

Reports and Comments

Animal Welfare welcomes the submission of items for this Reports and Comments section of the journal. These are accepted for publication at the discretion of the Editorial Office and are not peer-reviewed.

Scientific Procedures on Living Animals — Statistics for 2004

The annual report produced by the Home Office, on the use of living animals in scientific experiments and procedures, was published in December 2005 and reveals that during 2004 2.85 million procedures were carried out. This is an increase of 2.3% (63 thousand) on 2003 and is the highest number since 1992. Overall there has been a significant decline in procedures since 1976 but this has levelled off because of the increased use of genetically modified animals (see below). The report outlines all procedures by purpose and animal; toxicology and non-toxicology procedures are presented by animal, purpose and genetic status; and tree tables display information about procedures by animal group, particularly how the procedure and the target body system are related. Finally, historical trends are examined in a number of categories.

The main purposes of the procedures during 2004 were breeding (983 thousand or 34%), fundamental biological research (881 thousand or 31%), and applied studies into human medicine or dentistry (672 thousand or 24%). The vast majority (85%) of procedures were carried out using rodents, most of which were mice; the remaining procedures mainly involved fish and birds.

Overall, the use of genetically modified (GM) animals has increased by 5% on the 2003 figures to 32%. 68% of GM animals were used “solely to maintain breeding colonies”. Rodents accounted for 96% of the procedures that were recorded as using GM animals; there was an increase of 35% in the use of GM amphibians; and the use of GM fish doubled compared with 2003. In addition to the GM animals, 9% of all procedures in 2004 used animals that had a harmful genetic defect.

Non-toxicology procedures (85% of the total) were focused primarily on immunological research, with pharmaceutical research and development, cancer research, and anatomy being the next largest areas of interest. Toxicology procedures, and those involved in safety or efficacy evaluation, accounted for 15% of the total, which is a continuation of a decrease that has been evident for some years; the same category accounted for 25% of procedures in 1995.

Statistics of Scientific Procedures on Living Animals, Great Britain, 2004. Home Office, Crown Copyright 2005. Published by TSO (The Stationery Office), available online: www.tso.co.uk/bookshop; by email: book.orders@tso.co.uk; by telephone: 0870 240 3701; or by post: TSO, PO Box 29, Norwich NR3 1GN, UK. Price £14.50.

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UK Food Ethics Council Launches Bulletin

The UK Food Ethics Council has launched a new quarterly magazine for subscribers, which aims to cover “key developments in food and farming”. Of the ten articles in the first issue, one focuses directly on animal welfare and discusses some of the issues that surround chicken and egg production. It goes on to examine our role as consumers who have little or no understanding of the processes involved in producing our food. Other articles adhere to the overall theme of the issue — Negotiations — and examine world trade talks, policy making, and supermarkets and stakeholders, and the remainder look at fish farming and climate change. News, reading and upcoming events are going to become regular sections. The first issue is available to download free at www.foodethicscouncil.org/bulletin.

Bulletin of the Food Ethics Council. Spring 2006. Food Ethics Council, 39–41 Surrey Street, Brighton BN1 3PB, UK. Telephone: +44 (0) 1273 766 654; email: info@foodethicscouncil.org; website: www.foodethicscouncil.org

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Policy Statement from the Sheep Veterinary Society, UK

The UK’s Sheep Veterinary Society recently released a policy statement outlining the views of the Society with regard to the welfare of sheep. In the statement, the Society expressed concern about the forthcoming shift towards a market driven industry, and identified the reduction in number of local abattoirs as a particular problem because it necessitates transportation of animals over greater distances. Certification of competence is proposed to counteract the “continuing decline...in experienced shepherds”, and the new legislation in England, Scotland and Wales, which places a duty of care on to animal owners, is welcomed by the Society. A national campaign to eradicate sheep scab is also called for, after the success of local initiatives.

Welfare of Sheep in the UK; Sheep Veterinary Society.

The Policy statement is available in full on the Sheep Veterinary Society website: <http://svs.mri.sari.ac.uk/UKwelfare.htm>

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New Zealand Painful Husbandry Procedures Code of Welfare Published

The New Zealand Minister of Agriculture issued the Animal Welfare (Painful Husbandry Procedures) Code of Welfare No. 7 in December 2005. The document is intended to provide minimum standards and best practice recommendations relating to procedures carried out on farmed animals for “non-therapeutic reasons”. Specific chapters cover castration, tail docking, and disbudding and dehorning, but all painful procedures fall under the Code. Details are provided of other published guidelines where specific information

regarding beak trimming, velvet antler removal, and the castration and tail docking of pigs can be found.

