



Animal Welfare in New Zealand





MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY'S ANIMAL WELFARE MISSION

- TO SUPPORT THE EXPECTATIONS OF NEW ZEALAND SOCIETY FOR THE WELFARE AND HUMANE TREATMENT OF ANIMALS.
- TO ADMINISTER THE ANIMAL WELFARE ACT 1999 IN AN EFFECTIVE, RESPONSIBLE AND FAIR MANNER.
- TO SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT OF ANIMAL WELFARE STANDARDS THAT ADDRESS RISKS TO ANIMAL WELFARE AND PROMOTE IMPROVED WELFARE OUTCOMES.
- TO ENCOURAGE VOLUNTARY COMPLIANCE WITH ANIMAL WELFARE STANDARDS AND, WHERE NECESSARY, TO ENFORCE THE LAW.
- TO CONTRIBUTE TO NEW ZEALAND'S REPUTATION AS A TRUSTED AND SUSTAINABLE PRODUCER OF ANIMALS AND ANIMAL PRODUCTS.

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ISBN 978-0-478-35116-3 (Print)

ISBN 978-0-478-35117-0 (Online)

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Introduction

New Zealand's modern economy grew around pastoral farming and even today, nearly half of this country's export income is derived from farmed animals and their products. It is interesting that, in a country with almost no land mammals before human settlement, animals now play such a vital role in New Zealand's economic and social life.



New Zealanders can be proud of the achievements they have made in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of animals. As a nation we have developed legislation, codes of welfare, and production and quality systems shaped by a strong animal welfare ethic. While this record is a proud one, it would be wrong to be complacent.

Attitudes to animals and the way people use them are evolving rapidly, both within New Zealand and in the countries with which we trade. We are constantly confronted with new challenges – to justify the way we manage animals and to develop animal welfare practices that meet, or exceed, changing consumer expectations.

Animal welfare will play an increasingly influential role in international trade, as evidenced by its inclusion as an important strategic initiative in the OIE's strategic plans since 2001. The appointment of a New Zealander to chair the OIE's Permanent Animal Welfare Working Group reflects international recognition of our science-based, ethically-principled approach to animal welfare policy and practice.

Animal Welfare in New Zealand explains how New Zealand manages animal welfare, not only within its pastoral farming economy, but also within the country's wider social and environmental contexts.

This fourth edition comes ten years after the enactment of the Animal Welfare Act 1999 – itself the culmination of nearly 10 years of consultation, research and policy development and a foundation for New Zealand's animal welfare practices in the 21st century.

The Animal Welfare Act enables a rapid and effective response to new challenges and new ethical questions in animal welfare. It also gives people responsible for the care of animals a very clear understanding of their obligations.

I commend this publication to you as a reference point for an informed appreciation of animal welfare in New Zealand.

A C David Bayvel
 Director Animal Welfare
 Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry



New Zealand's animal populations

New Zealand's pre-human environment contained abundant bird, reptile, amphibian and marine mammal life. The only land mammals were three species of bat, one of which is now extinct.

Successive waves of human immigrants brought with them a wide range of animals – as a source of food, as farm animals, for use in sport and recreation, for pest control or simply for sentimental reasons. These introduced species have made a big impact on New Zealand's environment.

Today, the New Zealand environment supports large, well-established animal populations, both domestic and wild.

The main groups include:

FARMED LIVESTOCK SPECIES

The New Zealand economy depends heavily on the export income from pastoral farming. The industry is an integral part of the landscape, accounting for around half of New Zealand's total land area. Farmed species include:

- sheep (34 million);
- dairy cattle (5.6 million);
- beef cattle (4.5 million);
- deer (1.2 million);
- goats (96 thousand);
- layer hens (3.4 million) producing 77 million dozen eggs annually;
- breeding sows (42 thousand) producing an estimated 700 thousand pigs.

