Equine behaviour problems appear to be fairly common in stabled riding horses and are believed by some to be indicative of decreased welfare or potential welfare problems. Because of the stresses associated with racing, racehorses may be particularly at risk. An MSc project by Michelle Drissler, under the supervision of Dr. Suzanne Millman, examined the prevalence of various behaviour problems in Standardbreds at racetracks throughout Ontario. Standardbred horses are used in harness racing around a one-mile track while pulling a sulky behind them. Approximately 11,000 Standardbred horses are racing in Ontario, which encompasses over a quarter of the 40,000 horses racing throughout North America.

Standardbreds may be housed in various settings, allowing for a wide range of possible behaviour problems. They are commonly housed either on farms or at the track itself and are generally under the care of ‘grooms’. Whereas living at the tracks decreases stresses such as trailering, the activity at the track could be disturbing to the horses. The location of housing may also determine accessibility to pastures or paddocks and the amount of time the horses have outside.

Drissler gathered information on 1295 horses at 14 Ontario tracks during 2005. Grooms were surveyed on days in which horses they care for were racing. Questionnaires were completed which provided an indication of possible welfare problems. Included in the surveys were questions regarding solutions used by grooms and risk factors for the various behaviour problems.

The most common behavioural problems found within the surveyed horses were wood chewing and pawing, which were both found in over 40% of the horses examined in the study. Wood chewing occurs when wood from a stall or fence is chewed and ingested, while pawing is a repetitive digging motion with the front limbs, which is often associated with anxiety. Other problems, such as aggression toward humans were also examined and were reported in approximately 10% of the horses. Aggression problems are believed to be higher...continued on page 2
Drissler determined that the welfare of Standardbred horses could potentially be improved by daily access to pasture or a paddock and specialized training for grooms. In performing horses and may be a result of increased physical activity or psychological stress due to training regimens and competition. Importantly, stereotypic behaviour, such as cribbing, weaving or stall walking, were no more common than is seen in the general (stabled) horse population, roughly 5% of horses showed this behaviour.

Grooms were asked to report on the solutions employed to attempt to discourage behavioural problems. Increased access to paddock or pasture was associated with a decrease in threatening behaviour towards grooms. Access to pastures and paddocks was suggested as a solution employed by grooms in response to behaviour problems, and may therefore be associated with horses that have corrected behavioural problems. Access to pasture or paddocks was also associated with superior racing performance in terms of fastest non-racing times and earnings.

Drissler determined that the welfare of Standardbred horses could potentially be improved by daily access to pasture or a paddock and specialized training for grooms, such as the Groom Certification program offered by Equine Guelph. Thoughtful pairing of grooms, horses, and training programs with behavioural components were suggested as tools to improve equine welfare and the work of grooms. Further investigation into the behavioural problems, their causes, and potential solutions are required in order to improve welfare and longevity of horses in the industry.

Janet Higginson is an MSc candidate at the Ontario Veterinary College.

New Animal Care Program Gets the Thumbs Up from Chicken Farmers

By Colleen Doherty

While still only in its preliminary stages, the Chicken Farmers of Canada (CFC) have created an Animal Care Program that is not only easy to implement, it doesn’t require a lot of extra work. This self-assessment program allows a farmer to gauge the level of care given to chickens on the farm and then apply changes as needed based on the Recommended Codes of Practice. The Animal Care Program is meant to help demonstrate the level of care chickens receive on Canadian farms and it was created with the help of federal and provincial governments, academia, farm animal councils, farmers, veterinarians and other industry stakeholders. Pilot projects have been run in almost all of the provinces and according to Lisa Bishop-Spencer, Manager of Communications at the CFC, the Animal Care Program has received positive feedback from farmers.

“At this point, the priority was on ensuring that the program was easily implemented.” Said Bishop-Spencer. “Farmers were asked to implement the program, conduct a self-assessment and provide any feedback on all aspects of the program.”

