

## Sales Tax Refund Project Results

Illinois veterinarians received an email on June 18, 2007 from the firm of J.D. Michael, LLC regarding a proposal for the firm to work on behalf of veterinary practices to recover the overpayment of taxes on certain items (i.e. flea and tick preparations). A copy of the [original letter](#) from J.D. Michael, LLC is available on the ISVMA website.

Thirteen veterinary practices took advantage of the offer from J.D. Michael, LLC and these practices were able to secure refunds totaling \$56,298. The individual refunds ranged from \$775 to \$11,327 and the average refund was \$4331.

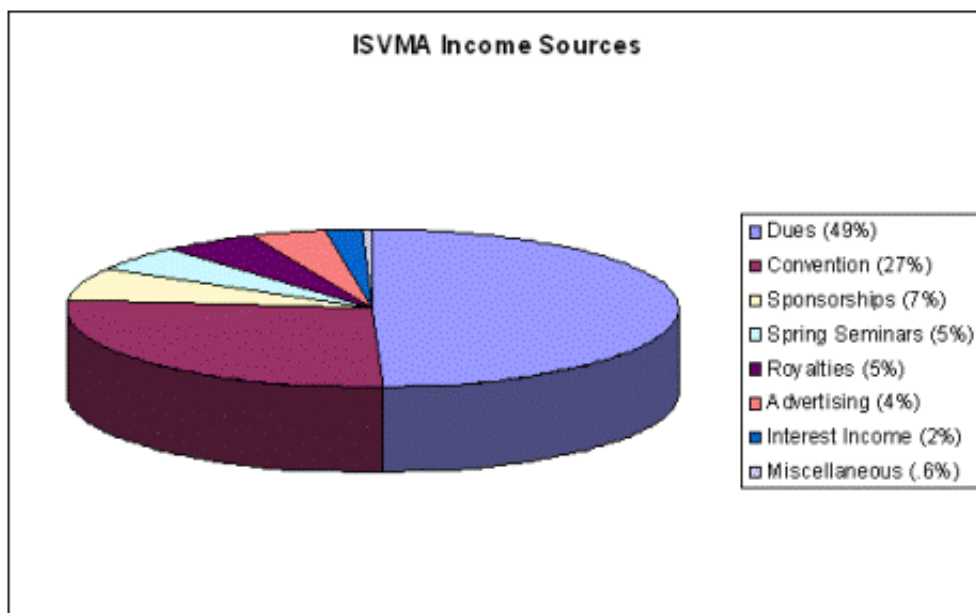
Although one of the refundable tax years has now passed, there is still an opportunity for veterinary practices to obtain refunds from the State of Illinois. For more information, please refer to the letter that is linked above.

J.D. Michael, LLC is the firm that consulted with ISVMA during the IDOR sales tax audit negotiations and has provided services to many Illinois veterinary practices.

## How Members Support ISVMA

Your membership in ISVMA is important to you as veterinarian and it is also critical to the veterinary profession in Illinois. In many ways, ISVMA has a [direct impact](#) on your practice and that of each of your Illinois colleagues.

ISVMA has a very small budget for the amount of work that is provided on behalf of the veterinary profession. Income is derived from a number of sources, but the association is very heavily reliant on dues and convention income (as shown below).



In order to assure greater financial stability, ISVMA must increase the percentage of income from non-dues sources. That is accomplished through more Illinois veterinary practices supporting ISVMA programs and services, including:

**1) ISVMA Annual Convention and Spring Seminars:** The ISVMA Annual Convention has set new attendance records each of the last three years. Despite the growing numbers of participants, the Illinois meeting still ranks among the lowest nationally in the percentage of member veterinarians that attend (17%).

Spring Seminar participation was outstanding in 2007 because of the need for veterinary practices to learn about the new sales tax regulation. Hopefully, similar crowds will register for these outstanding meetings every year!