In addition, 81 million broilers (chickens kept for meat production) and around 3 million turkeys, ducks and game birds are produced each year.

In keeping with New Zealand's history of innovation in agriculture, small populations of non-traditional farm species have been introduced. These include llama, alpaca, water buffalo, salmon, emu and ostrich.

While pigs and poultry are often farmed intensively, most agricultural species in New Zealand graze natural pastureland.

WORKING ANIMALS

In addition to animals farmed for food and fibre, others provide services to humans in ways that are important both economically and socially. These include:

- dogs used
 - for herding stock;
 - for racing;
 - for detection of drugs and other illegal imports such as fruit;
 - by the police force and for security purposes;

- to assist humans with sense or mobility disabilities;
- rodeo, circus and captive wild animals;
- horses used for farm work, trekking, racing and other equine sports.

COMPANION ANIMALS

New Zealanders are keen pet owners and there are large populations of horses (66 000), domestic dogs (estimated at 652 000) and cats (estimated at over 1.1 million). The private ownership of most exotic pets, particularly big cats and reptiles, is prohibited. Snakes are not present in New Zealand, even in zoos, and are prohibited. New Zealand pet lovers do, however, keep a wide variety of birds, fish, amphibians and small mammals (guinea pigs, rabbits, rats and mice). Ferrets, formerly popular as companion animals, can no longer be legally acquired as pets because of the damage they cause to wildlife if they escape.

The New Zealand environment supports large, well-established animal populations, both domestic and wild.

INDIGENOUS ANIMALS

Many native species, including some marine mammals, have been severely affected by past hunting, by habitat changes and/or by the depredations of introduced species. At least 59 species – one bat, 51 birds, three frogs, three lizards and one freshwater fish – have become extinct since humans arrived in New Zealand. Others are rare and endangered.

New Zealand has an active conservation programme to protect and enhance the populations of its rare and endangered species. On an international scale, New Zealand supports efforts to protect rare and endangered species in other countries through the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES).

Some marine mammal species were nearly exterminated by hunting during the period of early European settlement. They are now protected by law within New Zealand's Exclusive Economic Zone, but significant numbers of marine mammals and birds are killed or injured accidentally by commercial fishing operations. However, the New Zealand Government and the fishing industry have worked together to introduce regulations and



Other animals provide services to humans in ways that are important both economically and socially.

voluntary codes of practice to reduce the incidence of this accidental by-catch.

New Zealand stopped commercial whaling more than 40 years ago. The New Zealand Government is opposed to the resumption of commercial whaling and, as a member of the International Whaling Commission, has consistently supported the moratorium on this activity.

New Zealand has taken a leading role in supporting the Southern Ocean Sanctuary and has been prominent in the international campaign against unsustainable fishing practices.

FERAL AND WILD PEST SPECIES

Because New Zealand had no native terrestrial predators prior to the arrival of humans, many of our native species evolved in ways that became increasingly unsustainable with the arrival of predators. An example of this is the occurrence of flightless birds such as the kiwi and the kakapo, which have become increasingly rare and endangered. Other pest species damage agricultural production and the environment. Impacts are as follows:

- Possums, rabbits, wallabies, feral deer, goats and pigs can detrimentally affect pasture and native vegetation.
- Possums, ferrets, feral deer, and feral pigs contribute to the spread and maintenance of bovine tuberculosis.
- Some bird species damage horticultural and cereal crops and can spread animal diseases such as salmonellosis.

- Feral cats are a factor in the ongoing decline of native lizards and of kiwi and other ground-nesting birds. Uncontrolled dogs are significant predators of kiwi.
- Rats and mice damage stored crops; ship rats are one of the critical predators of many native birds such as the Mohua (yellowhead).
- Ferrets, stoats and weasels were introduced into New Zealand to help control rabbits. While these predators help suppress rabbits in some areas, they also prey extensively on native birds and reptiles, including rare and endangered species. Possums have also been shown to prey on the nests of native birds, as have hedgehogs, which also eat lizards.

