

Chairman's Message

By Manfred Grundt
INSCA Chairman

Dear Friends:

First, please let me take this opportunity to wish you and your families a very safe, happy, and prosperous 2004.

Next, I would like to briefly update you on several items. This past quarter has been very productive for INSCA. We sent a delegation to Xi'an, China, corresponded with you as the BSE outbreak occurred in the US and developed a membership campaign.

INSCA Vice President Mr. Li Xizhong, who is also Chairman of the China Natural Sausage Casing Association (CNSCA) invited several INSCA representatives to

attend the Board Meeting of CNSCA and the celebration of its 5th anniversary December 17 - 20, 2003 in Xi'an, China. Some of you may remember that INSCA supported the organization of CNSCA five years ago. (Please see Chairman Grundt's CNSCA Report for details).

As we neared the end of 2003, the BSE outbreak in the United States upset us all. There were many rumors floating around in the media at that time. INSCA headquarters worked closely with Legal Counsel, Shirley Coffield, to bring you the most accurate and updated news. Mrs. Coffield has been in contact with the Japanese Association and many INSCA members worldwide to bring you the most up to date news from the U.S.

This year, my goal is to bring ten new members to INSCA. I spent a day in Washington, DC working on a membership-marketing plan with our new Executive Secretary, Mrs. April James, and the President of Drohan Management Group, Bill Drohan. I am positive we will see our expected results of this well developed plan as we move forward.

As I have said before, we have many talented people in the natural casing industry. Let us stay together and work together through our Association to preserve the natural casing industry!

Executive Secretary's Report

By April James
INSCA Executive Secretary

Greetings!

I am very pleased to serve INSCA as the new Executive Secretary. Having over fifteen years experience in trade association and hotel management, I look forward to working with the Chairman, Board, Vice Presidents, and members of INSCA to progress INSCA to an even higher level of member services and financial stability.

There are others at INSCA headquarters, in addition to me, ready to serve you. Melissa White is the INSCA Administrator, and Michele Degreve is the Administrative Assistant. Please feel free to contact us with questions at any time. Michele speaks French and we also have individuals in our office who speak Chinese, Spanish, Italian and Turkish among others.

In the first mailing you received from the new INSCA headquarters, we asked you to confirm your address, phone, and email

and fax any changes back to our office. It is very important that we keep our database accurate so that we can contact you with urgent industry notifications. Please review the enclosed Membership Directory. If you notice that your email is not listed or if anything is incorrect, please notify us immediately.

Thank you to those of you who paid your 2004 dues and assessment on time! Please note that second dues notices have gone out by e-mail or fax. Please contact Michele Degreve at mdegreve@drohanmgmt.com if you have not received yours.

Advertising and sponsorship opportunities are available! For those of you who would like more exposure for your company, we have several fantastic opportunities for you. Become a sponsor at the Annual Meeting in London! Advertise in the Annual Year Book! Advertise in this newsletter! Details available in this mailing or contact INSCA headquarters.

I look forward to seeing you in London in May! Meanwhile, should you require assistance, please do not hesitate to contact Melissa, Michele, or me.

NEW LOCATION!

INSCA Headquarters

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INSCA

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**Mr. Richard Theise, Director and
Past Chairman**
THE STANDARD CASING
COMPANY, INC.
E-Mail: Rtheise@aol.com

Scientific Working Group Report

By Mounir Shehfe, SWG Chairman

Since the last report published in the Natural Link, the SWG has been quite active getting itself ready to face the challenges of 2004.

The SWG met in Palm Beach in late October and mainly discussed administrative and financial issues, realizing the difficulty of the situation following the tight financial situation of the associations. A recommendation to the Board of Directors was issued to urgently apply the decision of the annual \$1000 - assessment, thus providing funds for the important scientific work the SWG needs to do. Following this meeting and the decisions of the Board of Directors of INSCA, the SWG met again in early December over a phone conference which was of high importance due to the new approach taken by the members of the group and thus enabling the SWG to proceed on its scientific mission.

We are proud to note that members of the SWG have taken the initiative to sponsor and take over the financial responsibilities of certain projects and I am sure the industry is grateful for this.