The ISVMA provides high quality, affordable and easily accessible continuing education programs. We retain outstanding speakers and provide valuable session topics and ISVMA meetings are the single best place for you to network with other veterinary professionals from Illinois and share your professional experiences. These informal learning opportunities are among ISVMA's greatest benefits.

Illinois veterinarians must obtain 40 hours of CE every two years. You can fulfill all of your CE by attending just two ISVMA meetings each year: the ISVMA Annual Convention and the ISVMA Spring Seminars. By registering for these meetings, you will be supporting your state association AND receiving a great CE experience!

## 2) ISVMA Sponsored Benefit Programs:

The ISVMA offers [sponsored benefit programs](#) to its member practices in an effort to help them operate more efficiently and cost effectively. More veterinary practices are utilizing these programs every quarter - but there is room for tremendous growth!

The benefit programs are designed to benefit veterinary practices **and** ISVMA. Program partners pay a royalty to ISVMA so that they can have increased access to our membership and use our corporate image. Royalty income currently provides enough revenue to support a full-time secretarial position at ISVMA (salary & benefits). There is a lot of room for growth in this income category, however.

Has your practice contacted TransFirst Health Services to save money on its credit card processing charges? Many Illinois practices have saved thousands of dollars by signing up for this ISVMA sponsored benefit. Do your practice a favor and call them today at (800) 577-8573. You will save your practice money and help ISVMA - what a great way to support the association that developed this and other programs to benefit you!

## 3) Sponsorships:

Sponsorship income is critical to the financial success of the ISVMA Annual Convention. Sponsoring companies literally pay for the outstanding speakers at the ISVMA Annual Convention and Spring Seminars.

The companies that contribute sponsorships look for a return on investment (ROI). They invest in our meetings so that more veterinarians will register and visit vendors in exhibit hall. If they do not experience good veterinarian participation, they are less willing to support our meetings. The importance of increased veterinarian participation at the ISVMA Annual Conference cannot be more highly stressed!

### ISVMA Sponsors - 2007

The following is a list of companies that supported the ISVMA education program through sponsorship in 2007. This support includes Spring Seminar cash contributions, Annual Convention cash contributions, and the value of donated corporate speaker sponsorships.

#### ISVMA Annual Sponsorship Report

Name of Company/Individual	Sponsorship Level
Alberts Equine Dental Supplies	Contributor
Bayer Animal Health	Silver

Boehringer Ingelheim	Bronze
Butler Animal Health Supply	Silver
Four Flags Over Aspen	Contributor
Fort Dodge Animal Health	Platinum
Heska Corporation	Gold
Hill's Pet Nutrition, Inc.	Gold
IAMS Company/P&G Pet Care	Bronze
IDEXX Laboratories	Silver
Illinois Pork Producers Association	Bronze
MedRx, Inc.	Gold
Merial	Silver
Midwest Veterinary Supply, Inc.	Platinum
Novartis/Novartis-Deramaxx	Silver
Nutrena/Cargill Animal Nutrition	Silver
Pfizer Animal Health	Bronze
Professional Veterinary Products	Bronze
Rock River Canine Sports & Rehab	Bronze
Royal Canin	Bronze
Rx Vitamins for Pets, Inc.	Silver
Schering-Plough Animal Health	Bronze
The St. Francis Group/ Clean Earth Systems	Bronze
TransFirst Health Services, Inc.	Contributor
University of IL-College of Vet Med	Bronze

Please take the time to thank your representatives from our sponsoring companies. Let them know how much you appreciate their support of ISVMA!

### Membership Dues Discounted 50%

- Did you hire a new associate in the last year?
- Did you notify ISVMA of any changes in your staff?
- Did you check to make sure that your new associate is a member of ISVMA?

Don't wait another day to have your new associate fill out their [ISVMA Membership Application](#). As of January 1, 2008, all new ISVMA memberships are pro-rated at 50% of annual dues (because we are 50% through the membership year).

Have you checked to see if your staff veterinarians are ISVMA members? It is easy...just use the [Find a Veterinarian](#) search tool on the ISVMA website. All ISVMA member veterinarians are listed!

