ALISON L. VAN EENENNAAM

Professor Alison Louise Van Eenennaam was born in 1963 in Melbourne, Australia. Although her passion for animal genetics was piqued through lectures given by Mike Goddard during her BAgSc (Hons) degree at the University of Melbourne, she initially worked as a Development Scientist for Cooper's Animal Health in Camden, NSW. She then undertook a Master of Science at the University of California, Davis (UCD) in the United States, following which she worked for three years as a University of California Cooperative Extension Dairy and Livestock Extension Advisor in the central valley of California, before returning to UCD to complete a PhD in Genetics with Professor Juan Medrano. Upon graduation, she worked as a Research Scientist and then a Project Leader at Calgene, the small Davis-based company that commercialized the first genetically engineered plant food product, the Flavr Savr tomato.

In 2002 she returned to academia after accepting a position as a Professor of Cooperative Extension in Animal Biotechnology and Genomics at UCD. In 2023, she was promoted to Distinguished Professor, the highest UC campus-level faculty title that can be bestowed and is reserved for those whose work "*has been internationally recognized and acclaimed, and who have achieved the highest level of distinction in their scholarship, teaching, and university/public service*".

Alison has over 100 peer-reviewed publications, and her current research focuses on technical aspects of producing genome-edited livestock (especially cattle and sheep), and policy relating to the regulation of genetically modified and genome-edited organisms. She is an elected Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), the recipient of the 2019 American Society of Animal Science (ASAS) National Rockefeller Prentice Award in Animal Breeding and Genetics, the 2019 University of California Davis James H. Meyer Distinguished Career Achievement Award, and the 2021 U.S. Beef Improvement Federation (BIF) Pioneer Award.

Alison is a gifted communicator, and has been a leading voice and occasional YouTube star in the field of animal biotechnology, in particular the validation of the early generation of DNA marker tests, and the development and application of genetic modification in livestock. Alison presents widely and interacts frequently with a variety of media and has delivered more than 800 oral presentations to global audiences, ranging from cattle producers to Congress. She received the American Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU) National Award for Excellence in Extension; and the 2014 Council for Agricultural Science and Technology (CAST) Borlaug Communication Award.

Alison served as the USDA National Animal Genome Research Program (NRSP8) Bovine Genome coordinator (2018-2023), wrote the BIF guidelines for genome edited animals, and has served on several international advisory committees including the Strategic Steering Committee of the Australian dairy project entitled "ImProving Herds"; the International Advisory Committee of the "Center for Tropical Livestock Genetics and Health" (CTLGH); International Research Advisory Committee for

the Genome Canada project “Increasing feed efficiency and reducing methane emissions through genomics”; and as Chair of the Climate Smart Cattle Technical Advisory Group for Ag Research in New Zealand. She has also served on several World Congress Genetics Applied Livestock Production (WCGALP) Scientific Advisory Committees, and is on the Executive Committee organizing the 2026 WCGALP in Madison, Wisconsin.

She first attended AAABG in 2009 in South Australia, and has since attended almost all conferences. It is fitting that at the 26th AAABG in Queenstown NZ, Alison has been invited to give a keynote presentation. For her contributions to research in animal biotechnology and providing a trusted voice and evidence-based materials on the importance of genetic innovations to varied stakeholders globally, the Association for the Advancement of Animal Breeding and Genetics is pleased to elect Alison Van Eenennaam as a Fellow of the Association.