



## **Animals in Research**

Since 1889, American Humane has worked to protect animals used in scientific research. While scientific progress has resulted from many animal experiments, American Humane looks forward to the time when such experiments become unnecessary or obsolete.

Until alternative research methods are available and applied, and as long as animals continue to be used in laboratories, American Humane will insist on the strictest accountability in research procedures and in the procurement, treatment, maintenance and disposition of all species of laboratory animals.

In any research project using animals, there should always be a written experimental protocol that is reviewed by a licensed veterinarian and that includes appropriate humane husbandry and medical care along with due consideration for elimination of pain and relief of stress and suffering of the animals. There should be a clear-cut expectation that the experiment will contribute significantly to knowledge that will ultimately benefit humans and animals and, in rare cases where pain, stress, or suffering cannot be completely avoided, the benefits must be clearly and objectively demonstrated to outweigh any pain, stress or suffering experienced by the animals, which must be kept to an absolute minimum level and for only the shortest period possible. With all cases, the fewest number of animals and the least traumatic approach possible must be used.

American Humane supports the development and application of alternative methods of research and testing to reduce the number of animals required, refine existing techniques and procedures to reduce or eliminate pain and stress in laboratory animals, and replace animals in research with *in vitro* methods where available. We advocate the enforcement of laws governing the use of animals in research and teaching, and

advocate educating all individuals involved with research animals through courses in ethology, ethics, manipulative procedures, anesthetics and laboratory animal care. American Humane insists that research results be broadly disseminated and shared so as to reduce the number of studies and, therefore, the number of animals used in research.

Until the use of animals in laboratories is entirely eliminated, American Humane will pay especially close attention to the ways in which laboratories obtain such animals. American Humane opposes the surrender of animals by animal shelters and animal control agencies to labs, pharmaceutical and educational institutions, or any scientific or research facility. All animals that are in the possession of a shelter or animal control agency should be returned to their rightful owners, placed in suitable homes or humanely euthanized.

A shelter or animal control agency that surrenders animals to research facilities promotes the fear that any animals taken in will end up in a laboratory or research facility, discouraging pet owners or those who find stray animals from bringing animals into the shelter or agency. In a situation in which there is a law mandating the release of animals from shelters for purposes of biomedical research, the local animal care or control agency and the humane community should work to repeal such a law.

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