



Conference of Research Workers in Animal Diseases (CRWAD)

2026 PRESENTATION AWARDS

3 Minute Thesis (3MT) Competition

First Place:

Awardee: Isabel Tobin

Affiliation: Oklahoma State University

Presentation title: *From farm to table: How bacteria can protect your chicken dinner.*

Second Place:

Awardee: Rebecca Hutchinson

Affiliation: University of Kentucky

Presentation title: *Transcriptomic profiling of equine myometrium identifies immune networks underlying placentitis-induced activation.*

Third Place & Public Choice Award:

Awardee: Rafaela Santos

Affiliation: Texas Tech University

Presentation title: *Exploring the role of inflammatory microRNAs in calf health.*

CRWAD Post-Doc Research Awards

Awardee: F.Y. Yuan

Affiliation: Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Presentation title: *mRNA cocktail vaccination partially protects pigs from lethal challenge by African swine fever virus.*

Name: I.M. Leon Moreno

Affiliation: Texas A&M University

Presentation title: *Phagocytic uptake and intracellular replication of fluorescently modified Salmonella Newport and Lubbock.*

American Association of Veterinary Immunologists (AAVI) Awards

Oral Presentations:

First Place:

Awardee: Giovana Ciacci Zanella

Affiliation: Iowa State University

Presentation title: A multivalent mRNA-lipid nanoparticle vaccine against influenza A virus circulating in swine.

Second Place:

Awardee: Eric James Owczarzak

Affiliation: Michigan State University

Presentation title: Effect of isoprostane class on bovine monocyte-derived macrophage function under in vitro inflammatory and oxidative stress challenge.

Third Place (tie):

Awardee: Kathryn Willits Kesler

Affiliation: Michigan State University

Presentation title: Effect of zinc on lymphocyte functions relevant to vaccine responsiveness in vitro.

Awardee: Prince Pal Singh

Affiliation: The Ohio State University

Presentation title: Japanese encephalitis virus infection in pig fetuses causes transcriptional immunopathology sequelae in piglets.

Posters:

First Place:

Awardee: Trinidad Fernandez Wallace

Affiliation: University of Wisconsin-Madison

Presentation title: Effects of *Saccharomyces cerevisiae* boulardii CNCM I-1079 supplementation on the immune function of dairy cows during the periparturient period.

Second Place:

Awardee: Shristy Budha Magar

Affiliation: Kansas State University

Presentation title: Sex-specific effects of obesity on fecal microbiota during acute low- and high-dose influenza A virus infection in mice.

Third Place:

Awardee: Saurav Pantha

Affiliation: Kansas State University

Presentation title: Sexual dimorphism in metabolic responses to influenza vaccination in a mouse model of diet-induced obesity.

American College of Veterinary Microbiologists (ACVM) Awards

Don Kahn Award (Overall best presentation)

Awardee: Ana F. Castillo-Espinoza

Affiliation: Iowa State University

Presentation title: Resembling epithelial responses to swine mycoplasmas in vitro: An organotypic 3D tracheal model captures species- and strain-specific divergence

Oral Presentations:

First Place:

Awardee: N Ghahari

Affiliation: Purdue University

Presentation title: Neurophysiological and Morphological Signatures of *Clostridioides difficile* Toxin Exposure in a Brain-on-a-Chip Model

Second Place:

Awardee: Cassandra Barber

Affiliation: Mississippi State University

Presentation title: Bovine cathelicidins expression in respiratory tissues during bovine respiratory syncytial virus infection

Third Place:

Awardee: Valeria Lugo-Mesa

Affiliation: Texas A&M University

Presentation title: Copper sulfate treatment and effects on biofiltration in saltwater aquaria

Poster Presentations:

First Place:

Awardee: Tricia Serrao

Affiliation: South Dakota State University

Presentation title: Establishment of Turkey and Chicken Respiratory Cell Culture Model for the Isolation and Propagation of Avian Metapneumovirus Subgroup B

Second Place:

Awardee: Sujan Kafle

Affiliation: Kansas State University

Presentation title: Mucosal infection of CAST/EiJ mice with monkeypox virus

Third Place:

Awardee: Varsha Bommineni

Affiliation: University of Florida

Presentation title: *Campylobacter hepaticus* Transcriptomics Identified the Genes Involved in the Spotty Liver Disease (SLD) Pathogenesis

Animal Health Institute and Joseph J. Garbarino Foundation

Biosafety and Biosecurity Awards

Oral Presentations:

First Place:

Awardee: Sahar Rostami

Affiliation: Mississippi State University

Presentation title: Establishment of reference intervals for ocular surface temperature in canines via infrared thermography

Second Place:

Awardee: Kara Flaherty

Affiliation: The Ohio State University

Presentation title: Enhancing biosecurity practices and outbreak preparedness for African Swine Fever in Puerto Rico.

