

**PETITION FOR
WESTERN COORDINATING COMMITTEE
AUTHORIZATION**

WCC-

Animal Bioethics

October 1, 2000 - September 30, 2003

WESTERN COORDINATING COMMITTEE PROPOSAL

NUMBER: WCC-

TITLE: Animal Bioethics

DURATION: October 1, 2000 to September 30, 2003

DESCRIPTION AND JUSTIFICATION

Social structures are changing rapidly. In addition, scientific accomplishments have led to some negative consequences that were neither intended nor anticipated by scientists. Scientists typically view science as value-free enterprise, and therefore, ignore the moral considerations of their work. Nevertheless, science is a social practice and supports cultural agendas that determine socio-political structures that determine who has access to goods, services, liberties, and power. As a result, there are an ever-increasing number of highly contentious social issues related to the animal sciences and to animal production. In order to serve diverse public interests, Animal Scientists must begin to evaluate their work in a context that is broader than just the scientific or technical. We must begin to incorporate into our scientific activities, an ongoing critical evaluation of the personal, social, and cultural biases that guide our work, and the moral, social, and political impact of this work.

There is a tremendous amount of information being published today on animal issues, much of it having to do with farm animals and their welfare. A brief list of examples include:

1. On August 25, 1999 the Oregonian newspaper from Portland, Oregon published an article titled, "Legal Rights for Animals." That article begins, "More than a generation after civil rights and environmental lawyers took their battles to the courts, there are now lawyers who say they are following in those footsteps on behalf of clients with names like Freckles and Muffin and Rainbow."

Also in this article:

- A new scholarly journal called "Animal Law" is being published
- Steven M. Wise, a Boston lawyer who teaches courses in Animal Law says, "the legal work now being done on behalf of animals is paving the way for change. It is a long-term strategy to show that animals aren't just things for our use."

2. September 6, 1999 issue of Time magazine has an article which discusses the question, "Can Animals Think?" It is composed of excerpts from a new book titled "The Parrot's Lament" by Eugene Linden, which discusses "how animals demonstrate aspects of intelligence as they escape from, cheat, and outfox humans."

3. In 1999, Angus Taylor published a new book (Broadview Press) titled "Magpies, Monkeys and Morals: What philosophers say about animal liberation."

4. The Quarterly Review of Biology published a 1999 book called "Attitudes to Animals: Views in animal welfare" edited by Francine L. Dolins.

5. In a 1999 book titled "Mad Cowboy: plain truth from the cattle rancher who won't eat meat", Howard Lyman describes the ways that meat-eating kills humans from heart disease to cancer to "mad cow disease."

A comprehensive list of publications of this type would be large. It is expected that the amount of information that will be published in the next 10 years will continue to grow exponentially, but where are the voices of the Animal Scientist community? Other than publications by farm animal welfarists and behaviorists, the Animal Science community is largely silent on the subject. We suspect that their silence is partially due to the fact that Animal Scientists don't know how to respond, even though their perspectives should be heard. But what exactly are those interests? One would probably get a different answer depending on who you ask. The proposed regional coordinating committee is designed to help initiate a dialogue among members of the Animal Science community about what are the questions and what are the answers, or in other words, to help some members enter the debates in a meaningful and credible way.

"They have poisoned the water you know. They have laced the very air we breathe with toxins, seeded our bodies with the chemical generators of cancer, poisoned the apples our children eat, even the very milk they drink. Who? Who, you ask? Read! Listen! Pendulums swing. What comes around, goes around. It's not the communists, this time, but the scientists, the technologists... the Dr. Frankensteins, and the transnational corporations they work for..." (Franklin, 1997).

Pretty harsh words. In fact, infuriating words. We scientists haven't been doing these things! Rather, we have been working for the public good. Increase production efficiency, keep food prices low, so everyone in society benefits. However, Mr. Franklin's words quoted above suggest that society may not totally appreciate the unintended consequences of many of our accomplishments even though our efforts have kept prices low. He made these comments at the beginning of our 1996 American Society of Animal Science Annual Meeting to try to wake us up. Our unrelenting and narrow-sighted pursuit of improved production efficiency is creating some problems. It is no longer enough. At the end of Mr. Franklin's talk, someone from the audience said "OK, but what do we do?" Mr. Franklin said that we need to broaden the scope of our inquiries. Become more engaged in research in the philosophies and the social sciences, etc., and to begin communicating credibly with our critics.