Farmers that volunteered to take part in the Animal Care Program pilot projects were asked to assess many factors related to chicken farming. These factors included bird monitoring and handling, flock health care, management practices, and its relationship to current on-farm food safety programs. Overall, the cost of the required on-farm changes were reported to be minimal and the reaction from farmers was very positive. This has encouraged the CFC to work toward making the Animal Care Program nationally accessible to farmers as soon as possible.

“The goal is for implementation to begin in 2007.” Said Bishop-Spencer.

Colleen Doherty recently completed her MSc at U of G, and is currently a Food Safety Advisor with the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture Food and Rural Affairs.

National Communications Initiative: “Putting Animal Welfare on the Agenda”

By Kimberly Sheppard

The Ontario Farm Animal Council, in partnership with its sister groups in Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and the National group is coordinating a national effort aimed at improving the lines of communication among the scientists who conduct animal welfare research, the farmers, ranchers and veterinarians who use that information and the public.

The initiative, called “Putting Farm Animal Welfare on the Agenda,” includes the development of a speakers bureau that includes names of and sponsorship for international speakers, as well as enhanced communications through print and electronic media. Farm animal handling training is another key feature, providing interactive training workshops for students and livestock transporters.

“Our goal is to work together to contribute to a greater understanding of farm animal welfare research and issues facing the agriculture community across Canada, expanding upon each group’s efforts,” commented David Hyink, Alberta Farm Animal Care’s Chairman. “This project puts much needed funding behind some collaborative ideas the farm animal care groups have discussed for some time now.”

For more information, please visit www.ofac.org
OVC ‘toxic garden’ helps identify plants poisonous to animals

By Kimberly Sheppard

Animals often sicken and can even die after ingesting plants commonly found in home gardens or farm pastures. In fact, popular species such as lily-of-the-valley, foxglove and monkshood can all be deadly to pets, livestock and humans. Bleeding heart contains chemicals that can poison cattle. And the common yew tree can cause fatal heart arrhythmia in livestock, dogs and people.

Yet, these and many other poisonous and deadly plants are being planted in a garden at the Ontario Veterinary College. The toxic garden project, located in an isolated, fully enclosed and restricted-access courtyard, is a collaboration between the Guelph student chapter of the American College of Veterinary Pathologists, the U of G grounds department, and co-mentors Drs. Margaret Stalker and Dorothee Bienzle. Besides opening eyes to the potential hazards in many backyards, the project is designed to teach student veterinarians about the often-discriminating effects of certain plants. Chokecherry leaves for example, may be toxic to ruminants, but not to dogs or people. And the yew whose taxine alkaloids can be fatal for many animals — including horses — is a deer’s tasty meal.

The students plan to launch a website with information about the plants ranging from geographic distribution, and habitat and identifying features to toxic principles, susceptible species and clinical signs of intoxication or poisoning. They’ll also place interpretive information about individual species and warning signs in the garden itself.

National Farm Animal Care Council cites revision of Codes of Practice as top priority

By Kimberly Sheppard

The National Farm Animal Care Council (NFACC) says revision of Canada’s Codes of Practice for the care and handling of livestock will be among its main priorities as the organization moves into its second year of operation. The Codes were established as voluntary guidelines to encourage producers and transporters to raise the standard of treatment for the animals in their care. They focus specifically on the need for adequate air, water, and feed; safe housing and sufficient spaces; regular supervision and effective health care; and sensible handling.

Development of the Codes of Practice began the 1980’s, coordinated by the Canadian Federation of Humane Societies, and using a committee consisting of representatives from producer groups, veterinarians, scientists, and the government. Some of these Codes were drafted by U of G’s own Dr. Frank Hurnik, a leader in developing livestock-friendly technologies, and one of the founders of the Colonel K.L. Campbell Centre for the Study of Animal Welfare. Although there are now codes in place for virtually every species of farmed animal, many require updating, especially those more than 10 years old. The NFACC is recommending that Codes be based on the most current scientific research, and have been developing a code guideline document, consulting with industry players and others. They hope that work on new Codes will begin before January 2007.
Celebrating a Pioneering Career in Animal Welfare Science: Dr. Ian Duncan
By Kimberly Sheppard

In the Animal Behaviour and Welfare Group at U of G, he’s been referred to as our “silverback” – the strong, dominant leader of the troop. And beyond establishing a large and growing “troop” at the University of Guelph, Dr. Ian Duncan has been a key leader to a troop that spans the globe, spearheading an international evolution of the field of animal welfare science.