The following projects were approved and actual initial work has already started:

1. Effects of Ozone treatment on the quality and usability of casings in conjunction with Texas University.
2. Consumer Exposure data and risk evaluation for sausage in Natural Casings with the residue issue in perspective, with the Institute INRA, France.
3. Tests with Hormone treated animals and their residues in casings.
4. Study on the effects of alkaline treatment on the inactivation of FMD virus in casings with the Inset/Reims Institute.

In the meantime the DG Health and Consumer Protection of the EU Commission has published a reflection paper on the control of residues of veterinary medicinal products and Maximum Residue Limits which opens a new field of activity involving lobbying on the EU level surely backed by scientific data to be provided by the SWG.

Also the study on Residues of Curing Agents in Natural Sausage Casings previously submitted to antiviral treatment has been published in the November issue of the German publication "Fleischwirtschaft" and will also be published in English in the International issue of this publication in January 2004.

The survey of dry-salted natural casings for the presence of salmonella spp., listeria monocytogenes and sulphite reducing clostridium spores has been finalized and it is to be published in the International Journal of Food Microbiology.

In December the SWG was highly represented by its Chairman and Secretary General to the 5th Anniversary meeting of the Chinese Natural Sausage Casings Association meeting in Xi'an, China. Important discussions were held with the scientific working group of the Chinese Association reviewing the good accomplishments of the Chinese group, especially in implementing HACCP principles in many Chinese factories and imposing it as a prerequisite for export permits. Reports on this visit can be found in this edition of the Natural Link (pages 5 and 6).

Finally the Chairman and members of the SWG wish to thank its Secretary General, Dr. Panzer, who has retired from active duty at the end of December, wishing her the best of health and good wishes.

The contents of this article are mainly based from Dr. Panzer's reports, and we wish to quote Dr. Panzer's closing statement:

"This is my last Quarterly Report for you. It was a great challenge and an unforgettable experience in my life to have had the opportunity to transform scientific knowledge into lobby activities, to stimulate minds for changes and to learn every day something new on casings, which have become over the years an integral part of my life. I thank you all for your support; your ideas and good spirits which have enabled us to achieve what is available now. Good luck for the future!"

SWG MEMBERS

INSCA delegates:

INSCA Vice Chairman and SWG Chairman, Mr. Mounir Shehfe (Egypt)
Mr. Rick Theise (USA)
Mr. Philippe Leymonie (France)

ENSCA delegates:

Mr. Peter Gelhard (Germany)
Mr. Jan Roelsgaard (Denmark)
ENSCA President Mr. Lindy Munkholm (Denmark)

NANCA delegates:

Mr. Howard de Wied (USA)
NANCA President, Mrs. Barbara Negron (USA)

Executive Secretary, April James

INSCA Government Report

By Shirley Coffield, INSCA Legal Counsel

Since the meeting in Palm Beach, there have been a number of reports to members giving information and news with respect to the BSE finding in Canada and the US, the impact on trade of countries, new certificate requirements and related information.

I: COMMITTEE GOALS:

At the meeting in Palm Beach, the Government Committee agreed to undertake some specific tasks to increase our service to INSCA members:

1. We will help the INSCA office set up and maintain a web site location that will contain links to major trading country import and export regulations and requirements. **We will shortly be sending out a request to all National and Regional Associations asking for specific websites to be linked on the INSCA website and are also looking into ways that we can keep the information updated.** Unfortunately, country websites are frequently not updated, especially when there are numerous changes made in response to a specific event or events, such as a finding of BSE or an outbreak of FMD or CSF in a particular region or country. It is important therefore, that the INSCA office be immediately informed by members whenever they receive official information from their authorities about specific changes in import rules, certificate requirements

- or related information that will impact trade in casings.
2. We will help obtain and arrange information that regional and country associations can use with their authorities that describe our product and demonstrate its health and safety characteristics and standards of procedures and processing in the trade. In this regard, we will coordinate with the information being developed by the SWG to insure that the information is available and used by all INSCA members, when appropriate, in their discussions with the import and export authorities in their countries.
 3. We will send out rapid reports to all members when we receive credible information that will impact casings trade. In this regard, we are attempting to insure that the information we send out is accurate and will make every effort to verify it before it is sent out, so as not to give credence to the many rumors in the trade which can be very disrupting.