Framing the problems a bit differently, Bawden (1999) writes the following about agricultural bioethics: "A changing agenda is beginning to emerge with respect to the process of agricultural development with assertions about what it is that can be done – beginning to be replaced in their primacy, by questions about what it is that should be done." "What once were considered to be but technical issues are now increasingly appreciated as issues of moral concern." We animal scientists need to become more adept at working with and discussing these "moral concerns."

Beginning in the 1960's with Carson's book "Silent Spring", and the 1970's with "Animal Liberation" by Peter Singer and "Animal Machines" by Ruth Harrison, the voices of our critics began to grow. The number of voices continues to grow exponentially. But most of these voices are not animal scientists. Are we to remain silent in this debate? What do we do?

To address this concern, in 1997, the Contemporary Issues Program Committee of American Society of Animal Science sponsored a symposium called "What Should Animal Science Departments be doing to Address Contemporary Issues?" (Davis, 1998). In that session, Swanson (1998) reported the results of a survey of Departments of Animal Science showing that several departments have begun to address these issues with new undergraduate courses, but clearly more needs to be done. In addition, Paul Thompson

(1998) reported on the question from a philosopher's perspective. He concludes that "staying within the boundaries of one's farm or laboratory is no longer enough. Animal agriculture must become articulate in its relations with the public." To accomplish that he recommends several approaches, which are all part of developing "A new professional ethic" in Animal Sciences. These recommendations include:

1. Create a forum in which contentious issues in animal science and agriculture may be vigorously debated.
2. Increase the number of undergraduate and graduate courses that deal with the ethics of animal sciences and animal agriculture.
3. Create "renewed attention to the philosophy of science within the animal agriculture and veterinary disciplines."
4. Sponsor workshops / symposia which would "cover the basic patterns of argument used to justify an action in light of its consequences, in light of claims of right, consent and respect...."
5. Establish a new regional coordinating committee on animal bioethics to encourage the development of active interdisciplinary research projects and outreach programs.

It is for this last recommendation, a regional coordinating committee on bioethics that the proposal is being written. And it is through the auspices of this regional coordinating committee that his other recommendations may be addressed.

Recently, Schillo (1998) addressed the issue of diversity in the Animal Science profession, and argued that animal agriculture is driven by a world view that does not take into account the values that reflect the experiences of many people who live in our pluralistic society. He advocated a professional ethic that reflects more diverse values in order to make this profession more empirically relevant. This may require changing the ways in which we teach, conduct research, and evaluate and reward colleagues; i.e., changing the social structure of the profession.

Although he didn't call it a "new professional ethic", Cheeke (1999) has recently published a review of the problems facing contemporary animal scientists and animal agriculture. He also recommends that animal scientists need to move beyond the narrow focus of production efficiency.

The need for this regional coordinating committee was described at a 1993 meeting on food animal well being (Swanson and Thompson, 1993). In the published proceedings of this meeting, they list and discuss several actions needed to address increased social concerns about animal sciences and production. Among these recommendations were:

1. Undertake a program to develop educational materials and curricula on food animal well being;
2. Conduct research that will support the development of alternative policies and methods of production; and
3. Create sources of funding dedicated to research and program development on food animal well being.

This proposed regional coordinating committee should begin to address these recommendations.

However, it isn't just the Animal Sciences that need to begin addressing these issues of social concern. Writing in *Science*, the past president of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) wrote "Part of our collective responsibility to society must include a scientific community-wide periodic re-examination of our goals and alteration of our course, if appropriate (Lubchenco, 1998).

