



# The Humane Society of the United States' Animal Research News & Analysis October 7, 2003

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### 1. University of California at San Diego Ends Dog Labs

The University of California at San Diego (UCSD) has decided to halt the use of dog labs, which have been mandatory for UCSD's first-year medical students enrolled in physiology and pharmacology courses. The 35 year-old practice had killed 50-60 dogs per year. Doctors Against Dog Labs (DADL), a group of physicians and researchers at UCSD and elsewhere, had been pressuring UCSD to end the labs for five years. In a typical dog lab, the students perform procedures such as cutting the animals open to reveal the beating heart and the flow of blood, and inserting catheters into veins, arteries, and the heart to observe the effects of various drugs. The dogs are killed once the surgery and drug demonstrations are over. Dr. Lawrence Hansen, of DADL, noted that, as a result of the school's decision, "thousands of dogs won't be suffering lives of confinement, followed by terrifying transport and vivisection and death unnecessarily." UCSD joins numerous other medical schools around the country that have dropped the use of dog labs, including Harvard, Yale and Stanford, in favor of surgical observations and high-tech alternatives such as CD-Rom computer programs.

*Sources: The San Diego Union-Tribune, August 27, 2003,  
([www.signonsandiego.com/news/business/biotech/20030827-9999\\_1m27dogs.html](http://www.signonsandiego.com/news/business/biotech/20030827-9999_1m27dogs.html));  
Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine press release, August 29, 2003  
([www.pcrm.org/news/issues030829.html](http://www.pcrm.org/news/issues030829.html))*

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### 2. USDA Sued Over Primate Standards

The Animal Legal Defense Fund (ALDF) and the Animal Welfare Institute (AWI) have sued the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), alleging that the agency has failed to take action to

ensure the psychological well-being (PWB) of captive nonhuman primates such as chimpanzees, gorillas, and monkeys. Congress amended the Animal Welfare Act (AWA) in 1985, mandating that research facilities and other regulated entities must provide “for a physical environment adequate to promote the psychological well-being of primates.” The USDA, the agency that enforces the AWA, adopted standards to implement this provision in 1991, but later determined that the standards needed to be clarified and made enforceable. This led to a draft policy in 1999. The draft policy addressed the importance of meeting the social needs of primates as well as the special needs of infants and those primates showing signs of psychological distress. To date, 17 years after the Congressional mandate, this draft policy has not been issued as final. The USDA’s inaction affects over the 96,000 nonhuman primates in laboratories and the thousands more in zoos and in the entertainment industry. Given weaknesses in the prevailing 1991 standards, a facility could simply add a toy to the cage of a primate housed alone in a small, barren cage for weeks and this could be argued to be an acceptable means of promoting the animal’s PWB.

*“The HSUS is concerned about facilities that have failed to devote the necessary time, staff or resources needed to truly promote psychological well-being,” states Kathleen Conlee, HSUS’ Program Officer for Animal Research Issues. “Clear standards that can be properly enforced will prompt these facilities to provide their primates with improved care.”*

*Source: ALDF press release*

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### **3. USDA Cites Northwestern University Again for AWA Violations**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has issued a strongly worded statement regarding Northwestern University’s (NU) noncompliance with the Animal Welfare Act (AWA) for the second time in twelve months. The USDA concluded that NU “has failed to recognize or has elected to disregard the serious nature” of earlier inspections which found that the school was not in compliance with federal animal welfare laws. NU was already under investigation for non-compliance by the USDA and the National Institutes of Health resulting from last September’s investigation.

NU claims that the school has addressed many of the issues raised in last year’s report, yet the new report alleges that many of the problems continue. These include the “facility’s ability to train and ensure the...qualifications of all...personnel involved in the use and care of animals,” and failure to “provide a full description of the multiple surgeries” performed on the animals. Other deficiencies involve the tracking and handling of research animals. NU maintains that the school is taking steps to respond to the issues raised in the USDA reports.

*Source: Chicago Tribune, September 1, 2003 ([www.chicagotribune.com/news.chi-0309010185sep01.1.7308823.print.story](http://www.chicagotribune.com/news.chi-0309010185sep01.1.7308823.print.story))*

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### **4. Great Britain Releases Animal Research Statistics for 2002**

The number of animals used in Great Britain increased by 3.3% last year, culminating in a seven year high of 2.66 million animals, according to the British government’s latest annual report on animals used in scientific procedures. The report indicates that “there has been a significant

reduction in the annual number of experiments or scientific procedures since 1976, [but] this trend has leveled out in recent years, and currently numbers fluctuate year by year.”

The report revealed a 45% increase in the use of techniques causing physical trauma, an 11% increase in the number of procedures using genetically modified animals, a 43% increase in experiments for household products, and a 29% increase in agricultural toxicology experiments. There was also a 5% increase in experiments carried out without anesthetic, resulting in 60% of the total number of procedures not using anesthetic. The report contends, however, that many of the procedures that fall into this category are benign and that the use of anesthetic would add to the animal’s distress. Animal protectionists in Great Britain argue that the report does not include information on millions of animals used in military experiments or who were killed for blood, tissue or organ products or simply because they were considered surplus or “non-conforming” animals.

*Sources: Home Office Statistics of Scientific Procedures on Living Animals 2002 (Great Britain); The British Union for the Abolition of Vivisection ([www.buav.org/home/latestnews.html#stats](http://www.buav.org/home/latestnews.html#stats))*

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## 5. China Creating a New Primate Research Facility

China is establishing a new primate research center at Sun Yat-sen University in the southern part of the country. Tentatively named the Center for Stem Cell Biology and Tissue Engineering, the new facility aims to create transgenic primates for use as models of human disease and as a global source of primate stem cells. (Transgenic animals have been genetically manipulated to include genes from other animal species.) The center will start with 100-200 monkeys, but hopes to triple that in the future. Center officials plan to obtain rhesus and crab-eating (cynomolgus) monkeys from a nearby breeding facility and are also considering capturing wild monkeys from an island in southern China.

*Animal protectionists have not welcomed the plans for a new primate center in China. “We are at a time when all stakeholders should be searching for alternatives to the use of non-human primates in research,” according to Kathleen Conlee, HSUS’ Program Officer for Animal Research Issues. Taking primates from the wild is particularly problematic. “In addition to the stress caused by forcing wild animals to live in small cages in captivity, the capture and transport of animals from the wild often involves inhumane techniques that lead to injury and death.”*

*Source: Nature, July 17, 2003, volume 424 p. 239-240*

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