The roots of this pioneering career were laid down in Edinburgh, Scotland, where Dr. Duncan was born and educated. Receiving his B.Sc. in Agriculture with Honours in Animal Husbandry, Duncan continued on, studying for his Ph.D. at the AFRC Poultry Research Centre (now the Roslin Institute, famous for “Dolly” the sheep), under the guidance of David Wood-Gush. Duncan was one of the first people to use a scientific approach to solving animal welfare problems, investigating whether hens in battery cages were frustrated. He continued studying topics related to poultry welfare at the Poultry Research Centre for over 20 years.

Throughout his career, Duncan has acquired a long list of achievements, while holding numerous positions. He joined the Society of Veterinary Ethology (SVE) in 1972, and served in various functions including Honorary Secretary, Honorary Assistant Librarian and Editor, and Honorary Librarian, moving into the position of President from 1986 to 1987. During this time he also advised the Commission of the European Communities on matters relating to animal welfare.

Despite much opposition for the past 25 years, Duncan has stood strong in his belief that animal welfare is centered round how animals feel. Today, this school of thought is being generally accepted by the scientific community.

Award Recognition

Dr. Duncan joined the Department of Animal and Poultry Science at U of G in 1989, becoming full Professor. He was appointed Director of CSAW in 1990. In 1995, He was appointed to the University Chair in Animal Welfare – the oldest Chair in Animal Welfare in North America. Duncan has published over 150 scientific papers and 20 book chapters. Throughout his career he has received numerous awards, including:

- The Robert Fraser Gordon Medal for outstanding services to Poultry Science.
- The University of Guelph G.P. McRostie Faculty Award for advising and mentoring students.
- The Harry C. Rowseal Award from the Scientists Centre for Animal Welfare for his commitment in fostering the dual goals of good science and the humane treatment of animals.
- The University of Guelph Distinguished Professor Award.
- The University of Guelph Distinguished Faculty Award for advising and mentoring students.
- The Ontario Agricultural College Teaching Award in 2003.
Dr. Duncan joined the Department of Animal and Poultry Science at U of G in 1989, becoming full Professor. He was appointed Director of CSAW in 1990. In 1995, He was appointed to the University Chair in Animal Welfare – the oldest Chair in Animal Welfare in North America. Duncan has published over 150 scientific papers and 20 book chapters.

Despite his recent retirement, Dr. Duncan will continue on, contributing to the field and to U of G as Professor Emeritus. A celebration of his career was held on Sept 30th, via an afternoon of lectures by colleagues and followed by a Scottish ceilidh. Months before hand, Dr. Georgia Mason began collecting stories from friends and colleagues around the world, which were pasted into a “Memory Book.” Excerpts from just a few of the many submissions speak volumes:

At the Edinburgh conference (of the International Society for Applied Ethology) in about 1978 or so, Ian organized a bus trip to see the Chillingham White cattle herd established in saxon times. Chillingham is just over the Scottish/English border. Ian was doing a microphone commentary on the bus. No sooner was the bus in England when there came a terrific downpour. “see” said Ian, “I told you what would happen if we came to England.” – Dr. Bill Jackson, Legal Assessor, ISAE.

Ian himself tells a good story of a time when he had been working on Electro-cardiograms, and reading papers on Electro-Encephalograms. He was visiting another institute and saw a door labelled EGG ROOM. “I knew about E.C.G.s and E.E.G.s, but I couldn’t think what E.G.G. stood for,” he said. “I was about to ask someone, but luckily I worked it out just in time.” – Dr. Mike Appleby, World Society for the Protection of Animals

“...If I could contribute only half of your ideas, your research contributions, or leave half the impact that you have had during your career, then I would gauge my own career as a huge success. No one in our field could ever teach a class and not mention your research or ideas on such a variety of different topics. I can not think or talk about animal welfare, preference testing, animal feelings, animal suffering, environmental enrichment, etc., etc., without thinking of your contributions. You have been such a champion in animal welfare that your name and the topic are nearly synonymous…” Dr. Joseph Stookey, University of Saskatchewan.

