



Press Release

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Award for promotion of public understanding of animal welfare science

The winner of the first Universities Federation for Animal Welfare (UFAW) 'Tesco' Award for promoting public understanding of animal welfare science was announced on Wednesday 22nd October. Professor Lord Winston handed the prize to Dr Monica Winstanley of the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC) at an evening reception organised by UFAW at The Royal Society, for her booklet entitled 'Science and Animal Welfare'.

The welfare of animals has become a matter of great public concern and, not infrequently, public controversy. Society expects high standards, and to provide these requires a proper understanding of animals' physical and psychological needs and of how these needs can be met. A scientific approach is essential and there have been many advances in the science of animal welfare in the last 20 years. The Universities Federation for Animal Welfare, with support from Tesco, launched this new prize to encourage the publication or broadcast of work which best communicates to a wide audience the importance and value of the scientific approach, the ingenuity of the scientific methods, and the relevance of the findings.

Lord Winston said: "Although a small organisation, UFAW, by championing the scientific approach, has had an enormous influence in the development of animal welfare standards around the world. I congratulate UFAW and Tesco for this excellent initiative, and it gives me great pleasure to present the 2003 award to Dr Monica Winstanley for her review of recent advances in this fascinating branch of science."

In 'Science and Animal Welfare' Dr Winstanley outlines a variety of recent research approaches in the UK aimed at advancing our understanding of what is important to animals for their welfare, and at developing methods to tackle welfare problems.

As UFAW's Scientific Director Dr James Kirkwood points out, standards for keeping animals, which set minimum limits for parameters such as cage/enclosure sizes, tend these days to be established by committees in Brussels. Since no hens, pigs, cattle or mice sit on these committees, one of the great challenges of animal welfare science is to find ways to gain insight into the views and preferences of these animals themselves, so that their interests can be properly represented. Dr Winstanley reviews the ingenious methods being used in this relatively new branch of science to explore animals' minds for this reason.

Continued overleaf.....

SCIENCE IN THE SERVICE OF ANIMAL WELFARE

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Registered Charity No. 207996 (Registered in England) and Company Limited by Guarantee No. 579991

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Have you ever wondered how one might enquire of a housed chicken how bright it likes its lighting to be? Or of a sheep, if it can remember old flock mates? Or of a pig, if it knows that another pig knows where the food is? If you are interested in learning how such questions are approached and why they are relevant to welfare, Dr Winstanley's excellent booklet is a very good place to start.

Michelle Waterman, Tesco Agriculture Manager, said "Animal welfare is very important to Tesco and our customers, and we believe that awards such as this, which recognise research in this field, are important to improve standards throughout the industry".

Applications are now being sought for the 2004 Universities Federation for Animal Welfare 'Tesco' award for promotion of public understanding of animal welfare science. Application forms are available from The UFAW Secretary at the address shown below, and the deadline for receipt of applications is Friday 5th December 2003.

For further information please contact Dr JAMES KIRKWOOD tel 01582-831818

INFORMATION ABOUT THE UNIVERSITIES FEDERATION FOR ANIMAL WELFARE

UFAW, founded in 1926, is an internationally recognised, independent, scientific and educational animal welfare charity concerned with promoting high standards of welfare for farm, companion, laboratory and captive wild animals, and for those animals with which we interact in the wild. It works to improve animals' lives by:

- Promoting and supporting developments in the science and technology that underpin advances in animal welfare
- Promoting education in animal care and welfare
- Providing information, organising meetings, and publishing books, videos, articles, technical reports and the journal *Animal Welfare*
- Providing expert advice to government departments and other bodies and helping to draft and amend laws and guidelines
- Enlisting the energies of animal keepers, scientists, veterinarians, lawyers and others who care about animals

"Improvements in the care of animals are not now likely to come of their own accord, merely by wishing them: there must be research ... and it is in sponsoring research of this kind, and making its results widely known, that UFAW performs one of its most valuable services."

Sir Peter Medawar CBE FRS, 8th May 1957

Nobel Laureate (1960), Chairman of the UFAW Scientific Advisory Committee (1951B1962)