



A Pressing Societal Issue: Livestock Welfare

The School of Veterinary Medicine at UC Davis addresses welfare issues of livestock through education and research throughout the state. Faculty also contribute expertise to state and national veterinary associations, commodity groups, welfare organizations, consumers and policy makers to advance the health and well-being of animals in California and around the world.

Veterinary Medicine Teaching and Research Center—a national hub for clinical training of veterinary students and veterinarians who specialize in dairy production medicine. Gaining practical experience and participating in discussions of current topics, students learn science-based welfare practices

Regional and national scope—In their clinical and health management role, faculty veterinarians have completed formal assessments of animal care and well-being on more than 200 California dairies. Evaluations were developed as part of the National Dairy FARM Program: Farmers Assuring Responsible Management™

Practical guides—Faculty have published much-needed practical guides and reviews of best practices:

- On-Farm Livestock Euthanasia/La Eutanasia del Ganado en Granja
- Euthanasia Action Plan/Plan de Acción de Euthanasia
- <http://www.vetmed.ucdavis.edu/vetext/animalwelfare>
- "A Review of the Causes, Prevention, and Welfare of Nonambulatory Cattle," *Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association*, <http://avmajournals.avma.org/doi/pdf/10.2460/javma.231.2.227>
- *Cattle Care Standards: Recommendations for Meeting California Legal Requirements*, a resource for California law enforcement officials, many of whom do not have veterinary or animal science backgrounds. The publication also aids the cattle industry in addressing neglect and cruelty of cattle by recommending minimum standards of care pertinent to animal cruelty statutes. http://www.vetmed.ucdavis.edu/cfah/local-assets/pdfs/Cattle_Care_Standards.pdf

Science-based solutions—The Veterinary Medicine Teaching and Research Center faculty in Tulare have delivered several educational workshops to train veterinarians and producers in the proper use of captive bolt devices for humane euthanasia of cattle. The research of faculty veterinarian Sharif Aly is helping to refine procedures for improved application of captive bolt devices when used on the farm.

Advising on policy issues—Terry Lehenbauer, director of the Veterinary Medicine Teaching and Research Center, represents the American Association of Bovine Practitioners by serving on the Animal Agriculture Liaison Committee of the American Veterinary Medical Association. This group advises the AVMA's Executive Board on food animal health and welfare policies.

Dairy producer education—Veterinarian Michael Payne, on behalf of the California Dairy Quality Assurance Program, has developed and delivered a six-hour course to train more than 800 field staff and other dairy industry

representatives on livestock welfare, best management practices, calf care, food safety, feed and water quality, transport and environmental quality. This program has aided more than 1,000 California dairies to complete on-farm evaluations of their operations as part of a national producer initiative.

- <http://cdrf.org/home/checkoff-investments/cdqap/animal-care-the-cdqap/animal-care-farm-resource-binder/>

Ongoing outreach—Faculty have sent especially designed educational materials on cattle welfare to virtually every dairy producer in California, including UC Davis-developed guidelines for cattle transportation and on-farm euthanasia

Veterinary Medicine Extension—A vital link

- Carolyn Stull, the school's Veterinary Medicine Extension Specialist in animal welfare, has published widely-cited scientific reviews of the causes and prevention of non-ambulatory cows
- Stull's review of the practice of tail docking is credited with having led the way to California's elimination of tail docking and the National Milk Producers Federation's listing of tail docking as an unacceptable practice.
- Stull is a member of the committee writing international standards for transport of agricultural animals and chairs the Scientific Committee for Certified Humane, a national animal welfare certification program for food products. Stull has conducted workshops for animal control officers in California on cattle care, nutrition, handling, euthanasia and transport.
- Stull is the lead author of "Thousands of California animal producers and processors have received poster checklists, care guidelines and articles from Veterinary Medicine Extension. Faculty have developed and organized meetings, demonstrations and poster sessions for dairy producers, veterinarians, researchers and policy makers on the captive bolt method of euthanasia, including a 3-day workshop for 200 attendees at the Third International Symposium on the Management of Animal Carcasses, Tissue, and Related Byproducts in July 2009.

http://www.vetmed.ucdavis.edu/vetext/programs/animal_welfare/index.cfm

The International Animal Welfare Training Institute facilitates practical education and stakeholder dialog on a broad variety of animal welfare issues. This group has brought together veterinarians, animal scientists and stakeholders to improve animal well-being through collaborative animal welfare research and outreach. A major focus is the development of curriculum and training to educate veterinarians, first responders, government agencies and community members in emergency and disaster prevention and response methods for animals. <http://www.vetmed.ucdavis.edu/iawti/index.cfm>

Commitment to animal well-being, science and education—The four-year Doctor of Veterinary Medicine professional degree curriculum prepares tomorrow's veterinarians to understand and address the well-being of animals. Students actively address health topics, veterinary ethics, production issues, client communication and related topics in the classroom sessions and during clinics, on-farm visits, volunteer experiences and international veterinary exchanges.

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