lectures. “The quality of the practical CE from this conference is phenomenal,” she added.

New this year was the edition of an exhibit hall featuring physically-distanced table top exhibits. Pospisil said the exhibit hall was a nice touch as, “a lot of times we don’t get to ask the questions we have to the company representatives, so it was nice to get to chat with them in a small setting.”

“Today we started with how to treat ourselves, then ended with how to better treat our patients. I’m very proud of the program we have put forth, and hope that everyone got as much out of today as I did!” Dr. Aaron Pospisil, 2021 AABP Recent Veterinary Graduate Conference Chair

Though the in-person portion of this hybrid conference was smaller than in previous years, every effort was made to make sure COVID-19 protocols were followed such as mask-wearing, physical distancing in sessions and meals and grab-and-go meals. “Ensuring safety by following COVID-19 protocols allowed us to offer this conference to a small number of in-person attendees and live stream it to over 175 virtual attendees,” noted AABP Executive Director Dr. Fred Gingrich.

“AABP will continue to look for opportunities to provide CE to our members and make sure we are engaging our newest members,” Gingrich said. “They are the most important part of bovine practice – the future!”

Registrants and AABP members can access the RACE-approved recorded presentations as a free member benefit through the Beef Cattle Institute website accessible at <https://aabp.org>.



Preconference Seminars Offered In-depth Instruction

Three preconference seminars were well-attended to help attendees take home practical skills to put immediately into practice.

Fundamentals of DairyComp 305 Preconference Seminar



Drs. Greg Goodell and Mark Thomas designed this seminar to educate participants on the fundamentals of DC305 with regard to use on their clients herds. Setting up protocols, maintaining vet lists, defining sync lists and more were also discussed.

TIP: For those getting started in DairyComp 305, typing GUIDE on the main command line brings up the GUIDE menu and steps you through many reports to access data you might not know how to get yourself in DC305. Click on one of the tabs at the top of the page, for example the MASTITIS tab, and it lists many reports to select from. Select the PLUS or MINUS sign to expand or collapse the report menu under the tab and double click the report that you desire to run it. The nice thing about GUIDE is that if the report requires an item not defined, it will temporarily create that item for you to generate the report.

Hot Topics in Ruminant Surgery and Restraint Preconference Seminar

This preconference seminar focused on building on the vast knowledge and clinical experience of the private practitioner. Drs. Matt Meisner and Emily Reppert presented cases that focused on key

sedation, restraint (ropes/knots) and nerve blocks critical for obtaining positive post-operative outcomes. It addressed surgical intervention of cesarean sections, urolithiasis, lameness, herniation, displaced abomasums and other gastrointestinal surgeries in cattle as well as small ruminants. Participants learned how to prevent some nagging surgical complications and be empowered to take on surgical procedures to expand services in their practice.

TIP: Sheep/goat lumbosacral epidurals. Dr. Reppert suggested to:

- Sedate animal before administering the epidural to keep the animal from moving around
- Put the animal in sternal recumbency and pull the rear limbs forward
- Clip and aseptically prepare the site
- Insert the needle perpendicular to the body, brace your hand on the animal and slowly introduce the needle
- Let the animal sit for a minute or two before the procedure.

Practical Dairy Nutrition Troubleshooting Preconference Seminar

Drs. Enrique Schcolnik and Bill Stone discussed common situations where management and nutrition can influence production and health disorders. Their



goal was to provide attendees with tools they can use to help identify and correct the cause of the problem.

This was the first preconference seminar that was also offered as an option for virtual attendees.

TIP: Schcolnik offered these tips:

- When there is a big weather event with a lot of rain or moisture, make sure forage dry matters are adjusted accordingly, otherwise you will be feeding less fiber and more grain during those days, risking rumen health.

- One of the reasons for empty feedbunks can be due to inaccurate dry matter of feeds, especially forages.
- Cows will only eat in a small number of preferred areas of feedbunk, therefore, small empty sections of feedbunk are still significant when adjusting for intakes.

Welcome Reception Kicks off the Conference

The Thursday night Welcome Reception, sponsored by Boehringer Ingelheim, Thursday night was just the thing to break the ice and get attendees started on networking with each other, as well as reuniting with former classmates or colleagues.



McArthur Talks Listening and Learning in Order to Succeed

The always entertaining and thought-provoking Dr. Morgan McArthur kicked off the conference with his talk “Animal Instincts: To Succeed with Humans, Listen, Learn and Lead.”

“To be more interesting, be more interested,” McArthur said. “Dale Carnegie says a brilliant conversationalist is one who asks more questions. Veterinarians are trained observers. People love to talk about themselves and it’s all about listening. Be rewarding. Make someone feel important. People like to hear their own name.”