Efforts continue to find the most humane methods of pest control, including traps, poisons and non-lethal methods such as fertility control, with a focus on methods that are target-specific and have minimal environmental impact.

Some of these introduced species – deer, pigs, possum, chamois, thar, and goats – are also viewed as a resource by some people for both commercial and recreational hunting.

ANIMALS USED IN RESEARCH, TESTING AND TEACHING

In New Zealand, as in many countries, laboratory animals (mainly rodents) and farm animals (mainly cattle and sheep) are used in research, testing and teaching activities (RTT). Every project must be approved and monitored by an animal ethics committee (AEC) established by the institution using the animals. In addition, any organisation using animals in RTT must hold a code of ethical conduct (CEC) approved by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF). This sets out the policies to be adopted and the procedures to be followed by the organisation and its AEC.

With New Zealand's focus on animal husbandry and veterinary research, farm animals, particularly sheep and cattle, generally account for over 40 percent of the national total of animals used in research, testing and teaching, while rodents and rabbits constitute over 30 percent of the total. Most RTT involving animals is undertaken in Crown research institutes, universities and commercial companies, with some also taking place in government departments, polytechnics and schools.

Much of the research carried out in New Zealand does not result in the death or euthanasia of the animals concerned. In most years, approximately half of the animals are retained or released following use.



Animals and society

Values relating to the care and welfare of animals are complex, constantly evolving and increasingly tied to issues of environmental and agricultural sustainability. New Zealand's heritage is closely bound with farming, animals and the environment, but within our society there is a wide range of views.

Over the country's relatively short history, there has been a marked shift towards a more urbanised society with less than 20 percent of the population now living in rural areas compared to close to 60 percent in 1881. While the total population continues to rise, between 1881 and 2001 the urban population rose by over 1500 percent compared with a mere 83 percent rise in rural areas. Fewer New Zealanders than ever have contact with or experience of life on the farm.

Ours is also a multi-cultural society, so differing perspectives on the value and management of animals are inevitable. Opinions on animal usage range from those who do not accept the use of animals by humans under any circumstances, possibly to the other extreme of those who may sanction the exploitation of animals for economic gain with little or no regard to welfare. Most opinion falls within a broad middle ground.

Value systems outside New Zealand also have a strong influence on animal welfare practices in this country. Throughout the Western world, especially Europe, consumers have become more sensitive to the way in which animals are raised for food and fibre. The boundary between acceptable and unacceptable treatment of animals – whether farmed, companion, working or wild – is continually evolving. New Zealand has responded to these changing influences by developing animal welfare legislation that is both progressive and flexible.



Development of animal welfare legislation in New Zealand

Throughout most of recorded history, domesticated animals have been regarded almost exclusively as property, with no special rights.

The United Kingdom led the way in the development of legislation to protect animals in the 19th century.

This development coincided with the period of European settlement of New Zealand, and the large-scale importation of introduced species.

New Zealand quickly introduced animal welfare legislation that was progressive for its time. Initially, it followed British law – the UK Protection of Animals Act 1835 became part of the statutes of New Zealand in 1840.

The New Zealand Cruelty to Animals Act 1878 built on the original British legislation, extending the law to cover both wild and domestic animals. In 1884, the Cruelty to Animals Act was repealed by the Police Offences Act, which made neglect of animals an offence in addition to wilful cruelty. The new legislation also provided legal recognition to inspectors of Societies for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals as special constables, a situation that is reflected in the current legislation with specially trained staff being recommended by the Royal New Zealand SPCA to be appointed as animal welfare inspectors.

The boundary between acceptable and unacceptable treatment of animals – whether farmed, companion, working or wild – is continually evolving.