II. UPDATE ON CURRENT ISSUES:

1. BSE in the US and Canada

Members should be receiving frequent updates on actions in the US and Canada and in exporting and importing countries

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INSCA

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INSCA Government Report

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that have affected trade in beef and sheep/lamb casings going to and from the US. In coordination with NANCA, we have been in contact with several country associations and officials in countries that are now restricting all ruminant trade. Our goal is to have these countries separate bovine (beef) and ovine and caprine (sheep and goat) casings and to limit restrictions to bovine material. Further, we are attempting to get the US and Canada to limit their own restrictions to bovine material and to SRM material from countries where a risk of BSE has been determined to exist and to remove restrictions on lamb/sheep/goat material from all countries and remove restrictions on bovine material from BSE free countries such as Australia, Brazil, Argentina and Uruguay. We have provided several studies and definitions to governments to support our positions. We note that Brazil and several surrounding countries are restricting all ruminant casings. We are also working with the Japanese association to help get information together to give to their government in an attempt to have sheep/lamb casings allowed into Japan from the US and Canada. We are assisting Australian members who are facing health requirements that all beef casings from the US, whenever produced or imported, be destroyed. We are working also with members in Brazil and Argentina to help them with their authorities on the issues of removal of the distal ileum from BSE free countries and the issue of separating bovine from ovine so that lamb/sheep casings can be traded. Finally, the issue of transshipment of sheep casings from BSE free countries through the US and Canada is a major problem, which we are also addressing with appropriate authorities. This issue has been very active and busy over the past month and we believe our participation has helped authorities in several countries better understand our trade and the low risk of our product.

2. Residues and Current Efforts in China

As reported to the members, INSCA Chairman Grundt and a delegation of INSCA and SWG members visited China in December. During that meeting there

was specific attention given to the ongoing problem of medicinal residues found in casings exported from China and resulting products bans on export to the EU. Most recently, Italy has issued a rapid alert on dried hog casings from China. While in China, INSCA and SWG representatives discussed at length with Chinese officials from AQSIQ and CNCA the actions China is now taking to make sure there is no trade impacting residues in casings sent from China. This includes the implementation of a HACCP program in all casing workshops. Chinese authorities supported this work by Chinese companies. At the meeting, Chinese officials stated that their veterinarians would begin to check livestock at the farm level, which would mean that the burden would no longer be on one product that is exported. It was agreed that this meeting was very useful to members and will hopefully lead to more actions that will result in a resolution of this difficult problem. Please see the complete report of the meeting and copy of Mr. Shehfe's SWG report in this publication.

3. FMD/CSF/ASF/Other diseases

There continues to be increasing outbreaks of these two diseases, most recently in the last quarter of 2003 and the in January 2004 there have been outbreaks of CSF in Italy, Malaysia, and Slovakia; outbreaks of FMD in Argentina, Bolivia, Israel, Libya, and Tajikistan; outbreaks of ASF in Ghana, Nigeria and Tanzania. Swine casings are regularly restricted from countries with ASF. Also please note that Brazil has banned all hog products from Portugal due to an outbreak of Hog Vesicular Disease on December 23, 2003. (For the time being this includes casings). Because many countries are now restricting trade in casings from those countries and regions where FMD, CSF, and other animal diseases exists, the work of the SWG is very important.

4. SWG

Projects are now underway that will help members in their discussions with authorities on the issues of FMD and CSF. In this regard, there are already studies

showing that certain alkaline and acetic acid treatment are effective in inactivating the virus, and the SWG, through NANCA is working toward getting a test on Ozone treatment as another alternative method. In the meantime, studies are underway to determine if these treatments are practical for casings, that is, on the usability of casings when treated with these various products. NANCA is underwriting a study on the effect of Ozone treatment in the US, which is expected to begin soon at Texas A & M University, and there are two studies done in the EU under the auspices of the SWG by Verkleij and Houben which should be published soon on usability, and tracing of treated casings. Finally, a new study is being conducted through the SWG by Dr. Haas, who will look at alkaline and Ozone treatment for FMD inactivation.