Dr. Morgan McArthur kicked off the keynote session.

McArthur recommends these books for success:

- *Never Split the Difference: Negotiating As If Your Life Depended On It* by Chris Voss
- *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success* by Carol Dweck

Burnout is Real!

The World Health Organization now recognizes work "burnout" as an occupational phenomenon. The syndrome is included in the agency's handbook of medical diagnoses, which guides health professionals around the world. Symptoms of burnout include feelings of exhaustion, cynicism about one's job, and difficulty doing the job successfully.

At the conference, Dr. Laurie Fonken spoke on tools to enhance health and well-being and how work burnout can negatively affect veterinarians. "In the WHO definition, burnout is specific to workplace stress that has not been successfully managed."

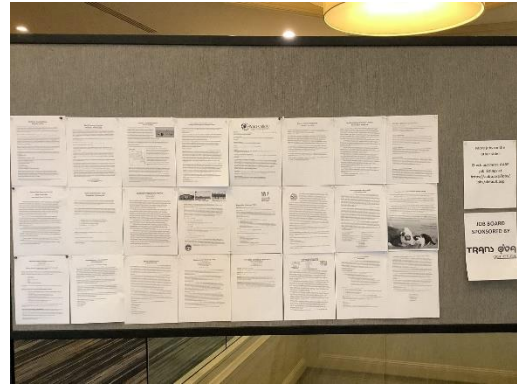
Burnout can involve:

- Emotional exhaustion - fatigue comes from caring at a high level for an extended period of time
- Stressful work environment
- Grief and Loss
- Moral distress
- High workload
- Lack of connection

It's important to recognize signs of burnout in your job in order to remedy the situations that you can.

Job Board Overflows with Over 45 Opportunities

Who says there are no great jobs out there for bovine veterinarians or mixed/rural practitioners? If the job board at the AABP Recent Grad conference was any indication, there are a lot of opportunities!



Over 45 job notices sent in by AABP members covered the front and back of a bulletin board in the center of the action at the conference. Some attendees looked at job opportunities while others looked at how different practices advertised for jobs.

Thanks, Trans Ova, for sponsoring the job board!

Didn't get a chance to submit a job posting? Visit <https://aabp.org> and click on the Classifieds tab where you can view current job notices as well as post jobs. This is the most-visited page on the AABP website!

Practice Self-Compassion

In her presentation "Coping with the Stress of Practice", AABP District 1 Director Dr. Liz Brock spoke about ways to combat your inner critic.

In a Sli.do poll, attendees were asked what is the one mental component of the job of veterinary medicine they struggle with the most? The biggest ones were:

- Imposter syndrome
- Fatigue
- On-call anxiety
- Lack of confidence
- Saying no

"We need to be nicer to ourselves, which is a tool we can use especially when things are bad," Brock said. She recommends Kristin Neff's book *Self-*

Compassion. She explained that in the book there is a three-step process to help you be nicer to yourself, especially in a bad moment or situation such as a failed calving intervention, surgery or other situation where you feel you have failed:

1. Acknowledge this is hard and I'm in a hard moment
2. Realize this is hard for a lot of people, not just me
3. Send yourself some kindness -- what would you say to a friend in the same situation?

Help to "Tote" All of that Information

Thanks, Elanco for the great insulated bags at the AABP 2021 Recent Graduate Conference in St. Louis, modeled here by Dr. Jessica Frischman, Hermiston, Ore.



Multimin Helps Unlock the Conference Success

A special thanks to Multimin for the fourth year in a row to sponsor the hotel keycards for the Recent Graduate Conference.



Conference Offers First Trade Show

For the first time in the four-year history of the AABP Recent Veterinary Graduate Conference, the conference offered a trade show with table top exhibits. The room was large to offer physical distancing but attendees were able to spend time and learn about the exhibitors' products. We thank all of our exhibitors!

AABP	Endovac
AASRP	Phibro Animal Health
Addison Laboratories	Repro Scan
Christian Veterinary Mission	SCCL
Colorado Serum Company	TechMix
E.I. Medical Imaging	Trans Ova
Elanco Animal Health	Vaxxinova

Tips for Milk Quality Audits

In the AABP Recent Graduate Conference presentation on milk quality programs in private practice, Dr. Scott Earnest gave some tips for simple milk quality audits when you're on-farm. Here are a few:

