

**THE HUMANE SOCIETY
OF THE UNITED STATES**



Animal Research News & Analysis

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1. NTP's New Vision and Roadmap Support the 3Rs

The U.S. National Toxicology Program (NTP) has issued a "Vision and Roadmap for the 21st Century" that constitutes one of the federal government's strongest endorsements of the 3 Rs of laboratory animal welfare (replacement, reduction, and refinement) and offers a long-term vision that moves toxicology away from an animal-based enterprise. The NTP coordinates toxicological testing programs within the federal government and seeks to both strengthen the science base in toxicology and develop improved testing methods. The roadmap outlines the NTP's strategy to use current and emerging technology to increase the quality and quantity of its assessments of the potential human health effects from chemical exposures.

The roadmap has several provisions that promote the 3 Rs. For example, the NTP will require training in humane experimental techniques for all researchers working with animals in order to ensure that animal studies are designed to minimize pain and distress and to promote the use of non-invasive approaches. The NTP will also work to develop methods to relate the dose of a toxic material tested in a non-animal test to the dose that causes similar effects in humans; these methods are critical to the eventual replacement of all animal tests. The roadmap has a long-term goal of evaluating toxicological effects based on mechanistic tests—a vision of moving away from the current one-animal-test-per-endpoint to a future of understanding what the chemical does in the body and using that to predict the toxicity. "This is a paradigm shift that would move toxicology away from using animals as 'black boxes' and, instead, substituting sophisticated science," according to Katherine Stitzel, a toxicologist retired from Procter & Gamble. Stakeholders interested in the 3 Rs will be eager to see these and other features of the new NTP roadmap developed and implemented.

Source and Further Information:

National Toxicology Program Vision and Roadmap

<http://ntp-server.niehs.nih.gov/index.cfm?objectid=B4DA3C38-F1F6-975E-7168BAC6475F1E5B>

2. Submitted Manuscript on Animal Stress Generates Concern and Media Interest

A manuscript on research animal stress submitted to *Contemporary Topics in Laboratory Animal Science* in August 2003 by critics of animal research generated concern amongst the journal's editors and publisher, ultimately leading the editor to resign, according to sources familiar with the situation. The report, "Laboratory routines cause animal stress," was eventually published in November 2004 and was picked up by several media outlets, including the *San Diego Union-Tribune*. The authors, Drs. Jonathan Balcombe, Neil Barnard, and Chad Sandusky, all of the Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine (PCRM), had surveyed eighty published studies to assess the potential stress associated with laboratory procedures commonly performed on animals. Balcombe et al. concluded that common procedures elicit stress responses in a variety of research animals, that many animals do not readily habituate to routine laboratory procedures, and, as a consequence, can experience stress, fear, and possibly distress in such situations. The authors also argued that stress induced by routine handling may affect the animals' immune response and cloud the interpretation of scientific findings.

Following submission to *Contemporary Topics*, the Balcombe et al. manuscript was revised twice following reviewers' comments and accepted for publication. It was slated for publication first in July (2004), then September, and finally November. The delay stemmed in part from a decision by the publisher, the American Association for Laboratory Animal Science (AALAS), to consider publishing it in a special issue on pain and distress, a move that the authors resisted, believing that it would delay publication another year. In the meantime, over the summer of 2004, *Contemporary Topics*' editor resigned because of the decision to delay publication of the Balcombe et al. paper after she had given it final approval. The AALAS Executive Committee took the unusual step of publishing a brief editorial accompanying the Balcombe et al. article, in which they characterized the paper as an opinion piece that is "selective in scope and does not include a rigorous review of current methods and studies concerned with detecting or observing effects of stress in laboratory animals."

Sources and Further Information:

Laboratory Routines Cause Animal Stress (p. 42-51) and *Interpreting Stress in Laboratory Animals* (p. 7); *Contemporary Topics in Laboratory Animal Science*, vol. 43 (Nov. 2004).