The next major step in animal welfare legislation was taken in 1960 with the passing of the Animals Protection Act. For its time, this legislation was among the most comprehensive and far-reaching of its type. This Act introduced several significant new provisions including:

- making it an offence to witness arranged animal fighting;
- prohibition of hare coursing;
- new offences relating to treatment of farm animals;
- a new offence of aggravated cruelty;
- wider powers for inspectors;
- transfer of administrative responsibility from the police to MAF.

A 1971 amendment restricted the dehorning and castration of farm animals and the methods used for docking of cows' tails.

A further amendment in 1983 established the National Animal Ethics Advisory Committee (NAEAC). Following this, the Animals Protection (Codes of Ethical Conduct) Regulations 1987 required that all organisations undertaking research, testing and teaching using animals be covered by a code of ethical conduct approved by the Minister of Agriculture. This development alongside the establishment of animal ethics committees, provides for a high degree of institutional self-regulation within government defined guidelines.

The Animal Welfare Advisory Committee (AWAC), a second ministerial advisory committee, was established in 1989. This became known as the National Animal Welfare Advisory Committee under the Animal Welfare Act 1999.

A 1993 amendment to the Animals Protection Act increased monetary penalties five-fold and extended the Courts' powers to disqualify convicted people from owning animals.

Despite the various amendments, the 1960 legislation did not adequately reflect society's expectations for animal welfare by the 1990s. Nor did it effectively respond to international trends and concerns.

In 1990, a review of the Animals Protection Act was conducted by AWAC. This included wide-ranging consultation with interested groups and organisations, the result of which was that the policy agreed by the Government aimed to develop new legislation that steered a middle course between extreme views on the use of animals.





The Animal Welfare Act 1999

– A framework for the 21st century

The Animal Welfare Act 1999 took effect from 1 January 2000, replacing the previous Animals Protection Act 1960 and regulations. The new Act has kept New Zealand at the forefront with some of the world's most progressive and comprehensive animal welfare law, and has served as a reference point for other countries also intent on changing their approach to animal welfare.

Key features of the Act include:

OBLIGATION TO CARE FOR ANIMALS

Penalties for ill-treatment of animals are balanced by a greater emphasis on prevention. This is done by clearly establishing the obligations on those responsible for the care of animals. The essential needs of animals are based on the internationally recognised “five freedoms”:

- Proper and sufficient food and water.
- Adequate shelter.
- The opportunity to display normal patterns of behaviour.
- Physical handling in a way which minimises the likelihood of unreasonable or unnecessary pain or distress.
- Protection from, and rapid diagnosis of, any significant injury or disease.

These obligations are qualified, however, as the needs in each individual case are assessed according to what is appropriate to the species, environment and circumstances of an animal.

FLEXIBILITY

Detailed minimum standards are contained in codes of welfare (see next page) which can be amended more easily than primary legislation.

ANIMALS COVERED BY THE ACT

The definition of animals under the Act includes mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, fish, crabs, crayfish, squid and octopus, as well as mammalian foetuses and avian or reptilian pre-hatched young in the last half of their period of gestation or development.

