One unit of a commodity is indistinguishable from another unit and has no more value. To become distinguishable we must add value and cease to be a commodity. Lest you forget, when you became a member of the American Registry of Professional Animal Scientists (ARPAS) you added personal value and rose from the commodity ranks of animal scientists.

Much of the following commentary has been taken directly from our ARPAS website, constitution, bylaws and existing ARPAS literature. Very little new has been added because the original foundation was very strong. Plagiarism may not be the correct term for my liberal borrowing since I am acknowledging my sources upfront. Whatever new I have added is certainly strengthened by the collective wisdom of those who drafted the original words. I would suggest that you review the sources of this information also.

The need for this organization was framed by this statement, “Modern animal agriculture, and society in general, are becoming more complex, with more governmental regulations and controls, more litigation, and more need for accountability and certified credibility. In this climate the registration, certification, and professional stature provided by ARPAS will become increasingly important.”

Our founder’s vision is stated in the preamble to our constitution: “To meet the need for a national registry of Animal Scientists qualified to provide technical service and to provide evidence of this professional competence to the public, to members of other professions and to the profession of the Animal Sciences (meat and fiber producing animals, dairy, poultry, equine, and companion animals) itself, the American Registry of Professional Animal Scientists (ARPAS) was established on August 7, 1984.”

ARPAS is a professional society affiliated with the American Society of Animal Science, American Dairy Science Association, Poultry Science Association, Equine Science Society, American Meat Science Association, and other scientific associations with an interest in the purpose of the Registry, but is not accountable to and does not speak for those scientific associations. The Registry is responsible to its membership and Governing Council. The Registry is self-governing and self-supporting through dues and fees assessed its members.

Our name: This organization shall be known as the American Registry of Professional Animal Scientists (ARPAS).

Our purpose: It shall be the purpose of this organization to provide registration of professional status for qualified members of the Registry, to strengthen the Animal Sciences among the professions and to promote the profession of the Animal Sciences. The Registry shall be open to all Animal Scientists who meet the requirements for professional registration as established by the Registry.

Our mission: ARPAS provides certification of animal scientists through examination, continuing education, and commitment to a code of ethics. ARPAS catalyzes continual improvement through publications (including the PAS journal) and by providing information on educational opportunities. The principal Core Competency of ARPAS is certification of professional animal scientists.

You are a member of ARPAS because:

1. You are fully qualified as a professional animal scientist by training and experience.
2. You take pride in your profession and you want others to recognize your feeling.
3. You believe that being designated a professional animal scientist will contribute to your success.
4. You believe that continuing education is essential to personal and professional development.
5. You believe in adding value so that your clients/customers get value added.
Who can benefit from ARPAS Membership? Anyone engaged in the practice of one of the Animal Sciences through research, education, extension, consulting, service, or production. As a member of ARPAS, tell other “animal scientists” about the “added value” you have acquired from being an ARPAS member and give them a copy of this presentation. Also, make sure you add your PAS or Diplomate designation to your correspondence and business card.

Update on ARPAS
ARPAS is a healthy and growing organization with over 1500 members. Our members are progressive, active and willing to serve this organization. Our current President is Dr. Bob Wetteman and the President-Elect is Dr. Jeff DeFrain. ARPAS has been fortunate to have capable leadership to orchestrate our activities and programs. Our members have always been very willing to serve on the Governing Council, as an officer or serve on a committee. Kelsey Grant is our capable FASS administrative assistant. She is your primary contact at the ARPAS office and she handles the routine issues regarding membership, testing and CEU's so efficiently that I seldom get involved. She constantly and courteously points out ways we can improve our administrative functions such as membership, tracking of CEU’s, and evaluation of educational programs for ARPAS credits. Kelsey is constantly fine tuning her daily activities to allow more time to implement improvements to ARPAS administrative functions.

In my 8th year as your Executive VP, I focus on implementing new programs, new chapters and growing membership but not on fighting small brush fires and solving individual issues. Kelsey, with the help of others in the FASS organization, do a great job on most of these. 2015 was a year of paying for some deferred maintenance (called infrastructure improvements by politicians) for ARPAS. With help from the IT folks at FASS, we are remodeling our website to eliminate outdated information and make it more user-friendly. The website is your 24-hour-a-day communication vehicle. It is designed to provide ARPAS information and allow you to deposit CEU's. We encourage all of you conducting programs to have them evaluated for ARPAS credits so attendees can readily update their CEU’s on line.

Dr. Steve Schmidt, exam committee chair with help from ARPAS members, Kelsey and FASS personnel, has refreshed most ARPAS exams, prepared and posted study guides and expanded our ability to balance exams and track individual questions in our exam database. An online exam process was implemented a couple of years ago. Dr. Wayne Kellogg is Editor of the “Professional Animal Scientist Journal”. The journal is now published by Elsevier Publishing Company. We hope this change will provide international recognition to our Journal and it continues to grow in both size and recognition. The ARPAS Newsletter, which is provided three-times/year, is edited by Kelsey with assistance from the NE Director and the publications committee and is available online. This newsletter has grown from a small communication piece developed by Bill Baumgardt, your first Executive Director, to an outstanding publication in a user-friendly format.

ACAS (American College of Animal Science) is functional and has admitted several new diplomates, most by a process termed “highly qualified individual”. Please help us identify those highly qualified individuals that should be board certified members of ARPAS through this certification process. Dr. John Bernard is the current President of ACAS. Our Treasurer, Dr. Dale Hill, will verify that ARPAS is in good financial condition. We are funding all of our current initiatives and evaluating new ones to benefit our members. Initiatives in recent years include the ARPAS Symposium Foundation, the ARPAS Foundation and the “Distinguished Professional Animal Scientist Award”. All of these have been featured in the newsletter. These programs are indicative of ARPAS reaching a stage of maturity that values recognition of members and the Foundation provides a continuing financial mechanism for support of worthy endeavors.
Many industry meetings and programs provide a forum for prospective members to take ARPAS exams and to have an ARPAS information booth. Our seven chapters are active in serving members at the grass roots level of ARPAS. The California Chapter of ARPAS sponsors an annual symposium and the Mid-West Chapter sponsors a student dinner at the Tri-State Nutrition Conference. Other chapters are involved in or initiating similar programs. Thank you for proctoring ARPAS exams, individually and at conferences and for giving time to work on behalf of this organization. Without our members input, service on committees and leadership, we would not exist.