The legal obligations of those who own or are responsible for animals are set out, with minimum standards that must be met. The Code can be used to assist in prosecution if it can be shown that the minimum standards have not been reached, as well as in the defence against a charge if it can be shown that minimum standards have been adhered to.

The first minimum standard refers to the 'Justification for Painful Procedures'. Alternatives should be sought to the procedures, and also to the farm management systems that necessitate them. The benefit to animal welfare, farm management, animal product or human safety must outweigh the pain and distress a procedure may cause, as judged by the operator. The Code states that "painful husbandry procedures should be looked upon as transitional management practices", and in the long-term the need for them should be removed completely. Next, a minimum standard is set for 'Minimising Harmful Consequences' by acting to limit the pain and distress caused. In particular it is specified that newborn animals should not be operated on. The minimum standard regarding 'Castration and the Shortening of the Scrotum (cryptorchid)' states that pain relief must be used if an animal is over six months old, but that pain relief is required, regardless of age, with the use of high tension bands (although these are not recommended for use on young animals). Lists giving the least to most painful methods of castration for both lambs and calves are provided. Guidance on 'Tail Docking' states that this should only be carried out if it is deemed necessary after careful consideration. Specific guidance is given for cattle and sheep, the latter requiring pain relief if over six months as with castration, but the best practice recommendation is that this should be done by six weeks. The minimum standards also cover disbudding and dehorning. Finally minimum standards for 'operator training, stockmanship and facilities' are described.

Animal Welfare (Painful Husbandry Procedures) Code of Welfare 2005, Code of Welfare No. 7. ISBN 0 478 29800 5. The Code is available from the Executive Co-ordinator, Animal Welfare, MAF Biosecurity New Zealand, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, PO Box 2526, Wellington, New Zealand. Telephone: +64 4 819 0366; email: animalwelfare@maf.govt.nz

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Proceedings of the ISAZ 2004 Conference

A special issue of the journal *Anthrozoös* was published in 2005 which featured papers and posters presented at the 13th annual meeting of the International Society for Anthrozoology on *Advances in the Science and Application of Animal Training*, organised in conjunction with UFAW. Papers cover a range of welfare-related issues, and include:

- Effects of breed, sex, and neuter status on trainability in dogs. James Serpell and Yuying Hsu;

- What's in a word? A review of the attributes of a command affecting the performance of pet dogs. Daniel Mills;
- Multisensory learning: from experimental psychology to animal training. Candy Rowe;
- The positive aspects of correct negative reinforcement. Andrew McLean;
- Variations in the timing of reinforcement as a training technique for foals (*Equus caballus*). Amanda Warren-Smith, Andrew McLean, Helen Nicol and Paul McGreevy;
- Training of laboratory-housed non-human primates in the UK. Mark Prescott, Hannah Buchanan-Smith and Anita Rennie;
- Can training zoo-housed primates compromise their conservation? A case study using Abyssinian colobus monkeys (*Colobus guereza*). Vicky Melfi and Sian Thomas.

Anthrozoös Special Issue Proceedings of the ISAZ 2004 Conference Advances in the Science and Application of Animal Training. 2005. *Journal of the International Society for Anthrozoology* 18(3). ISSN 0892-7936. Published by Purdue University Press, PO Box 388, Ashland, OH 44805, USA. Telephone: 800 247 6553; email: orders@bookmasters.com; website: www.thepress.purdue.edu. ISAZ website: http://www.vetmed.ucdavis.edu/CCAB/isaz.htm

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New Welfare Guidelines for Horses, Ponies and Donkeys

This updated compendium, produced by the National Equine Welfare Council, sets out to "promote sound welfare and management practices" throughout the equine industry, and provides extensive guidance on all aspects of equine care. Although similar guidelines on the care of agricultural animals are available, equine species are classed as non-agricultural and therefore are not covered by these. Throughout the book relevant legislation is highlighted in the text, and appendices give details of Government Publications, Codes of Practice, Orders and Statutory Instruments, EU Legislation and Governing Bodies. Contact addresses for the Governing Bodies, as well as many other organisations, are given in the 'Useful Contacts' section at the end of the book.

Horse management, including the provision of feed and water are looked at first, followed by a section on health issues. This includes advice on inspection protocols and condition scoring (a graphical representation of which is provided as an appendix for both horses and donkeys). The section on dental care emphasises the importance of annual inspections and also outlines the development of training courses being run by the British Equine Veterinary Association and the Worldwide Association of Equine Dentists. If existing regulations, currently being looked at by Defra, are changed, these courses will qualify suitably trained non-veterinarians to perform an increased range of dental care procedures, including practices that are currently illegal unless performed by a veterinarian. The