

ISAG Conference 2004, Tokyo

Avian Immunogenetics

The Avian Immunogenetics Standing Committee held a meeting on September 16, 2004 on the final morning of the 29th ISAG Conference at Meiji University, Surugadai Campus, Ochanomizu, Tokyo, Japan. The meeting was well attended with twenty individuals leaving email addresses for further contact regarding committee activities during the interval between meetings.

The Chair, Marcia Miller, welcomed the group and made the attendees aware of the goals set forth in the 28th ISAG meeting in Göttingen. These included the completion of a new nomenclature for the chicken MHC, a goal that was met (see 2004 Nomenclature for the chicken major histocompatibility (*B* and *Y*) complex, *Immunogenetics* 56:261-279, reprints were made available) and the possibility of reviewing and standardizing the nomenclature for chicken cytokines and chemokines, a goal that remains.

Standing committee membership was reviewed and new members elected.

New members:

Janet Fulton, Hy-Line International (USA) will assume the Chair

Sandra Ewald, Auburn University (USA)

Continuing members include:

Marcia M. Miller, Beckman Research Institute (USA) continuing, but rotating out of Chair

Gabriela Iglesias, U. Buenos Aires (Argentina)

Jim Kaufman, Institute for Animal Health (UK)

Susan Lamont, Iowa State U. (USA)

Rima Zoorob, CNRS UPR 1983 (France) -- wishes to formalize membership by joining ISAG

The Chair made a request for additional committee members especially from other continents not presently represented on the committee. Several attendees expressed interest, but needed time to consider. These individuals will soon be contacted and will be added to the committee, if they are willing. It was generally agreed that an active working group would be formed utilizing primarily email as the means of communication in the interval until the 2006 meeting.

The remainder of the meeting was devoted to excellent platform presentations made by nine speakers in three areas: 1) quail MHC and polymorphisms, 2) the chicken MHC *B* and *Y* regions, and 3) the genetics of susceptibility of chickens to avian tumor virus. Findings presented included an up to the minute comparison between the MHC of quail and chicken showing both conservation and great expansion of region in the quail MHC relative to chicken. Diversity of class II β loci in the quail was described showing that some haplotypes have one major expressed class II β locus, while others have two. A further presentation on the quail provided data on mapping feather and blood protein genes in which chromosomal assignments were made for transferrin, hemoglobin, and prealbumin. Work on the chicken included a detailed presentation demonstrating the utility and applicability of the LEI0258 in MHC *B* typing. Progress on applying SSCP in MHC typing of the indigenous chickens of Thailand was described. Results of ongoing genomic sequencing of the *Y* gene region were presented. Two presentations explored the genetic basis of susceptibility to infection by avian leukosis/sarcoma –

one using a differential cloning technique, the other making use of recombinant congenic strains to identify, evaluate and characterize genes.