“Please accept our gratitude for your generosity in sharing your expertise in courts of law and at government hearings on behalf of animals.” Stephanie Brown, Canadian Coalition for Farm Animals

“I am not quite sure whether Prof. Duncan has read Chinese philosophy before, but I feel if Confucius were still alive, he will accept him as one of his disciples (Confucius fellows were also respected by Chinese)...” Liang Chou Hsiao, National Pingtung University of Science and Technology, Taiwan

“(Duncan’s) work is a model of clarity, beautifully reasoned and beautifully articulated. He is a man of unusual courage and integrity in a world where these virtues grow increasingly scarce. Ian is one of the very few people for whom I have unequivocal admiration, and he has been an inspiration to me for more than a quarter of a century.” – Bernie Rollin, Colorado State University

“Your name was among the most recognized by North American students of applied ethology in my genre – and still is. The wisdom and assistance you gave to us as we established our careers will not be forgotten. In fact most of us have followed suit by giving a leg up to the next generation of young scientists. To leave that trait as a Hallmark of a career is highly complimentary of your character…” – Dr. Janice Swanson, Kansas State University
Dr. Karen Houle spends her days thinking about animal welfare and animal use ethics.

Well, some of her days, anyway, because as professor of Philosophy of the Environment, a second year course at the University of Guelph, these issues are integral to what she teaches. Even the course description provokes thought: ‘For society to recognize animals as [full] members of the moral community would be to put an end to the prevailing idea that these creatures are essentially resources. This would have far reaching implications for agriculture and industry, for scientific research, for many occupations, for land use, and for animal populations themselves.’

For Karen Houle, the question of the animal, and how we treat animals, is, in her words, central to philosophy – “what does it mean to have a right, and what kinds of beings do we owe duties to?” These are questions with no easy answers, and they provide an opportunity for debate and discussion. “I start the course by asking students to defend who counts morally and who doesn’t, and that’s the challenge. It is still the challenge if you are working with lab rats, trout, or pigs: you still have to be able to tell a story about why this kind of being is one that you spend your life worried about, and this other one you don’t lose any sleep over. It’s a great question”.

Houle received her MA and PhD in philosophy from the University of Guelph, spending her summers working at tree-planting camps in Northern Ontario, while balancing higher education with looking after her two young children. Houle has always had a strong connection to nature, “because I have a garden, because I grew up in the north, because my grandparents were farmers, I have an ecological perspective, and that means that you can’t not consider non-human animals, it just follows from that.” This perspective influences how she views philosophy, which can be human-centric in its thinking, “There is nothing about me that sees the world as just a human world, I never have. I want to look at non-human animals because it’s a true, more complete view.”

After post-doctoral work at Mt. Allison University in New Brunswick, she worked as an assistant professor in Alberta before finally returning to the University of Guelph in 2005. She is also an accomplished poet and author, publishing her first book of poetry in 2000, Ballast.

Animal welfare science and philosophy have a lot to offer each other, says Houle, and thinks that some background in philosophy might help researchers tackle the difficult question of animal feelings. “I think it would be a really rich thing for students who are interested in animal welfare to take a course in history of the philosophy of emotion. We would read carefully about who said what about what it means to feel and what their conceptual tools were. I think it would be good for people who are working directly with these questions [of feelings] and have laboratory evidence. Maybe it would open up some interesting debates, differences of opinion.”

In addition to animal welfare and ethics, Houle’s philosophical interests include reproductive technologies, hate speech and other violences, environmental health, intellectual property, indigenous rights and property law. This year, Houle taught a newly-developed philosophy course, ‘Facing Disasters: Political and Ethical Responses to Natural and Social Disasters’.

