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MORRIS ANIMAL FOUNDATION, AMERICAN VETERINARY MEDICAL FOUNDATION PARTNER ON RESEARCH INTO DEADLY CANINE AND AVIAN FLU VIRUSES

AVMF sponsors two MAF-funded studies on infectious diseases

Denver/Feb. 26, 2008 – For a second year in a row, the American Veterinary Medical Foundation (AVMF) has teamed with Morris Animal Foundation (MAF) to fight deadly canine and avian influenza viruses. AVMF has committed to co-sponsoring two MAF-funded studies that will research these serious viruses.

“Canine and avian influenza viruses can cause illness and death in dogs and birds, as well as other animal species and people. We need to understand how these viruses spread in order to provide prevention and treatment,” said Patricia N. Olson, DVM, Ph.D., president/CEO of Morris Animal Foundation. “We are very pleased that the AVMF is partnering with us in this endeavor.”

These viruses have the ability to jump from one species to another, which could lead to major health issues. The two research studies will analyze disease transmission and how to monitor and contain these viruses. The canine study will determine the prevalence of canine flu infections in animal shelters and identify the factors that cause it to spread. Lead researcher Dr. Cynda Crawford at the University of Florida hopes to use her findings to develop effective guidelines for managing respiratory infections in shelters.

Dr. Justin Brown and Dr. David Stallknecht, both at the University of Georgia, are studying the ability of avian flu viruses to persist in water. They believe the results will provide insight into the risks of viral transmission from wild birds to domestic poultry. Dr. Brown is the recipient of an MAF Fellowship Training grant and is receiving mentorship from Dr. Stallknecht, a recognized expert in avian influenza.

“These grants to Morris Animal Foundation reinforce our belief that only by working together can we make a difference in the outcomes for animals,” commented Robert E. “Bud” Hertzog, Chairman of the American Veterinary Medical Foundation.

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About Morris Animal Foundation:

Morris Animal Foundation, established in 1948, is dedicated to funding research that protects, treats and cures companion animals and wildlife. MAF has been at the forefront of funding breakthrough research studies benefiting animals in some 100 countries, spanning all seven continents on earth. MAF has its headquarters in Denver, Colorado. The Foundation has funded nearly 1,400 humane animal health studies with funds totaling more than \$51 million. One hundred percent of annual donations go to fund health study programs. For more information, call (800) 243-2345, or visit www.MorrisAnimalFoundation.org.

About the American Veterinary Medical Foundation: The American Veterinary Medical Foundation (AVMF) is a national, 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization established in 1963. AVMF protects and advances the medical care and well being of animals by raising and distributing funds in support of animal disaster preparedness and response and animal health studies. In the last decade, AVMF has awarded grants totaling over \$7 million in support of this mission. The ultimate goal of the AVMF is to help as many states as possible be prepared for disasters affecting animals. For more information, please visit our website at www.avmf.org or call 800-248-2862 ext. 6690.