OBJECTIVES:

The objectives of this coordinating committee would be to:

1. Create a forum in which animal scientists and non-animal scientists (philosophers, social scientists, etc.) may work together to examine and discuss contentious social issues.
2. Provide a means of encouraging the development and coordinating the activities of research projects dealing with bioethics of the animal sciences.
3. Develop mechanisms of outreach that would allow animal scientists to respond directly to consumers and our critics who may question our science and / or production methods.
4. Provide the means for ongoing critical analysis of the animal science profession in the context of its ability to address moral and socio-political issues.

NOTE: This coordinating committee will not be developed to become an advocacy group for animal science or animal agriculture. Rather, the research and other activities conducted under its umbrella will be done in an honest attempt to search for truth.

SCOPE OF WORK

The coordinating committee would represent an umbrella under which would be conducted a variety of programs. These could include:

- Hatch research projects
Some projects already exist which fit well within this regional coordinating committee. For example, at Oregon State University a project is underway which will examine the perceptions of both consumers and livestock producers about the mental abilities of domestic animals and the relationship between mental abilities of animals and production (husbandry) systems, (Davis and Cheeke. 1998). This coordinating committee is different from many Hatch projects in that it includes collaboration with social scientists. Similar collaborations will be developed in other contributing projects.
- Symposia to be held in conjunction with the national meetings of American Society of Animal Science / American Dairy Science Association
- Internet web page designed to provide society with immediate and credible answers to many of the questions that have become so highly contentious (genetic engineering of animals and industrialized animal agriculture). This would require projects that would research the scientific literature and summarize what is known (factual) and what remains to be defined about many of these issues.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

The efforts of scientists / investigators / participants of this coordinating committee will result in:

- ✓ Increased credible dialog between science and non-scientist community about contentious social issues. This will occur through increased number of scientific lay publications.
- ✓ Increased cooperative research between Animal Scientists, social scientists and philosophers.
- ✓ Development of new methods of publishing Animal Science information in forms that are both easily accessible by society and easily understandable to the greater public.

EDUCATIONAL PLAN

The initial activities of the committee will, of course, be focused primarily on existing participants and the sharing of information with other possible participants. The group's efforts will then develop to include symposia and presentations at national and international meetings for both animal scientist and animal producer groups. In addition, the committee will develop the methods by which (electronic) concerned citizens may ask for clarification of concerns such as BST, animal welfare, animal rights, corporate farming, biotechnology, environmental problems, etc.

INITIAL PARTICIPANTS

These initial participants are from the Western Region.

Name and Institution	Area of Expertise	App'tment Percentage Res., Ext., Teaching
Steve Davis, Oregon State University	Animal Welfare Animal Rights	70%, 20%, 0%
Jim Males, Oregon State University	Ruminant Nutrition	55%, 20%, 25%
Ruth Newberry, Washington State University	Animal Welfare Animal Ethics Animal Behavior	51%, 0%, 49%
Joy Mench, University of California – Davis	Animal Welfare	40%, 0%, 30%

In addition, Dr. Richard Reynnells, USDA-CSREES National Program Leader in Poultry Science, has expressed his interest in being the CSREES representative for this project. Animal well-being issues are an area of primary focus for him. He is with the USDA-CSREES Plant and Animal Systems Unit, and can be reached at Ag Box 2220, Washington, DC 20250-2220 . His telephone number is 202-401-5352 and his e-mail address is rreynnells@reusda.gov.

POSSIBLE ADDITIONAL PARTICIPANTS

This is a list of people nationwide who have indicated an interest in the project.

Janice Swanson, Kansas State University
Bill Hohenboken, Virginia Polytechnic Institute & University
Mary Beck, University of Nebraska
Steve Ford, Iowa State University
Lori Cramer, Oregon State University
Paul Thompson, Purdue University*
Bernard Rollin, Colorado State University*
Don Lay, Iowa State University
David Fraser, University of British Columbia
Henry Kattesh, University of Tennessee
Don Beermann, University of Nebraska
Terry Mader, University of Nebraska
Ray Stricklin, University of Maryland
Peter Cheeke, Oregon State University
Michael Dikeman, Kansas State University
Rick Rhodes, University of Rhode Island
Keith Schillo, University of Kentucky
Palmer Holden, Iowa State University
Debbie Cherney, Cornell University
Marg Shea-Moore, Purdue University
Ted Friend, Texas A&M University
Jeff Armstrong, Purdue University
Miriam Weber, Michigan State University
Adroadlo Zanella, Michigan State University
Jim Croom, North Carolina State University

This list includes only members of American Society of Animal Science who have expressed interest in this coordinating committee. There are undoubtedly others in the American Dairy Science Association and Poultry Science Association and American Meat Science Association who will be interested.