Residue Studies

The SWG has agreed to prepare a comprehensive paper to respond to the recently published EU paper: "Reflection paper on Residues in Foodstuffs of Animal Origin". This paper is an attempt to determine new means to balance consumer protection, animal health, welfare and trade requirements concerning residues of medicines used in animals used for food. There has been a request for public comment and we will be preparing comments and proposals backed by scientific evidence.

These projects will be of great help to all members.

Member News

*We invite members to
contact INSCA with
any company news.*

CNSCA Celebrates 5th Anniversary

By *Manfred Grundt*
INSCA Chairman

& *Mounir Shehfe*
INSCA Vice Chairman

Xi'an, China
December 17-20, 2003

This is the report from the INSCA Chairman and Vice Chairman's trip to Xi'an, China, to attend the Board Meeting of CNSCA and the celebration of its 5th anniversary from December 17- 20, 2003.

To have her support in affairs concerning the joint INSCA / ENSCA / NANCA Scientific Working Group (SWG), we invited its Secretary Dr. Gisela Panzer to attend the meeting with us. We traveled with our own translator, Mr. Walter Wang, Chinese Director of Grundt & Sohn. All travel expenses inside China for these two persons as well as our own travel cost were paid by the undersigned. Only Dr. Panzer's flights from Hamburg, Germany to Beijing, China and back home were paid by INSCA.

On December 16, 2003 Dr. Panzer arrived in Beijing to stay with us there until the next day. In the afternoon of the 16th, the four of us held our first meeting. We discussed the event in Xi'an and Mr. Wang explained to us his translations of the speeches of the INSCA Chairman, the INSCA Vice Chairman and the Secretary of the Scientific Working Group in Chinese language.

On December 17, 2003 we traveled from Beijing to Xi'an.

This is the official agenda of
**CHINA NATURAL SAUSAGE CASING
INDUSTRIAL ANNUAL MEETING**
December 18 - 20, 2003, Xi'an, China.

Dec. 17, Wednesday, CNSCA reception Desk

2:00 pm - 5:30 pm

Chairmen Group preparing meeting and the 7th Standing Board Meeting of the 2nd term.

6:00 pm

Reception Party, Chair: Mr. Liang Xunda

1. Toasting address at the dinner party by Chairman Mr. Li Xizhong
2. Commendation to the experts, scholars, international friends and representatives from companies.

INSCA Chairman Grundt held a short speech sending regards from INSCA's Board and membership. He also thanked CNSCA for inviting INSCA and wished all participants a good meeting and good luck for the future.

About 200 people from China and other countries attended.

Dec. 18, Thursday

08:30 am - 12:00 noon

CNSCA Annual Meeting. Chair: Mr. Liang Xunda.

1. Report by CNSCA Chairman Mr. Li Xizhong.

2. Speech by INSCA Chairman Mr. Manfred Grundt. During his speech, the INSCA Chairman awarded the "INSCA Contribution Award for outstanding work in the development of the natural casing industry" (plaque) to the following four Chinese officials: Dr. Qin Zhenkui, Director General of the State General Administration of the P.R.C. for Quality Supervision and Inspection and Quarantine Import and Export Food Safety Bureau; Dr. Bao Junkai, Deputy Director General of the State General Administration of the P.R.C. for Quality Supervision and Inspection and Quarantine Import and Export Food Safety Bureau; Dr. Geng Dongjiu, Director General of the Certification and Accreditation Administration of the P.R.C.; and Dr. Shi Xiaowei, Deputy Director General of the Certification and Accreditation Administration of the P.R.C.

The undersigned had the impression that these four persons felt quite honored to receive the award.

3. Important speech in Chinese language by the Deputy Director General of AQSIQ, Dr. Bao.

4. Speech by Deputy Director General of CNCA, Dr. Shi. This lady is responsible for factory certification control and the HACCP program inside China. Like Dr. Bao's, her speech was very important. Both went deeply into the Chinese HACCP program and explained the actual status from their points of view.

5. Speech by leader of Chinese Standardize Committee in Chinese

language (without translation in English).