Andrew Colgoni recently completed his Master’s degree at the Ontario Veterinary College.
Aspects on Sentience and Pain Perception in Fishes
By Kimberly Sheppard

“It is a silly fish that is caught twice with the same bait”. This was one of the many thoughts put forth by English author Thomas Fuller in his 1732 publication Gnomologia. And although Fuller was speaking metaphorically about the nature of human learning, this old adage may today hold some weight for fish themselves.

Whether a fish can feel the pain of a hook piercing its mouth has been a hot topic of debate for some time. What a fish will do with this information if it indeed feels pain is another (and even more contentious) issue entirely. Will it learn to avoid the same hook in the future? The ability to process pain information and use this information to make future decisions would imply sentence, or the ability to consciously perceive experiences - and therefore the ability to suffer. However, the jury is still out on this issue.

The topic was recently visited in a special symposium, “Aspects on Sentience and Pain Perception in Fishes,” hosted by CSAW and the U of G Aquaculture Centre, and organized by Dr. Georgia Mason, Canada Research Chair in Animal Welfare, and Prof. Rich Moccia, Director of the Aquaculture Centre. The topic raises not only philosophical and ethical questions surrounding areas such as sport fishing and angling, but also brings with it some very practical considerations for aquaculture.

In fact, with the growth of modern aquaculture, finfish are now considered “farm animals.” Fish are also the most utilized animal across all the different research species. Therefore, welfare issues that apply to other farm and research animals, such as stocking density, invasive procedures, housing, environmental enrichment, transportation, slaughter or euthanasia, may equally apply to fish. From a welfare perspective, some common practices in aquaculture, such as withholding feed for 3-7 days prior to shipping, may need to be reconsidered.

Because animal welfare science is based in how animals feel however, such considerations are coming under fire. Compared to some of the higher mammalian vertebrates, we know comparatively little about the cognitive capacities of fish. Dr. Gary Varner, philosophy professor from Texas A&M University, pointed out that, “arguments by analogy” can sometimes be abused when making comparisons between the species. He pointed out that an animal that perceives something in its environment, and reacts to it in an adaptive way, need not be conscious in the strict sense of the word, but if it can think about its perception of the environment, this is conscious perception.

He cautioned that we must be careful when reaching conclusions that fish can consciously feel pain just because their behaviours and physiological responses to pain are similar to human responses (such as increased heart rate, respiratory rate, stress hormones and avoidance behaviour).

However, Dr. Victoria Braithwaite, a fish behaviourist from Edinburgh University, provided a litany of scientific evidence that seems to go beyond argument by analogy. Not only has she and colleagues found that fish do have the same basic neuroanatomy for pain perception as other vertebrates, she also outlined studies by others in which fish show the capacity for memory, problem-solving skills, spacial-map formation, and the ability to recognize and remember social status of conspecifics. So, what does this all say for consciousness and the capacity to suffer? As Braithwaite puts it, we’re not quite there yet. She does feel, however, that there is enough information and evidence to suggest that we should probably give fish the benefit of the doubt.

Welfare issues that apply to other farm and research animals, such as stocking density, invasive procedures, housing, environmental enrichment, transportation, and slaughter or euthanasia may equally apply to fish.

Do fish have conscious experiences (awareness/feelings)?

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Can fish suffer from pain?

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This symposium was accompanied by a “technological extravaganza!” Audience members were asked to vote “yes”, “no” or “don’t know” to two questions both before and after the symposium, using hand-held remote controls. Answers were registered by computer.

Dr. Georgia Mason summed up these results in this way: “People arrived sympathetic to fish feeling pain, and weren’t much changed on that front by the talks - but quite a lot also arrived feeling that fish could feel pain despite not being conscious which may suggest that people thought consciousness a more loaded term than it is. By the end of the afternoon, the consciousness and pain results matched up more logically, which suggests people learned a lot about what consciousness means during the afternoon!”
Building a Better World for Dairy Cattle
F.W. Presant Memorial Lecture

By Kimberly Sheppard

Despite this good image however, there are important issues to be addressed. Dr. Dan Weary, Professor of Agroecology and NSERC Industrial Research Chair in Animal Welfare at the University of British Columbia (UBC), brought some of these issues to light in his lecture “Building a better world for dairy cattle - the science and practice of improved care and housing for animals.” This was the Fifth F.W. Presant Memorial Lecture.

