

Dr. Robert G. Ehlenfeldt
2009 Outstanding Alumnus

Dr. Robert Ehlenfeldt is a 1967 graduate of Beaver Dam High School. He served in the United States Army from 1969-71 and was an Avionics Technician during the Vietnam War. After his military service, Dr. Ehlenfeldt attended the University of Wisconsin – Platteville and graduated summa cum laude with a Bachelor’s degree in Biology in 1975. In 1979, he received his Doctorate of Veterinary Medicine from the College of Veterinary Medicine at the University of Minnesota. In addition, he also completed short courses in epidemiology, management budget, communication, and labor relations.

After graduating, he was a partner at the Fletcher Veterinary Clinic in Platteville from 1979-1985. Dr. Ehlenfeldt joined the Department of Agriculture, Trade, & Consumer Protection in 1985 as the district veterinarian in Southwestern Wisconsin. He became the field veterinary supervisor in 1986 and directed the U.S.’s first area tests to detect and control pseudorabies. While serving in this capacity, Dr. Ehlenfeldt established policies for disease reporting, control, treatment and prevention, and developed contracts with the Food and Drug Administration. He became assistant director of the Wisconsin Animal Health Laboratory in 1988, where he served as a veterinary specialist on trade missions to promote animal health and Wisconsin livestock in Thailand, Costa Rica, Venezuela, and Korea. In 1990, Dr. Ehlenfeldt became the Director of the Wisconsin Animal Health Laboratory.

In 1995, Dr. Ehlenfeldt transferred to the Assistant State Veterinarian’s position and in 2003 was appointed as the State Veterinarian. Since then he has dealt with traditional livestock disease as well as several emerging diseases including: Chronic Wasting Disease (deer), Monkeypox (Prairie Dogs), Avian Influenza, BSE (Mad Cow), Contagious Equine Metritis, Avian Newcastle Disease and Viral Hemorrhagic Septicemia and Spring Viremia in fish.

Dr. Ehlenfeldt is widely regarded as an authority on matters of animal health, veterinary disease, and the prevention and treatment of veterinary diseases. He is frequently requested to speak at statewide venues on these topics and has been consulted numerous times for commentary on issues affecting Wisconsin farm animals. In 2007, he spoke before the Committee of Natural Resources. Dr. Ehlenfeldt works closely with other state agencies and federal animal health authorities. He serves as an Advisory Board member for the Johne’s Disease Integrated Program and is a member of the Wisconsin Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory Board of Directors. In addition, he also served as President of the U.S. Animal Health Association North Central Region and of the University of Wisconsin – Platteville Alumni Association-Agriculture/Biology Chapter.

Dr. Ehlenfeldt has received a number of recognitions and awards, including the Army Commendation Medal with Oak Leaf Cluster, Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection Outstanding Performance awards, and, in 2008, was recognized as a Distinguished Alumnus by the University of Wisconsin – Platteville.