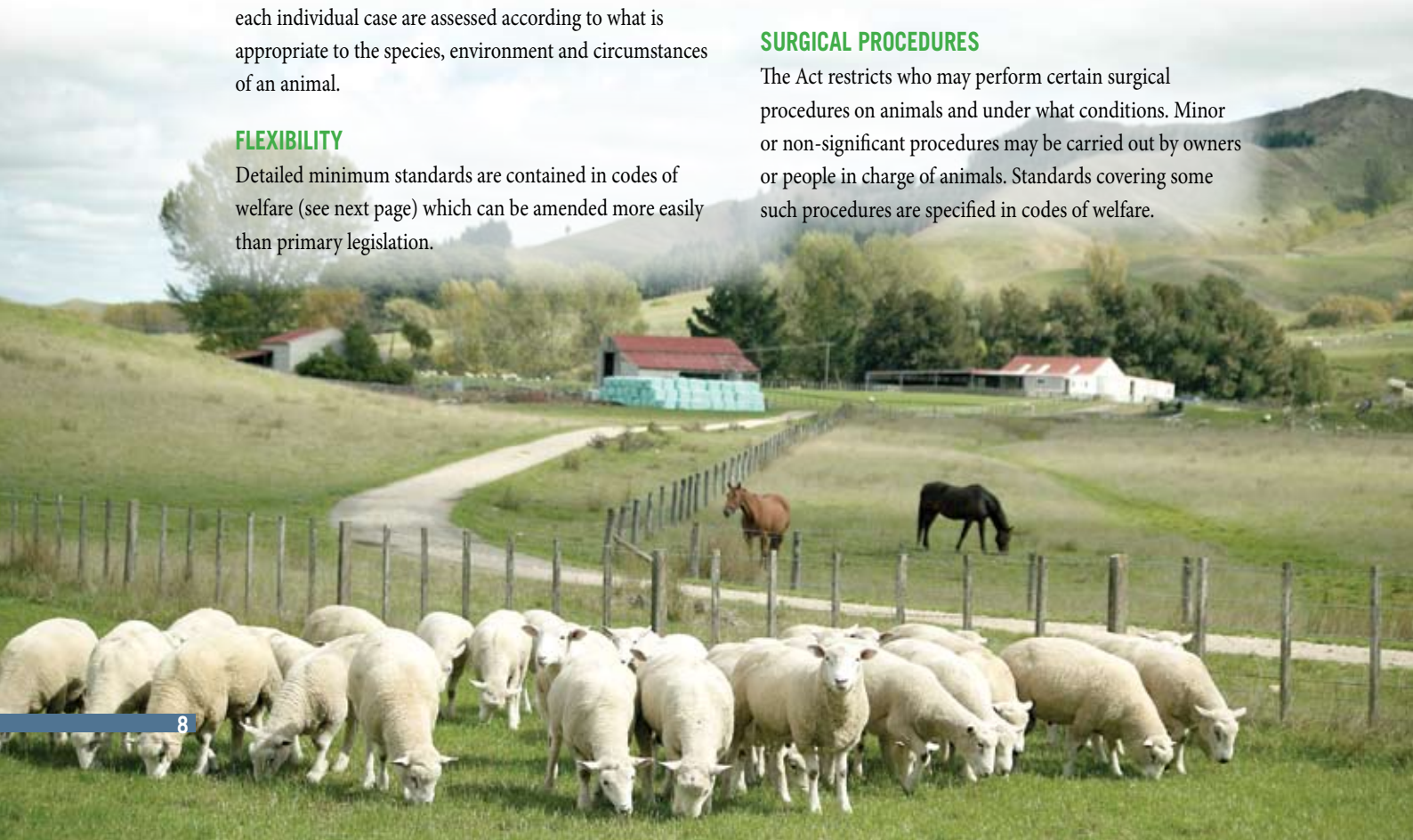
This covers all animals thought to be capable of feeling pain and means that all such animals, whether they be for production, work, companionship, domesticated or wild, are covered by the Act, so that while some groups are opposed to the use of animals in certain activities such as rodeos and circuses, the humane care and management of all such animals is covered by New Zealand law.

ANIMALS IN THE WILD

While ill-treatment of animals in the wild would be in breach of the Act, the legislation does not make it unlawful to carry out animal pest control, or to hunt or fish for animals in the wild. The Act also provides for restrictions on the types and use of traps and devices used in trapping and for other purposes, and for animals caught alive (for example, during pest control) to be killed humanely if they are not to be released. Commercial fishing is covered by separate legislation, although fisheries officials regard the practice of shark-finning as inhumane and are looking at how this might be enforced under the welfare legislation.

SURGICAL PROCEDURES

The Act restricts who may perform certain surgical procedures on animals and under what conditions. Minor or non-significant procedures may be carried out by owners or people in charge of animals. Standards covering some such procedures are specified in codes of welfare.