Weary highlighted several areas that we must carefully assess to ensure that potential problems do not go unacknowledged. For instance, are various housing conditions, lying substrates, stall configurations, or feeder design allowing for freedom of movement and freedom from injury? Could dairy calves be housed socially, are they on the best possible feeding schedule, and are they being fed enough to prevent distress?

Weary and his group have made some interesting discoveries that identify areas where improvements can and should be made, and he is quick to point out that dairy producers are incredibly receptive to potential solutions.

Different types of scientific approaches are used in assessing how animals use their environments, and one is to observe the animals as they go about their daily routines, modifying particular aspects of the environment to determine if this changes behaviour. Michelle Drissler, who recently graduated with her MSc from the Animal Behaviour and Welfare Program at U of G, did an undergraduate project while attending UBC where she used such an approach. Drissler was interested in the bedding that cows lie upon, and whether improved bedding maintenance affected cow preference. She found that cows preferred a stall in which bedding had been maintained regularly to stalls in which bedding had been displaced by the cow’s own body creating a “dugout.” This finding is probably related to comfort and reduced stress and friction on the cow’s hocks and legs.

These social animals are separated at birth from their dams, and are typically singly housed to prevent injurious cross-sucking (sucking of other calves’ body parts), prevent spread of disease, and to manage feeding.

The transition period, which accounts for 3 weeks before and after calving, is a critical time for dairy cows because of the nutritional, physiological and social changes that take place.

Researchers and producer interactions are positive, say Weary, and uptake is high.

© Dr. Dan Weary of the University of British Columbia, with one of his research subjects
Likewise, Dr. Cassandra Tucker, now at UC Davis, used a similar approach at UBC to compare mattresses to stalls deep-bedded with sawdust or sand. In addition to preferences, Tucker looked at hock lesions, and found that these were highly prevalent with mattresses, but not present with sand. Mattresses maintained with more bedding eliminated these hock lesions, and also improved preference and lying time. These variables (as well as other types of injury) are also improved when hardware such as neck rails or brisket boards are removed from stalls. These are installed to prevent standing or lying too far forward in the stall, resulting in defecation in stalls, and leading to health problems and increased labour. Such problems still need to be overcome to better accommodate the cows’ comfort, health, and safety.

Dr. Todd Duffield, CSAW Associated Faculty Member at U of G, is presently collaborating with UBC MSc candidate Julie Huzzey on various problems associated with ‘transition cows’. The transition period, which accounts for 3 weeks before and after calving, is a critical time for dairy cows because of the nutritional, physiological and social changes that take place. Huzzey has already investigated feed-bunk design for transition cows, which is particularly important at this time because feeding behaviour is competitive, and cows will attempt to displace one another from the trough, affecting food consumption. Huzzey has found that it is possible to mitigate this competitive behaviour by using a headlock system, which ensures that cows can continue feeding when they start, and other potential solutions are being investigated.

Of course, it’s sometimes easy to forget that the purpose of the transition period is to produce a calf, and therefore milk. How to ideally manage these calves is also a problem, and despite good intentions, there are definite problems here as well. These social animals are separated at birth from their dams, and are typically singly housed to prevent injurious cross-sucking (sucking of other calves’ body parts), prevent spread of disease, and to manage feeding.

Calves show distress calling both at separation and standing too far forward in the stall, resulting in defecation in stalls, and leading to health problems and increased labour. Such problems still need to be overcome to better accommodate the cows’ comfort, health, and safety.

