

standards required by UK law (and these are clearly marked as such) but also include others above and beyond these. Appendices include an example animal welfare policy and an example standard operating procedure. Advice is given throughout the document to encourage operators to strive for high standards of welfare.

The adoption of these guidelines, for the welfare of animals in abattoirs, by quality assurance schemes and by abattoirs themselves around the world would be a very valuable step towards raising global standards. They will be of interest to all those in the food animal industry.

Best Practice Guidelines for the Welfare of Cattle in Abattoirs; Best Practice Guidelines for the Welfare of Sheep and Goats in Abattoirs; Best Practice Guidelines for the Welfare of Pigs in Abattoirs; Best Practice Guidelines for the Welfare of Broilers and Hens in Processing Plants (June 2004). Produced by the Humane Slaughter Association. Each is 19 pp A4 paperback. (ISBNs: 1 871561 31 0; 1 871561 30 2; 1 871561 32 9; 1 871561 33 7 respectively. Published by and available from the Humane Slaughter Association, The Old School, Brewhouse Hill, Wheathampstead, Hertfordshire AL4 8AN, UK; telephone +44 1582 831919; email info@hsa.org.uk. Price £5–10 per copy depending on number ordered.

Marking amphibians, reptiles and marine mammals

Studies of the biology of free-living animals for their conservation management or for other reasons often depend upon being able to reliably identify individuals. In most cases the only way this can be achieved is by marking them in some way. Many methods are available and in deciding which to use, the advantages and disadvantages of each, both for the purposes of the study and to the animals being marked, need to be carefully considered. New Zealand's Department of Conservation has published a very useful review of methods for marking amphibians, reptiles and marine mammals (details below) in which the practicalities, welfare aspects and issues of public perception are discussed.

The booklet, which is attractively illustrated with photographs of seals and reptiles marked in various ways, starts with introductory chapters on public perception and support, why and how animals are marked, and general safeguards for marking wildlife. There are then sections in which wide ranges of temporary, semi-permanent and permanent methods are outlined. For each method there is a description of the technique followed by bullet-point lists covering advantages, disadvantages, safeguards and acceptability.

The techniques outlined are too numerous to list here but include paints and dyes, adhesive tapes, fur removal, fluorescent powders, tags, telemetric devices, branding, ear notching, and toe clipping. Regarding the use of painful or stressful methods it is emphasised that, in addition to safeguards for animal welfare, the public "should be provided with the justification for the marking programme and the

method chosen and a careful explanation of the benefits and general and specific safeguards employed."

This is a valuable and well-written practical guide about the marking methods available and the issues surrounding their use. It is aimed at wildlife managers and researchers and, although the examples are of New Zealand fauna, it is relevant and includes sound advice for those working with reptiles, amphibians and marine mammals anywhere in the world.

Marking amphibians, reptiles and marine mammals: animal welfare, practicalities and public perceptions in New Zealand (June 2004). Produced by Mellor DJ, Bausoleil NJ and Stafford KJ of the Animal Welfare Science and Bioethics Centre, Massey University. 55 pp A5 ringbound (ISBN 0 478 22563 6). Published by and available free of charge from the Department of Conservation, PO Box 10-420, Wellington, New Zealand; email science.publications@doc.govt.nz.

Guidelines for the accommodation and care of primates in scientific research

Recognising concerns regarding the behavioural, social and environmental needs of non-human primates in the laboratory environment, the UK's Medical Research Council (MRC) has recently published an ethical guide entitled 'Best practice in the accommodation and care of primates used in scientific research'. Developed by the Centre for Best Practice for Animals in Research (CBPAR) following consultation with appropriate stakeholders and a review of the published literature, this guide is aimed at all those involved in research using primates and is essential reading for MRC staff and grant-holders, as all MRC-funded research using primates (including collaborations abroad) is now conditional on implementing the principles set out in the guidelines.

A brief introduction outlines the position adopted by the MRC concerning the use of primates in research. It "...supports the principles of the 3Rs (the replacement, reduction and refinement of laboratory animal use) and expects high standards of housing and care for the animals used in research which it funds...", and is "...committed to exceeding minimum legal requirements and to introducing and implementing standards which reflect contemporary best practice". Expanding on this central theme, subsequent chapters set out best practice guidelines in relation to the sourcing of animals, experimental design, accommodation and environment (including environmental enrichment), handling, restraint, training, the provision of technical and veterinary care and support, and the fate of the animals.

The most comprehensive section addresses the accommodation and environment, regarding which the guidelines state that "...primates must be provided with a complex and stimulating environment that promotes good health and psychological well-being and provides full opportunity for social interactions, exercise and to express a range of behaviours appropriate to the species". With this in mind, the importance of the cage/enclosure dimensions, floor material, natural light, and social housing is outlined, along