6. Speech by the joint INSCA / ENSCA / NANCA Scientific Working Group's Chairman and INSCA Vice Chairman Mr. Mounir Shehfe. Translated by Grundt & Sohn's Chinese Director Mr. Walter Wang.

7. Introduction on the situation about the controls on medicine residues by INSCA / ENSCA / NANCA SWG Secretary Dr. Gisela Panzer, (translated by Nong Yongzhan in Chinese language)

8. Speech by the German association's President Mrs. Heike Molkenthin, (translated in Chinese language by a translator of her company.)

9. Speech by the Japanese association's President Mr. Yozo Kawamura.

10. Speech of the Vice Chairman of China Meat Association, (translated in English.)

2:00 pm – 5:30 pm

The afternoon session was chaired by Mr. Wang Qichang (Senior Adviser)

1. Speech by CNSCA Vice Chairmen: Mr. Zhang Lichang: Report on the situation of "Deleting Inspection" on China casing exporting enterprises and registration status.

Mr. Liang Xunda: Report on the CNSCA SWG works.

Mr. Sun Bin: Report on the CNSCA financial status.

2. Introduction about standard of natural casing industry and the knowledge about certification and accreditation of HACCP system by an expert.

3. Speeches by representatives from companies: Mr. Shen Liuchun, Ms. Wang Xuefeng and Mr. Yang Yinlong.

4. Approved the proposal for modification to CNSCA By-Law.

5. Others: 2:00 pm - 5:30 pm: Tourism in Xi'an (only for foreigners; visit of the terracotta army).

6:00 pm: Dinner Party, chaired by Mr. Liang Xunda. 184 guests attended this event.

Dec. 19, Friday

8:00 am - 9:00 am

CNSCA Board Meeting, chaired by Mr. Li Xizhong

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CNSCA Celebrates 5th Anniversary

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9:00 am - 12:00 noon

China-Foreign colloquium, chaired by Mr. Zhang Lichang.

This event was organized in the form of an interview. The journalists asked and the foreigners answered.

In this colloquium came questions from China press journalists and television station CCC4, and also leaders from the Chinese CNSCA asked questions and the foreign guests answered.

The following foreign guests were available for these interviews:

Mr. Manfred Grundt, INSCA Chairman.

Mr. Mounir Shehfe, INSCA Vice Chairman and Chairman of the Scientific Working Group.

Dr. Gisela Panzer, Secretary of the Scientific Working Group and scientific and administration adviser.

Mr. Yozo Kawamura, President of the Japanese association JSCIA.

Mr. Peter Gelhard, INSCA Vice President.

Mr. Lex van Hessen, Past Director and Past Chairman of INSCA, Past Chairman of the Scientific Working Group.

Mrs. Heike Molkenhuth, President of German Association ZVN and INSCA Director.

2:00 pm - 6:00 pm

China-foreign business discussion / Free Trade.

Question came from the auditorium to foreign guests. This was a very well organized and successful colloquium. INSCA and other natural casing associations could learn from this very well organized meeting in Xi'an!

2:00 pm - 5:00 pm

SWG China meeting.

The undersigned and Dr. Gisela Panzer invited. Mr. Mounir Shehfe also asked Mr. Lex van Hessen to attend this very important Chinese SWG meeting. After this meeting, Dr. Gisela Panzer said that China did a lot and a great job in past 12 months and the work is well done in details. The leaders of our Scientific Working Group, Mr. Shehfe and Dr. Panzer, also said that China did a great job especially to implement the HACCP Program in all workshops of our natural

casing industry. Even Dr. Qin, Dr. Bao, and Dr. Shi from the AQSIQ and CNCA offices worked hard and supported this HACCP program inside China. But Dr. Panzer, Mr. Mounir Shehfe and Mr. Lex van Hessen also mentioned in their speeches that it is only the beginning of the HACCP program in Chinese factories. The next step must be the control by veterinaries to make the natural product safer and free from antibiotics.

