

ANIMAL RESEARCH NEWS & ANALYSIS

**THE HUMANE SOCIETY
OF THE UNITED STATES**



USDA Audit Report Reveals Problems

An internal U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) review has uncovered serious problems with the agency's enforcement of the

Animal Welfare Act (AWA), prompting the USDA to recommend several corrective actions. The USDA audited its Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), which is responsible for monitoring animal research facilities and other entities for compliance with the AWA. The audit found several serious concerns related to oversight of research facilities. For example, APHIS has been lax in enforcing sanctions of AWA violators. Fines, if assessed, were automatically discounted up to 75%, when the facilities agreed to settle out of court. A USDA official reportedly stated that violators consider these fines just a cost of doing business, rather than a punishment or deterrent from continued violation. The Animal Care regional offices have been inconsistent in penalizing AWA violators, with its Eastern Region failing to take action against 30% of violators. The report also expresses concern that Institutional Animal Care And Use Committees are not effectively monitoring mandated activities such as reviewing painful and distressful procedures. And some Veterinary Medical Officers (inspectors) did not verify the number of animals used in research, yet 13 out of 16 facilities misreported the number of animals used in research, with most facilities under-reporting the number used.

Based on the audit, the USDA has made recommendations to clarify enforcement policy, review cases of 'declined' enforcement, eliminate the automatic 75% "discount," and increase fines, along with calculating fines according to number of animals

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In this issue...

[USDA Audit Report Reveals Problems...](#)

[Chimp Haven Celebrates Grand Opening...](#)

[AAVMC Announces Call for Posters, Abstracts...](#)

[European Partnership Issues 3Rs Declaration ...](#)

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Noteworthy...

Based on a new study, scientists now regard mice as capable of singing. It was already known that mice produced ultrasonic vocalizations, but the recently discovered motifs and themes in these noises are what distinguish the vocalizations as actual songs. E. Holy, Ph.D, compared the mouse song to that of juvenile birds—not quite masters, but still eking out something similar to "a melodic hook in a catchy

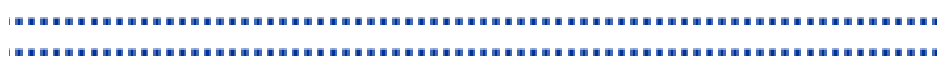
affected. The USDA also plans to revise the Research Facility Inspection Guide to require Veterinary Medical Officers to verify the actual number of animals used in research experiments.

"The USDA should regard the audit as a wake-up to begin taking seriously its oversight of animal research facilities," says Dr. Martin Stephens, Vice President for Animal Research Issues at The Humane Society of the United States. "The research community itself should demand better from the USDA and avoid the simplistic perspective that poor enforcement of the AWA is in its best long-term interest."

Source: [USDA Audit Report](#); The Chronicle of Higher Education, November 1, 2005

tune." For more information see CNN.com

The deadline for the InterNICHE 2005 Humane Education Award has been extended to 15 December 2005. The award is a grant program to support the development and/or purchase of alternatives in education. The application form is available at InterNICHE.org.

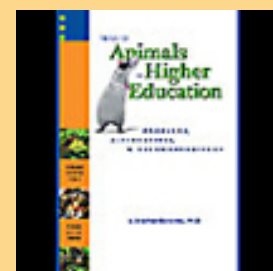


Chimp Haven Celebrates Grand Opening

Chimp Haven, the first federally mandated sanctuary for chimpanzees formerly used in research, had its grand opening on

October 29th. Located on 200 forested acres in Shreveport, Louisiana, Chimp Haven was established in response to the Chimpanzee Health Improvement, Maintenance and Protection Act (CHIMP Act) of 2000, which outlines the operation and federal funding for chimps in the sanctuary system. The facility currently houses 31 chimpanzees, age 13-53. After Phase II of construction is complete next year, 170 more chimpanzees are expected to be relocated to the sanctuary.

Chimp Haven includes a five acre outdoor habitat designed to mimic the chimps' natural environment in western and central Africa. Because the chimps have lived most of their lives in captivity, however, they still have the option of spending time in the indoor structure as well. The sanctuary includes a veterinary clinic. In addition to providing a sanctuary for the



chimps, the facility also lowers the daily cost of housing and maintenance of individual chimps from \$30 in the federal laboratory to an estimated \$15.

Source: The Patriot Ledger, October 19, 2005; The Shreveport Times, October 29, 2005



The AAVMC Announces Call for Posters, Abstracts, Models, and Simulations

The Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges (AAVMC) has announced a Call for Posters, a Call for Abstracts, and a Call for Models and Simulations for its 2006 educational symposium, The Use of Animals in Veterinary Medical Teaching; Replacement, Reduction; Refinement, to be held March 9-10, 2006 in Washington D.C.. Conference themes include animal welfare and ethical considerations, alternatives to the use of live animals, best practices-refining the use of live animals, building relationships with the animal protection community, and compliance and regulatory issues, among others.

The deadline for all material is February 3, 2006.

This symposium will be held in conjunction with the AAVMC's Annual Meeting, March 9-14, 2006. The AAVMC represents all veterinary medical colleges in the United States and Canada, eight departments of veterinary science, eight departments of comparative medicine, two animal medical centers, and three international colleges of veterinary medicine in its collective dealings with governmental bodies, veterinary medical organizations, the animal and human health industry, educational and scientific organizations and the public. For more information see AAVMC.org

Source: [AAVMC](http://AAVMC.org)



European Partnership Issues 3R's Declaration

The European Union and trade associations from the pharmaceutical, chemical, cosmetics, and biotechnology sectors have issued a "3 R's Declaration" that establishes a voluntary partnership aimed at refining, reducing, and replacing animal use in product testing. The new partnership was announced at conference entitled "Europe Goes Alternative," held November 7th in Brussels. The partners are setting up a task force that will decide programs and activities for early 2006, and will identify possible obstacles they may encounter in implementing the 3R's. The task force will look at several areas including the mapping of research activities and current strategies, cooperation in research, development of alternative approaches, and methods to facilitate the acceptance of alternative approaches.

At the conference, European Commissioner Gunter Berheugen said "We do not only wish to reduce animal testing, but also want to bring it to an end in the long run. Moreover, alternative testing methods are innovations, which benefit the competitiveness of European industry." Marlou Heinen from the Eurogroup for Animal Welfare, an umbrella group for some 19 animal welfare organizations, stated "We think it is a very promising initiative, but we see it very much as a first step—whether it will be an actual success will very much depend on how this is going to be implemented."

Currently 10.7 million animals are used annually for research and testing in the European Union. Sixteen percent of these animals are used in production and quality control of products and devices in human and veterinary medicine and dentistry, and 10% for toxicology and safety evaluation.

Source: [The European Commission Press Release](#); [Drug Researcher.com](#); [The Scientist](#)

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