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ALTERNATIVES

IN VETERINARY MEDICAL EDUCATION



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Association of Veterinarians for Animal Rights

AVAR Completes Survey on Animal Use at U.S. Veterinary Schools

The AVAR's survey on animal use at U.S. veterinary medical schools has been completed and is now online. The survey, believed to be the first of its kind, is entitled *Educational Use of Nonhuman Animals in U.S. Veterinary Medical Schools for the 1998 - 1999 School Year*. It was conducted by Susan Krebsbach, D.V.M., a consultant to the AVAR. It was funded by the Leonard X. Bosack and Bette M. Kruger Charitable Foundation with the goal of providing a comparison of animal use at various veterinary medical schools and suggestions to the schools on how to eliminate harmful animal use.

The survey took more than a year of tedious work. It required obtaining protocols of each educational use of animals and other pertinent information from each of the veterinary schools, entering the information in a database, and then generating the pertinent reports. Of the 27 veterinary schools located in the United States, 22 participated. Five schools refused to participate, and the AVAR subsequently sought legal assistance to see if they might be required by law to do so. Ultimately, we decided that a lawsuit would only jeopardize the survey and, by the time we would have received the information, it would be outdated. Consequently, we conducted the survey without the participation of Cornell University, Louisiana State University, Tuskegee University, University of Pennsylvania, and University of Missouri.

The survey provides a breakdown of the number of animals used by category of procedure, the number of animals used for multiple sessions, the number of different species used by discipline, the

number of animals used by discipline and category of procedure, the number of animals used by species and category of procedure, and a list of the number of students at each school for that year.

The reports can be seen online directly by going to http://avar.org/avar_survey_title.html. Alternatively, you can go to the AVAR's home page, <http://avar.org/>, and then navigate to the reports through the links in the announcements or the publications page. The survey is only available on the Internet due to its length and detail. Moreover, this allows us to easily add information or make any required changes.

Survey Results

The survey showed that about 7,500 students used nearly 36,500 animals in various procedures (not necessarily different animals). Over 9,300 healthy animals were killed or authorized to be killed in the 1998 - 1999 school year --- all for the sake of "education." These were healthy animals in which procedures were conducted that resulted in their deaths, regardless of the health of the individual animal or the outcome of the procedure. The death of the animals was *not* necessarily because of the procedures being conducted; in most cases, it was because the animals were purposefully killed given predetermined protocols for the teaching or testing experience.

The school that performed the most of these terminal procedures was North Carolina State University, which showed a total of 1,073 in the 1998 - 1999 school year. The school that performed the least was Tufts University, which showed a total of 52 animals killed.

It should be noted that Tufts University has announced plans to eliminate, in this academic year, the surgery elective that involves the killing of the dogs used in the laboratory at the end of the surgical procedures. Once again, the AVAR commends Tufts University for this positive step forward.

Clarification of the Number of Animals

The survey has two different types of "number of animals used." The first is the number of animals (by species) authorized for use for the 1998 - 1999 school year identified in the Animal Care and Use Form (protocol). The second is the number of animals (by species) actually used for the 1998 - 1999 school year identified in written correspondence from the school. In most cases, the number of animals actually used is less than the number of animals authorized for use. Every participating veterinary school was given the opportunity to provide the AVAR with the number of animals actually used for the 1998 - 1999 school year. When available, the number of animals actually used for the 1998 - 1999 school year was used in the generation of the reports. If no data on animal numbers were available, the

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course was not included in the reports.

Futures

Additional information may be extracted from the database and will then be posted on the AVAR web site. After the schools have provided their comments to the AVAR about the survey results, we will generate some suggestions for eliminating the harmful use of animals in numerous disciplines. Additionally, areas that need development of alternative solutions to the harmful use of animals or refinement of current offerings will be

identified. The AVAR hopes to continue a dialog with the faculty of U.S. veterinary medical schools on this matter and appreciates that the participating schools have an interest in reducing or eliminating harmful animal use at their particular institution.

Editor's Note: The AVAR thanks Dr. Nedim Buyukmihci, AVAR's president, who did all the computer programming for the survey and Ms. Teri Barnato, National Director of AVAR, for her support and invaluable assistance. We also thank the Leonard X. Bosack and Bette M. Kruger Foundation for providing the funding for this important survey.



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Alternatives Resources Available

Database:

Alternatives in Education

A database that contains thousands of alternatives, including alternatives to dissection and other laboratory uses of nonhuman animals.

The database can be searched or downloaded from the AVAR at
http://AVAR.org/alted_db.htm

Contact: AVAR

Booklets:

Alternatives to the Harmful Use of Non-human Animals - Updated in 1997

Description of alternatives in the basic sciences. Cost is \$3.00.

Contact: AVAR

All Media:

Videos, fax sheets, and information on nonanimal alternatives in medical education and trauma training.

Contact: Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine (PCRM)

5100 Wisconsin Avenue, Suite 404
Washington, DC 20016
Phone: (202)686-2210
E-mail: research@PCRM.org
Web site: www.PCRM.org

Animal Welfare Information Center (AWIC) National Agriculture Library

10301 Baltimore Avenue,
Beltsville, MD 20705
Phone: (301)504-6212 Fax: (301)504-7125
E-mail: awic@nal.usda.gov
Web site: <http://www.nal.usda.gov/awic>

The UC Center for Animal Alternatives School of Veterinary Medicine

University of California, Davis, CA 95616
Phone: (530)752-1800
E-mail: mwwood@ucdavis.edu
Web site: www.vetmed.ucdavis.edu/animal_alternatives/main.htm

Animal Rights Law Clinic

State University of New Jersey
School of Law
15 Washington Street, Newark, NJ 07102
Phone: (973)353-5989 Fax: (973)353-1445

Organizations that provide dissection alternatives on a temporary loan basis:

The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS)

2100 L Street, NW
Washington, DC 20037
Phone: General - (202)452-1100
Direct - (301)258-3042
E-mail: hsuslab@ix.netcom.com
Web site: www.hsus.org

The National Anti-Vivisection Society (NAVS)

53 West Jackson Boulevard
Chicago, IL 60604
Phone: (800)888-NAVS Fax: (312)427-6524
E-mail: NAVS@NAVS.org
Web site: www.NAVS.org

The Ethical Science Education Coalition (ESEC)

333 Washington Street, Suite 850
Boston, MA 02108
Phone: (617)367-9143
E-mail: esec@ma.neavs.com

The American Anti-Vivisection Society (AAVS)

801 Old York Road, #204
Jenkintown, PA 19046-1685
Phone: (800)-SAY-AAVS
E-mail: aavsal@aol.com
Web site: <http://www.aavs.org>

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