In private meetings with some officials they informed the undersigned that the local veterinaries will start to check the livestock directly in the farms. We all believe that China is on a very good and successful way to keep in future all antibiotics out of the animals. Like Mr. Lex van Hessen mentioned in his statement on December 19, 2003; he said that it is very important for the Chinese association to make their veterinaries control food for human consumption from the farm via the slaughterhouse to the final natural casing product, regarding antibiotics for example. Only if this is done properly, we will see a light at the end of the tunnel and the EU officials will look at the Chinese work more positively than they do today.

INSCA Chairman Grundt could attend the SWG meeting for only one hour and admired how well the Chinese SWG Advisor, Dr. Gong Hai Yan, gave his statements about the Chinese SWG activities. Well done, all three of us agreed.

The main language at the Scientific Working Group meeting that afternoon was Chinese, translated by Mr. van Hessen's translator. Thank you to this lady, her translation of this complicated matter was very well understood.

6.00 pm

Celebration Party, chaired by Mr. Liang Xunda. It was a wonderful event.

Dr. Gisela Panzer, Mr. Walter Wang and the undersigned went back to Beijing on December 20, 2003.

Dear Board Member and dear INSCA Member,

We have to congratulate our fellow association CNSCA, its whole Board and Chairman Mr. Li Xizhong once again. Our special thanks go to CNSCA Vice Chairman and Chairman of the Chinese SWG, Mr. Liang Xunda. From our point of view, we never attended the meeting of one of our industry associations that was so well organized in every detail.

We also have to say a special thank you to the Chinese officials for taking so much time to discuss important issues with the undersigned and other representatives of our natural casing industry.

Thanks to INSCA's Chinese members for their support, thanks to the many CNSCA members for attending this meeting in Xi'an.

INSCA's leaders found new good friends and we hope that very soon more Chinese companies will become INSCA members, either for their first time or repeatedly.

**Please contact
INSCA
headquarters if
you would like a
copy of a speech
mentioned above.**

INSCA WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS

ITALY

I.S.A. di CONTI VIRGINIO & C. snc
Contact Person: Mrs. Conti Dott. Enea

CHINA

CHINA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE FOR IMP. & EXP. OF FOODSTUFFS NATIVE PRODUCE
& ANIMAL BY-PRODUCTS
Contact Person: Mr. Cao Xumin

2004 Board of Directors Nominations

INSCA's Nominating Committee presented a slate of candidates to fill upcoming vacancies in May 2004. As stated in the bylaws, the number of Directors shall be eleven, to be distributed geographically as follows:

North and South America – 3;
Europe and Africa – 5;
Asia, Australia, and New Zealand – 3.

Three Director's terms will expire in May 2004. See below:

North and South America – 2 (Mr. Franz Kienast, Mr. Richard Theise)

Asia, Australia, and New Zealand – 1 (Mr. Leow Then Loy)

Mr. Theise and Mr. Leow will have finished their second terms and are not eligible to serve in office for one year.

The Nominating Committee has presented the following slate for 2004.

North and South America:

Mr. Franz Kienast
Mr. Allen Ross
Howard DeWeid
Steven Feinstein

Asia, Australia, and New Zealand

Mr. Li Xizhong
Mr. Pieter van der Wiel

Mr. Mayo reported that for 2004, three Director's terms are expiring.

Mr. Kienast will be finishing his first term by May 2004, and has graciously accepted a nomination to run for re-election.

The second terms of Mr. Theise and Mr. Leow will expire, and these gentlemen will have to wait at least one year before serving in office again.

Two open seats for the North and South America Region exist.

Vice President Allen Ross,
Howard DeWeid and
Steven Feinstein will join Mr. Kienast on the ballot.

In the Asia and Oceania Region,
Vice President, Li Xizhong and
Pieter van der Wiel

will contest the seat that Mr. Leow will relinquish.

Newsletter Advertising

You now have the option of advertising in INSCA's quarterly - *Natural Link*.

The following advertising sizes are available:

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Outside Back Cover
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Quarter Page

Natural Link Print Schedule for 2004:

April,
July,
October

There are a limited number of advertising spaces available for each newsletter.

Please contact April James at
ajames@drohanmgmt or
insca@aol.com for pricing.

Plan To Attend

INSCA 39th Annual Meeting

Hilton London Metropole

London, UK

May 20 – 23, 2004



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Send submissions to:

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