One area of research being developed currently is the disposal of large numbers of laying hens. Drs. Bruce Hunter, Pat Turner, Doris Dyson and others from the University of Guelph, along with the Canadian Inspection Food Agency, the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs and the Poultry Industry are developing ways to assess euthanasia methods for large numbers of laying hens given a variety of variables including the type or mixture of gas used. The effectiveness of the methods will be assessed by measuring physiology, such as heart rate, brain waves, and brain function as well as bird behaviour via video and live observations. A compilation of these factors will determine which method is best given the many factors involved.

The benefits of this study are far-reaching in terms of the impact of the project. It can reduce the need to transport these birds or use methods of euthanasia that have not been developed for large numbers of birds. This will dramatically improve bird welfare at end-of-life.

This project is a great example of how partnerships between scientists, government and industry can proactively work to improve animal welfare problems instead of reacting to situations as they occur. Hopefully it will be the first of a number of these ventures.

Laura Dixon is a PhD candidate in the Ontario Agricultural College.
7th Annual Animal Welfare Forum
By Kimberly Sheppard

The OVC Animal Welfare Club (AWC), held its 7th Annual Animal Welfare Forum on September 30th. The theme of the Forum was “Know Your Role: The Ethical Responsibility of Veterinarians, Universities, and Private Industry for Animal Welfare”.

Dr. Elizabeth Stone, OVC Dean, introduced the topic of the day by reiterating the importance of animal welfare within the OVC Community and the College’s commitment to such. Dr. Terry Whiting, Vet Services Branch of Manitoba Agriculture & Food delivered a talk on the veterinary profession’s role in animal welfare policing. Dr. Daniel Carey, Animal Welfare representative from Iams Company, then discussed a number of considerations that Iams Company incorporates into animal welfare policy for research animals. These included the “3 R’s” - reduce, refine, replace, the “5 F’s” – or five freedoms from hunger and thirst, discomfort, pain/injury/disease, fear and distress and freedom to express natural behaviour, and “10 Steps” for designing an ethical and effective research program. Wrapping up the day was Ms. Amy Kerwin, Founder of Primates Inc., who spoke on the challenges and future direction for retiring old and new world monkeys from research facilities.

In addition to raising awareness on animal welfare issues, a goal of the Forum is to raise funds for a $1000 scholarship to support a graduate student working in the area of animal welfare. For the fourth year, the AWC invited undergraduate students to present research posters that relate to animal welfare. CSAW is proud to be an annual sponsor of this valuable student initiative.

This year’s winners were:

» 1st place: Mary-Jordan Reed

‘An Evaluation of the Impact of Dehorning and Meloxicam Treatment on Cortisol Concentration in Dairy Calves’

» 2nd place: Merryn Douglas and Zoryana Salo

‘The Effect of Mechanical Stress on Hoof Remodeling’

» 3rd place: Jonathan Huska

‘Hoof Conformation and its Relationship to Musculoskeletal Injury in Ontario Standardbred and Thoroughbred Racehorses’

Congratulations!

Congratulations are in order for several successful student members of CSAW. Recently defending their theses and receiving MSc degrees were:

» Michelle Drissler “Behaviour problems in racing Standardbred horses in Ontario”

» Andrew Colgoni “The impact of microflora alteration on the social behaviour of weaned pigs”

» Dr. Stephanie Yue completed her PhD defence in December on the topic of “Fear and avoidance responses in rainbow trout”

» And MSc graduates Robyn Elgie and Natalie Reid have both been accepted to the Doctor of Veterinary Science Program at OVC.

Way to go!
CSAW NEWS...

Royal Agricultural Winter Fair a Huge Success!

CSAW attended the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair in November, setting up a display that demonstrated one of the many methods for “asking the animals” how they feel about particular aspects of the environment. Day-old chicks had the choice of a warmer vs. cooler environment, or an enriched vs. non-enriched environment. Student volunteers spent nine long days talking to crowds of people eager to learn more about how animal welfare science is conducted, and some of the projects currently underway at U of G (and kept at it, despite some very hoarse voices!).