### About the Photo

The [Long-eared Owl](#) (*Asio otus*) is a medium-sized woodland Owl. Females average 14 1/2 inches in length and males average 13 1/2 inches. They have a wingspan of approximately 38

inches. Long-eared Owls have prominent ear tufts that appear to sit in the middle of the head and are usually held erect. Their plumage is brown and buff, with heavy mottling and barring over most of the body. Their eyes are golden yellow, facial disks are pale and rufous (North America) and their bill is black. Their forehead and lores are mottled grey and white and they have a white chin patch. Their legs and feet are heavily feathered. Juveniles are similar to adults but are less heavily marked, their head tufts are shorter and less defined and their facial disk is darker.

Long-eared Owls are widely distributed in North America, Eurasia and northern Africa. They are strictly nocturnal. During the breeding season, they live in pairs and defend only the area immediately surrounding the nest. Unlike most other Owls, however, they may roost communally (7 to 50 Owls) during the winter. These colonies are typically found in dense thickets and range over very large undefended foraging areas. Communal roost sites are often used year after year, probably by the same birds.

Some Long-eared Owls are migratory, while others spend the winter in the breeding range. Other long-eared owls appear to be nomadic, moving in response to fluctuations in food availability. They are uncommon in Illinois and have declined over the years in the state; likely due to habitat loss. They were, until recently, on the Illinois state endangered species list. Breeding evidence is sketchy; most birds are seen in the winter.

Long-eared Owls are nocturnal, with activity normally beginning at dusk. They appear slim and slouch forward when perched. Long-eared Owls are buoyant fliers, appearing to glide noiselessly even when their wings are flapping. They are very maneuverable and can fly through fairly dense brush. They fly moth-like, often hovering and fluttering while looking for prey. When roosting, a Long-eared Owl will stretch its body to make itself appear like a tree branch.

Long-eared Owls inhabit open woodlands, forest edges, riparian strips along rivers, hedgerows, juniper thickets, woodlots, and wooded ravines and gullies. Breeding habitat must include thickly wooded areas for nesting and roosting with nearby open spaces for hunting. During winter, they need dense conifer groves or brushy thickets to roost in. Roosting sites are usually in the heaviest forest cover available. They will also roost in hedgerows, or in caves and cracks in rock canyons.

Long-eared Owls hunt mainly by ranging over open rangeland, clearings, and fallow fields. They rarely hunt in woodlands where they roost and nest. They hunt mainly from late dusk to just before dawn, flying low to the ground, (1 to 2 meters (3 to 7 feet)), with the head canted to one side listening for prey. When prey is spotted, the Owl pounces immediately, pinning the prey to the ground with its powerful talons. Smaller prey is usually swallowed immediately, or carried away in the bill. Larger prey is carried in the talons. They feed primarily on mammals. In most areas voles are the most common prey, but deer mice are the most important prey in other areas. Birds are also taken, occasionally on the wing. Most bird prey are smaller species that occur on or near the ground. Bird prey includes meadowlarks, blackbirds, juncos, Horned Larks, doves, bluebirds, and thrashers. Larger birds such as grouse and screech-Owls are occasionally taken. Long-eared Owls sometimes eat insects, frogs, and snakes.

An "invasion" of Long-eared Owls appears to be occurring in parts of Northern Illinois this winter. Several colonies are being reported - some in very high traffic areas like Chicago lakefront parks! These are likely nomadic birds in search of food.

I photographed this Long-eared Owl in the winter of 2006 in DuPage County, IL.

### Contact Us

Please feel free to forward this issue of the E-SOURCE to veterinarians that are not receiving ISVMA's electronic newsletter. Any ISVMA member may subscribe to the E-SOURCE for free:

If you wish to add your name to the recipient list, send an e-mail to [info@isvma.org](mailto:info@isvma.org) and ask to

receive the E-SOURCE newsletter.

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