*Note: These participants are philosophers who have indicated an interest in participating in the coordinating committee. These individuals have published extensively on ethical issues related to agriculture.

REFERENCES CITED

1. Bawden, R. 1998/99. Book review of "Issues in Agricultural Bioethics", T.B. Mepham, G.A. Tucker, J. Wiseman (eds). *J. Agricultural & Environmental Ethics*. 11:145-162.
2. "Can Animals Think?" September 6, 1999, pages 56-60, *Time* magazine.
3. Carson, R. 1962. *Silent Spring*. Fawcett, Greenwich, Conn.
4. Cheeke, P.R. 1999. Shrinking membership in the American Society of Animal Science: does the discipline of poultry science give us some clues? *J. Animal Sci*. 77:2031-2038.
5. Davis, S.L. 1998. Do domestic animals have minds and the ability to think? A provisional sample of opinions on the question. *J. Animal Sci*. 76:2072-2079.
6. Davis, S.L. 1999. Symposium introduction: What should animal science departments be doing to address contemporary issues? *J. Animal Sci*. 77:353.
7. Dolins, F.L. (ed.). 1999. *Attitudes to Animals: views in animal welfare*. The Quarterly Review of Biology. Cambridge University Press.
8. Franklin, J. 1997. Poisons of the mind. *J. Animal Sci*. 75 (Supp. 1):68-74.
9. Harrison, R. 1964. *Animal Machines; the new factory farming industry*. V. Stuart, London.
10. "Legal Rights for Animals." August 25, 1999, page A11, the *Oregonian*.
11. Lubchenco, J. 1998. Entering the century of the environment: A new social contract for science. *Science* 279:491-497.
12. Lyman, H.F., with G. Merzer. 1999. *Mad Cowboy: Plain truth from the cattle rancher who won't eat meat*. Scribner, New York.
13. Schillo, K.K. 1998. Toward a pluralistic animal science: Postliberal feminist perspectives. *J. Animal Sci*. 76:2763-2770.
14. Singer, P. 1990. *Animal Liberation*. Random House. New York.
15. Swanson, J.C. 1998. What are animal science departments doing to address contemporary issues? *J. Animal Sci*. 77:354-360.
16. Swanson, J.C. and P.B. Thompson. 1993. Public issues and concerns. In *Food Animal Well-Being, a conference*. Published by the Purdue University Office of Agricultural Research Programs.
17. Taylor, A. 1999. *Magpies, Monkeys and Morals: What philosophers say about animal liberation*. Broadview Press, Peterborough, Canada.
18. Thompson, P.B. 1998. From a philosopher's perspective, how should animal scientists meet the challenge of contemporary issues? *J. Animal Sci*. 77:372-377.

OPERATIONAL STRUCTURE

The committee will, in concert with the Administrative Advisor, elect a Chair who will be responsible for coordinating each meeting, a Chair-elect, who will assume these duties the following year, and a Secretary/Treasurer, who will be responsible for any financial activities of the committee and for recording the minutes of each meeting.

Between meetings, committee members will communicate with each other as issues and concerns arise. To facilitate this communication, a listserv (anbio@mail.orst.edu) has been created. Committee members can use this listserv to share information about development in their region and breaking issues on animal bioethics that may be happening anywhere in the world.

The committee expects to grow over time, so scientists (animal, dairy, poultry) across the US will be encouraged to participate.

May, 2000

OSU Animal Sciences: 00/s/anbio/wccp
O:\all\witters\regional\anethics.doc

Project Number: WCC-204
Project Title: Animal Bioethics

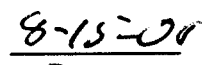
SIGNATURES:

Administrative Advisor

Date



Chair, Western Directors Association



Date