- Do not use hoses to blast away manure when cattle are on the parlor deck as they will splatter on the cows' teats and udders, increasing pathogen loads.
- Use the NMC scoring system to grade teat ends. Use a flashlight to give a quick look. "A high percentage of everted teat ends signals poor machine function or poor letdown," Earnest says. "It can give an opening to talk to the owner about pursuing a better job with teats."
- Check for clean teat ends with alcohol pads or 4x4 white gauze squares, and wipe the ends of teats. "If soil is evident, some training will be necessary to improve towel technique." He suggests to photograph the wipes and keep track of which milker was responsible for each photo, and you can also show them to the farm manager and can monitor progress with the milker.
- Do some strip yields with a measuring cup. Strip each quarter for up to 15 seconds. You should get 40-100 ml from each quarter. "If there's too much it indicates a problem with milk out; very little indicates over milking." Earnest notes to

check the automatic take off settings or see if milkers are overriding the ATOs. He also says to see if there is a difference between day/night shifts, as well as individuals in the parlor.

- Post the printed milking routine near the parlor, then learn it yourself and watch to see if it's being followed while you wash your boots. If you're at the farm at night, check up on the night shift. It's common to find corners cut on the night shift.
- Prep lag time starts with stimulation, ideally 10 seconds, and the timer stops when the unit is attached. The goal is 60-120 seconds. Notice if there is a big difference between first and last cow in this sequence. Fore-stripping is not just about stimulation, but also mastitis detection.

Fecal Egg Count Reduction Testing

In her "We've been Doing it Wrong All Along: Working with Cattle Producers to Right the Parasite Control Ship" presentation, Dr. Meredyth Jones gave this tip on fecal egg count reduction testing (FECRT).

"When performing fecal egg count reduction testing, the post-treatment sampling time varies by the drug class being tested," she said.

- Non-ivermectins - 10-14 days
- Ivermectins - 14-17 days
- Moxidectin 17-21 days
- And if combination deworming - 14 days

Two Practice Tips from Dr. Corale Dorn

Once a week, load a talk from the AABP/BCI CE portal or a podcast onto your phone before you drive or fly. You'll have 52 talks in a year.

Trained observation is always free when you're on-farm, even if you are there for something else.

Goal Setting and Personality Traits

At her presentation "How to Open Doors for Producers to Use Your Services", Dr. Keelan Lewis told attendees to ask themselves "What does being a bovine veterinarian or large animal veterinarian mean to you?", especially in the first years of practice. She said to describe to themselves things such as do you want to work on large herds, on super valuable animals, on-call or not? Weekends or not? Sale barn work? Do client education? "What does it mean to you?" she repeated. "How do I move to be the person to guide managerial positions and not do so much 'shotgun' services?"

Lewis said setting goals needs to be a priority as younger veterinarians look ahead at the type of practice they want to have or to work in. Goals should include:

- Financial – "How do I pay to do what I want?" Lewis asks. "Do I set goals for billable hours? New associates don't define their financial goals, but what does it mean for you?"
- Lifestyle-oriented – For Lewis, the local sale barn sale is on Sunday, but she doesn't like working on Sunday. "Write these down. You don't know how to recruit your clientele if you don't know who to recruit."
- Time you have available to commit clinically.
- Your skill set – "Define your skill set. Are you dairy? Beef? What can you offer your client?"
- Local needs – "What does your community need?" Lewis asked. "Are there tons of show animals and individual medicine in your area? Or is that nonexistent such as my area of West Texas that is not focused on individual medicine."



Dr. Keelan Lewis

Write down tangible goals and decide how to reach them when looking for job opportunities. "It's a veterinarian's market, not an owner's market right now," Lewis said. "We are all looking to hire."

- Goals – "A common question is what percent of species does the practice see now? But the

question that is left out is what opportunity is there for me to meet the goals I want? Select based on your opportunities.”

- Consider your five-year plan – “By five years you will be the bovine vet you wish to be,” Lewis said. “It can get discouraging by the 18-month mark because you’re not yet a bovine powerhouse.”
- Consider your personality type – “We want personality assessments for applicants. We go back to base personality types. If you know what yours is, you can find a job that is more fitting.” Lewis suggests the personality test at www.16personalities.com. “It helps me know what associates desire in a job and how they will respond to opportunities.”

Listen to an AABP *Have You Herd?* podcast featuring Lewis discussing work-life balance in practice at <https://bit.ly/2PiUgF1>.

Preconditioning Pays

Dr. Catherine Maguire discussed preconditioning strategies of beef calves. “What are we after when we talk about preconditioning?”

“Preparation of 6-8-month old range-reared beef calves for entry into a feedlot and intensive fattening program.” USDA NAHMS definition of preconditioning (2013).