Third Place:

Awardee: Melissa Curlee

Affiliation: Lincoln Memorial University

Presentation title: Spatiotemporal analysis of highly pathogenic avian influenza A (H5N1) occurrence in wild birds in the United States, 2021–2025.

Association for Veterinary Epidemiology and Preventive Medicine (AVEPM) Awards

Gearhart Award:

Awardee: Alejandra Arevalo

Affiliation: The Ohio State University

Presentation title: Environmental prevalence of *Salmonella* Dublin in Midwest U.S. dairy-beef operations: Associations with biosecurity and farm management.

Oral Presentations:

First Place:

Awardee: Seth Arnold

Affiliation: University of Wisconsin

Presentation title: Outreach and communication regarding mosquito activity and its associated disease risk are crucial to inform the public of risks to their health

Second Place:

Awardee: Taylor McAtee

Affiliation: Kansas State University

Presentation title: Health challenges such as BRD, reduce cattle growth and feed efficiency, increasing greenhouse gas emissions per unit of beef produced

Third Place:

Awardee: Janice O'Brien

Affiliation: Virginia Tech University

Presentation title: Grain-free diets have been the subject of much scientific scrutiny since their meteoric rise in sales in the 2010's, and their potential association with dilated cardiomyopathy in dogs first reported in 2018

Fourth Place:

Awardee: Harley Henderson

Affiliation: Texas A&M University

Presentation title: Complex polymicrobial diseases such as BRD, arthritis, and liver abscesses, are leading causes of cattle mortalities in North American feedlots

Poster Presentation:

First Place:

Awardee: Alexandra Pace

Affiliation: University of Idaho

Presentation title: Wildfires are a major source of air pollutants that are public health hazards, such as fine particulate matter and volatile organic compounds

NC1202 Enteric Diseases of Food Animals Awards

David Francis Awards

First Place:

Awardee: I. Tobin

Affiliation: Oklahoma State University

Presentation title: *Megasphaera stantonii*, a commensal bacterium, confers colonization resistance against necrotic enteritis in chickens

Second Place:

Awardee: S. Mainali

Affiliation: University of Arkansas

Presentation title: *Eimeria maxima* protein expression in chicken ileum during necrotic enteritis

Third Place:

Awardee: C. Skow

Affiliation: Iowa State University

Presentation title: The potential of a host-specific gut bacterium in modulating chicken lung immunity

Lynn Joens Awards

First Place:

Awardee: J. Joseph

Affiliation: University of Delaware

Presentation title: Evaluation of the antibiotic potentiation ability of phytochemicals against *Salmonella* Typhimurium and ESBL *E. coli*

Second Place:

Awardee: K. H. Hazlett

Affiliation: Texas A&M University

Presentation title: Beyond the flavor: Shotgun metagenomics for functional insights and MAG recovery in bovine liver abscesses

Third Place:

Awardee: N. M. Souza

Affiliation: Boise State University

Presentation title: *Salmonella* ArtAB toxin to determine its role in host-pathogen interactions

US Animal Vaccinology Research Coordination Network

(USAVRCN) Awards

Oral Presentations:

Awardee: Gracie Hedgpeth

Affiliation: University of Notre Dame

Presentation title: Effects of Bd metabolite prophylaxis treatment on amphibian host resistance and tolerance to the deadly chytrid fungus *Batrachochytrium dendrobatidis*

Awardee: S Kumari

Affiliation: University of Nebraska–Lincoln

Presentation title: Lipid nanoparticle-encapsulated DNA vaccine induces robust and durable immunity against avian influenza in chickens

Poster Presentations:

Awardee: V.R. Mokalla

Affiliation: South Dakota State University, Brookings

Presentation title: Inulin acetate nanoparticles as a novel TLR4-based adjuvant for influenza vaccination in pigs

Awardee: J. Murugesan

Affiliation: Oklahoma State University

Presentation title: Development of prototype single-cycle vaccines for bovine respiratory syncytial virus

Society for Tropical Veterinary Medicine (STVM) Awards

Awardee: Oluyemisi Akerele

Affiliation: University of South Africa, Gauteng

Presentation title: *Spatial-distribution of dog rabies in Gauteng Province using the average nearest neighbor from 2009–2025.*