

**Report on the Incubation & Fertility Research Group (WPSA Working Group 6)
Meeting – 6th-7th September 2005 at the University of Lincoln**

September 2005 saw the 30th Anniversary meeting of the Incubation & Fertility Research Group (WPSA Working Group 6) at the University of Lincoln, England. Thirty-five delegates, from eleven different countries (from as far a field as Canada, the USA, Singapore and Australia), attended this enjoyable and successful meeting. As always there was a full programme over one and half days with twelve talks covering a wide range of topics from “Trouble shooting in the daily practice of the hatchery” to “Blood vessel density and eNOS concentration in the chick embryo chorio-allantoic membrane: area under the air cell is different from the rest”. There were also four posters presented by delegates again covering a variety of diverse topics, *e.g.* “Egg productivity and mortality over 25 years for Blue Tits (*Parus caeruleus*) and Great Tits (*Parus major*) in Treswell Wood, Nottinghamshire” and “Movement *in ovo* and its effects on proliferation, apoptosis and post-hatch muscle fibre number in the chick”.

A highlight of the meeting was a workshop on fertility in poultry presented by invited speakers. David Froman of Oregon State University, USA on his visit to the IFRG gave a presentation on “Sperm mobility: a new quantitative trait in poultry” and Jean-Pierre Brillard of INRA’s Station de Recherches Avicoles, Tours, France outlined his new research on “Testicular stem cells: the potential for transgenic poultry”. It was particularly interesting to have Ken Laughlin, of Aviagen Ltd., Scotland, speak on “Fertility – 30 years on”. Ken had attended the very first meeting of the (then) Incubation Research Group.

To conclude the meeting there was a very entertaining talk by Dr Nick French of British United Turkeys Ltd., England on his personal experience of the IFRG. Nick has attended every IFRG meeting since 1979 and so was well qualified to comment on the development of the Group. To the amusement of the audience he awarded various “prizes” during his talk for various achievements at meetings including Colin Dawes who won the most surreal paper with “Eggs in Art”.

With the usual mix of academics and commercial participants there were some lively discussions over refreshments and during the dinner held on the night of the 6th September. It was decided that the 2006 meeting would be held in Lincoln in the week before the European Poultry Conference in Verona. In this way it is hoped that the IFRG will attract delegates to its workshop that will focus on practical aspects of commercial incubation. Of course the meeting will be open to anyone with an interest in fertility, embryonic development or incubation. Full information will be posted at www.ifrg.org.

D C Deeming, October 2005