PhD. student Laura Dixon explains methods of animal welfare science to an interested audience

CSAW would like to congratulate all the student volunteers for their hard work and dedication to making our time at “The Royal” such a success:

» Emily Toth
» Jen Brown
» Megan Mackenzie Bell
» Uta von Borstel
» Andrew Colgoni
» Maria Diez Leon
» Laura Dixon
» Colleen Doherty

» Annelise Heinrich
» Janet Higginson
» Sarah Hook
» Gabriel Jantzi
» Patricia Kirby
» Tyler O’Neill
» Anita Tucker
» Kristen Reynolds

We would also like to extend a special thank-you to McKinley’s Hatchery Ltd. for donating chicks, and to Valerie Toth of Glenire Acres Farm for adopting the chicks after the Fair.

In this preference test, the chicks can move freely between the two enclosures, but choose to spend their time in the enriched enclosure on the left.
CSAW has a New Director!

In early January, 2007, Dr. Tina Widowski, Associate Professor in the Department of Animal and Poultry Science was named to the position of Director for CSAW. This is exciting news, since the position will facilitate some clear goals for the future success of CSAW’s activities.

“The centre was first conceptualized nearly 20 years ago by the late professor David Porter, who was the chair of the Department of Biomedical Sciences,” says Widowski, who served as CSAW’s associate director from 1994 to 1998. “The centre was one of the first of its kind, and professor Porter would be pleased to know that today animal welfare has become a part of doing business in all of the animal industries and that there is an even greater need for the centre to conduct research and train students in this area,” she says.

Alan Wildeman, vice-president (research) has appointed Elizabeth Stone, as OVC Dean, to be the university-designated official with overall responsibility and authority for ensuring that CSAW is fulfilling its mandate and to report on CSAW activities to his office.

Stone adds that she is excited about CSAW’s future. “The centre has a distinguished history of improving the welfare of all kinds of animals by promoting innovative research, teaching and educational programs.”

CARING DURING CRISIS

A symposium hosted by: The Ontario Veterinary College, Ontario Agricultural College and the Colonel K.L. Campbell Centre for the Study of Animal Welfare

The objectives of this symposium are (1) to raise awareness about how animals, and the people who care for them, are affected during pandemics and natural disasters, and (2) to share knowledge about how animal welfare may be addressed during these situations.

The symposium will provide presentations, discussions and proceedings that may be used as a framework document for policy makers and stakeholders to address animal welfare within emergency response plans at local, national and international levels.

For more information or to register, please visit: http://www.ovc.uoguelph.ca/conference/caringduringcrisis/

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MISSION STATEMENT

As a group of individuals with diverse interests and views, our primary goal is to promote the welfare of animals through research and education.

The following sessions will feature presentations and panel discussions including:

- Victoria Bowes, DVM
  British Columbia Ministry of Agriculture & Land
  Responding to issues under disease conditions: the BC experience with avian influenza

- Ian J H Duncan, PhD
  Emeritus Chair in Animal Welfare, University of Guelph
  What do we know about what animals need during disasters and disease outbreaks?

- Brian Evans, DVM
  Office of the Chief Veterinary Officer, Canadian Food Inspection Agency
  How is animal welfare addressed within international frameworks?

- Kelli Ferris, DVM
  North Carolina State University
  Decision making during disasters: lessons learned from Hurricanes Katrina and Floyd

- Sebastian Heath, DVM PhD
  USDA and Department of Homeland Security
  Animal management in disasters: an international perspective of impacts on livelihoods

- Maggie Mort, PhD
  Institute for Health Research, Lancaster University UK
  The psychosocial effects of UK foot and mouth outbreak on the people involved

- Mohan Raj, PhD
  University of Bristol
  Humane killing of animals for disease control purposes

- William Stokes, DVM DACLAM
  National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences, USA
  Disaster planning for laboratory animal facilities: lessons learned from Hurricane Katrina

- Terry Whiting, DVM MSc
  Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives
  Special welfare concerns in countries dependent on live animal trade: the real emergency for Canada

- Carin Wittnich, DVM
  The Canadian Veterinary Medical Association
  How is animal welfare addressed within Canada’s emergency response plan?