But, Maguire says, the USDA NAHMS definition lacks an end objective – a real why and what we hope to gain out of implementation of preconditioning practices. These practices should:

- Increase the value of calves marketed
- Decrease subsequent disease
- Enhance producer reputation over time

What things positively or negatively impact the price of calves?

- Verified health programs
- Weight variation
- Flesh score
- Age & source verification
- Superior progressive genetics

- Oversized truck loads
- Auction date
- Base weight of the lot
- Days: auction to delivery
- Gender of lot
- Sold in mixed gender lot
- Area of origin
- Breed
- Horns

(King, et al, JAVMA 2006)



Dr. Catherine Maguire

The most significant positive drivers of sale price are verified health programs, age and source verification, and dehorned calves.

“You can help increase the value of your clients’ calves,” Maguire stated. “For the most part, producers have one opportunity to market their calves annually, so helping them

maximize the opportunity and realizing the biggest return on investment is imperative to being a veterinarian in a cow-calf state in the beef industry.”

Listen to an AABP *Have You Herd?* podcast with Dr. Maguire at <https://apple.co/3sDkReO>.

Practical Pain Management in Cattle: Four Keys to Success

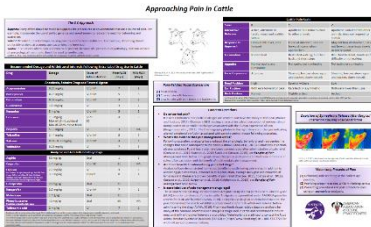
“Pain management is a key part of assuring animal well-being and farm animal welfare,” said Dr. Hans Coetzee in his presentation on pain management.

“Providing analgesia has become a consumer expectation,” he said. “Consumers are surprised and sometimes appalled to hear livestock procedures such as castration and dehorning may not be using pain management.”

In the current National Dairy Farmers Assuring Responsible Management (FARM®) Program, pain mitigation is expected to be used when disbudding calves for any method. Coetzee notes, however, that the challenge is that there are currently no FDA-approved drugs labeled for pain relief after disbudding.

Coetzee said minimizing pain includes the “4 S’s” – suppress, substitute, soothe and supplement:

- **Suppress** (prevent pain)
 - Polled genetics – reduces need for dehorning
 - Sexed semen – reduces need for castration
- **Substitute** (use alternative)
 - Paste vs. cautery dehorning
 - Perform in young vs. older animal
- **Soothe** (analgesia)
 - Preemptive vs. existing pain
- **Supplement**
 - Multimodal analgesia



Coetzee suggests to download and print the pain management “cheat sheet”, *Approaching Pain*

in Cattle, from the AABP website Committee Resources page under the Committee for Pharmaceutical and Biologics Issues section at https://aabp.org/committees/resources/Pain_Brochure_8-15.pdf.

Listen to an AABP *Have You Herd?* podcast on this subject with Dr. Coetzee at <https://bit.ly/39q317m>.

Chuteside Management Event Reports

Dr. John Bolinger likes to use management event reports for cow-calf pregnancy check, weaning, pre-breeding/turnout, bull BSEs and heifer development. “In my first practice, we wanted to develop a report we could send back to clients after we preg-checked cows,” he said in his presentation “Records, Chuteside Reports, What New Grads Can Do”.

“We would keep records on paper and have a carbon-copy, type it up and mail back a report,” he explained. “When I started my own practice I kept doing it and tried to do in a timely manner, but then got busier and couldn’t get them done.” At that point, Bolinger decided to use a tablet chuteside and use an Apple spreadsheet program called Numbers which was user-friendly on a tablet. Features like Autosave saves information as you move around in the spreadsheet, and the Undo button is a lifesaver when other people type in the data and may delete some numbers or copy over others.

He has been able to create a template so he doesn’t have to create a new one for each farm. This template has a baseline report, but is customizable, and he ends up with a single-page management report. “I try to make them concise and highlight what is important at that particular time,” he said. “It’s important to not lead into information overload. We need to focus on what we think is important on each report. With a problem herd, we might dive in deeper.”

One thing Bolinger always asks are the bull-in and bull-out dates. “Clients didn’t think this was very important, but then they started to realize these are important dates for me to know because when they go in and how long they leave them in dictates what is going on in that cowherd,” he said. “It also gives you some limits on staging pregnancies when you know how long the bull has been in. Body condition score is also very important to record for cowherds.” In the section about vaccines, Bolinger uses a lot of dropdown menus to save re-typing.

Bolinger prints reports on-farm with an inexpensive \$80-100 printer. “The majority of my clients have smartphones and want to view the report. I can send them as pdfs so no information accidentally gets changed or deleted.” He says some of his clients, however, like the Numbers spreadsheet as they use it as a calving book because it has the cow numbers and when he said they would calve.