3. ARDF Announces Alternatives Grants Program for 2005

The Alternatives Research & Development Foundation, which funds and otherwise promotes alternatives to the use of laboratory animals in research, testing, and education, is soliciting research proposals for its *Alternatives Research Grant Program*. The purpose of the grant program, now in its 15th year, is to stimulate development of new techniques for conducting basic biomedical research, testing or education that do not rely on animal models. Past grants have helped improve the accuracy and efficiency of experiments that benefit human health, while successfully replacing or reducing animal use in broad areas of research, such as the production of monoclonal antibodies. Up to \$40,000 in funding is available to support individual projects with preference given to U.S. universities and research institutions. Awards for the 2005 may total up to \$150,000. The deadline for submissions is April 30, 2005. Grant recipients will be announced on July 15, 2005. For further information, please visit www.ardf-online.org.

4. France Challenges European Union's Cosmetics Directive

France is challenging the 7th amendment to the European Union (EU) Cosmetics Directive, which seeks to ban animal testing of cosmetics and the sale of any cosmetics tested on animals within the EU. France claims that the directive would damage the European cosmetics industry and violate

several World Trade Organization (WTO) rules. France's challenge had an initial hearing before the European Court of Justice in Luxembourg in January, 2005. A ruling is expected by this summer.

France claims the 7th amendment breaches WTO rules regarding "freedom to pursue a professional activity" and violates WTO rules forbidding discrimination of foreign products. However, supporters of the bans point out that the 7th amendment does not prohibit cosmetic companies from developing and marketing new products. Supporters also note that public concern with animal welfare is a valid exception to free trade under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) Article XX. GATT provides an international forum for encouraging free trade and resolving trade disputes among its over 110 member countries. Article XX was instrumental in the 2000 U.S. ban on the import and sale of dog and cat fur products.

Sources and Further Information:

France Challenges European Union Cosmetic Directive, The HSUS

http://www.hsus.org/animals_in_research/animals_in_research_news/

France seeks to overturn animal testing directive, EUBusiness.com January 17, 2005

<http://www.eubusiness.com/topics/Rd/animals.2005-01-17>

COLIPA European Trade Association-Text of Cosmetics Directive

<http://www.colipa.com/site/index.cfm?SID=15588>

British Union for the Abolition of Vivisection

<http://www.buav.org/news/2003/08-22.html>

5. InterNICHE Announces Upcoming Conference on Animal Use in Education

The 2nd InterNICHE Conference, *Alternatives in the Mainstream: Innovations in life science education and training* will be held May 12-15, 2005 in Oslo, Norway. The conference will feature leading international and local speakers, alternative displays, multimedia and virtual reality rooms, poster displays, discussion forms, and various workshops, and is expected to draw hundreds of teachers, product developers, students, animal welfare advocates, policy makers, and legislators. Workshops will include a teachers' guide to alternatives implementation, cultural obstacles and opportunities for alternatives implementation, body donation programs and ethical dissection, conscientious objection, and empowerment for campaigners. For further conference details and registration information, visit www.InterNICHE.org.

InterNICHE is a diverse international network of students, teachers and animal advocates that focuses on the promotion of alternatives to animal use in biological science as well as medical and veterinary education. Its book, *From Guinea Pig to Computer Mouse*, describes over 500 products that promote progressive life science education.

Animal Research News & Analysis is an electronic newsletter that provides news stories and interpretive analyses concerning the use of animals in research, testing, and education. The newsletter is produced by The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) and is distributed periodically. Any questions, comments or email address changes should be directed to ari@hsus.org. To unsubscribe, please send an e-mail request to ari@hsus.org with the words, "unsubscribe – Animal Research News" in the subject line; please specify your first and last name. The HSUS's collection of web-based animal research-related news stories can be viewed at: http://www.hsus.org/animals_in_research/animals_in_research_news.

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