View Bolinger’s presentation on the BCI website to see the other types of management reports he uses in his cow-calf practice.

FARM® 4.0 Program

Dr. Dave Brennan spoke about the ISO-certified Farmers Assuring Responsible Management (FARM®) program and its benefits to dairy producers and the dairy industry.

The FARM Program was started in 2009 by the National Milk Producers Federation (NMPF) with help from Dairy Management, Inc., to establish standards for animal care, no matter the size of the dairy.



Dr. Dave Brennan

A voluntary program, it makes protocol recommendations and veterinarians and their producers can make their protocols to fit the recommendations.

“It’s a huge opportunity for the dairy industry to maintain global exports of dairy products,” Brennan explained. “It’s also good for public perception of the dairy industry.”

Why should your dairy clients participate?

- To help establish the highest standard for the dairy industry
- Provide consumers proof of where their food comes from
- Form a “community” or “team” with all U.S. dairy farms
- Help promote and protect the dairy industry
- Maintain a market for their milk

But there are producers who are reluctant to participate. “As veterinarians, that’s where we get to bridge that gap to inform our dairy producers that it is good for you, good for me and good for the dairy industry,” Brennan said.

Why do some farms resist the FARM program?

- Feel they are being told what to do
- Feel they don’t need it
- Don’t see the global aspect of the industry
- Don’t see the negative light the industry is often in
- Worry where the program is headed
- Don’t fully understand the program

Brennan said that FARM is voluntary, but that 98% of milk in the U.S. is under the FARM program, and it will get harder and harder to find processors who will buy milk from dairies that are not FARM-certified. Processors cannot sell milk in the open market if not all of their dairies are FARM-certified. He noted that a small local processor in his area supplied milk to local schools, and many of its dairies were non-FARM certified. When schools shut down due to COVID-19, they were unable to sell their milk on the open market and it was dumped.

He encourages dairy veterinarians to take the FARM Program training to understand what will happen on dairy farms by FARM. “Start with your producers’ FARM Program book. Get it, sign it and review it with your producers.” Brennan organized a large meeting with 300 producers and a local

processor to watch the required videos and get certified.

Brennan recommends to visit the website at Nationaldairyfarm.com to find out more about the FARM program.

Listen to an AABP *Have You Herd?* podcast on the FARM Program at <https://bit.ly/3sCyYRw> and view a FARM 4.0 AABP webinar through the Beef Cattle Institute portal at <https://aabp.org>.

Tips on Starting a Mobile Practice

After she graduated in 2014 then completed a residency, in 2015 Dr. Lesley Moser jumped right in and started a mobile practice in east Tennessee. She found a used truck, bought a box from a retiring veterinarian and went from there.



Dr. Lesley Moser

To get started, Moser says the first question you need to ask yourself is why start your own practice? What kind of veterinarian do you want to be? What type of practice do you want to have? “These are not surface-level or yes/no questions,” Moser said.

“Everything you do from here comes from how you answer these questions.” She recommends the book *Start with Why* by Simon Sinek.

She suggests to:

- Create a vision by building your practice in your head and getting it down on paper.
- Craft a mission statement. Moser’s mission statement is “Bringing large animal veterinary medicine to your family.” Target it to the audience you will be serving.
- Write your business plan. The Small Business Administration website has templates you can use (<https://www.sba.gov>). Make sure to have others proofread it – both medical professionals and lay persons to make sure it is understandable.
- Create a logo to differentiate yourself from other practices.

- Think about finances, licenses and insurance, including start-up costs, equipment and supplies.
- Create a spreadsheet list of all of the services you want to offer and what you need to make those services something you can offer.

“It is still possible to open up a practice, even with your student debt load, so don’t let that scare you.” Dr. Lesley Moser.

Find more tips from Moser about starting a mobile practice on the Beef Cattle Institute portal at <https://aabp.org>.

Post Conference/CE

The conference offered 15.5 RACE-approved continuing education (CE) credits. RACE approval is one benefit in addition to having online CE free of charge for AABP members.

Access your CE certificate from the conference by logging onto the AABP website at <https://aabp.org>. Hover your mouse over your name in the upper right hand corner, select My Account, then scroll to the bottom where you can view and print your CE certificate.

In-person attendance was limited to recent graduates, however, all AABP members can access



the RACE-approved recorded presentations as a free member benefit through the Beef Cattle Institute (BCI) website accessible at

<https://aabp.org>. Stay tuned for presentations to be uploaded on the site.

And don’t forget, you can access webinars as well as presentations from past AABP conferences through the BCI site.

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