Significant surgical procedures can only be carried out by a veterinarian, or under veterinary supervision in certain circumstances.

ANIMAL EXPORTS

The Act requires certification for the export of animals that are not otherwise exempted. Exemptions are provided for export situations which pose minimal risk to the animals (for example, short haul flights for some species).

RESEARCH, TESTING AND TEACHING (RTT)

The use of animals in RTT is covered by a separate part (Part 6) of the Act. No research, testing or teaching may be carried out on any live animal unless the person or organisation involved holds an approved CEC. This sets out the policies to be adopted and the procedures to be followed by the organisation and the AEC established by the organisation.

AECs are required to approve and monitor every project to ensure that the welfare of the animals is maximised and that any cost to the animals is balanced by the potential benefit of the work. Each AEC must have three members who are not associated with the organisation – a nominee of the New Zealand Veterinary Association, a nominee of an approved animal welfare organisation, and a lay person nominated by a local government body to represent the public interest.

These committees are subject to independent review at a maximum of every five years. This system, along with the requirement for external members on AECs, provides for greater transparency and accountability when decisions are made about the use of animals in RTT. To further promote transparency, a detailed analysis of animal use statistics is published each year in the NAEAC annual report.

ENFORCEMENT

The responsibility for enforcing the Act lies with MAF. Inspectors under the Act may be either people employed under the State Sector Act (generally MAF and New Zealand Food Safety Authority staff), police officers, or people nominated by an approved organisation who are appointed by the Minister.

Organisations that meet certain criteria and whose primary purpose is to promote animal welfare, can be approved by the Minister to enforce the Act and destroy, sell or re-home animals which are given into their care. The Royal New Zealand SPCA and the Animal Welfare Institute of New Zealand are approved organisations.

The new Act has kept New Zealand at the forefront with some of the world's most progressive and comprehensive animal welfare law.

CODES OF WELFARE

The Act provides for detailed codes of welfare to be developed and issued by the Minister of Agriculture on the recommendation of the National Animal Welfare Advisory Committee (NAWAC), following a public consultation process. The codes specify minimum standards and recommendations for best practice and cover a variety of practices and procedures both within and outside farming.

While breach of minimum standards set in a code does not constitute an offence in itself, it may lead to legal action for breaches of the Act.

At the time of publication, the Minister of Agriculture had issued codes on the following animals or procedures:

- Broiler chickens (fully housed).
- Circuses.
- Companion cats.
- Deer.
- Layer hens.
- Painful husbandry procedures.
- Pigs.
- Rodeos.
- Zoos.

The following are under development as new codes of welfare for presentation to the Minister:

- Commercial slaughter.
- Dairy cattle.
- Dogs.
- Transport of animals within New Zealand.
- Sheep and beef cattle.
- Temporary housing for companion animals
- Goats.
- Camelids.
- Equine.
- Animals at saleyards.

Information regarding codes of welfare can be found at www.biosecurity.govt.nz/regs/animal-welfare/stds/codes

In addition to the codes, a number of guidelines for the welfare of animals have been published and can be found at www.biosecurity.govt.nz/regs/animal-welfare/pubs/nawac



Operational research

MAF is responsible for ensuring that the Minister of Agriculture and the Government are given sound, science-based policy advice on animal welfare matters affecting the agriculture sector. These issues can affect New Zealand's domestic and international markets.

Section 10 of the Animal Welfare Act 1999 provides that:

“The owner of an animal and every person in charge of an animal must ensure that the physical, health and behavioural needs of the animal are met in a manner that is in accordance with both:

- (a) good practice and*
- (b) scientific knowledge”*

In order to ensure that standards of animal welfare set in codes of welfare meet this requirement, MAF commissions operational research each year on issues where gaps in knowledge have been identified. Detailed summaries of funded operational research programmes can be found in the annual reports of NAWAC.

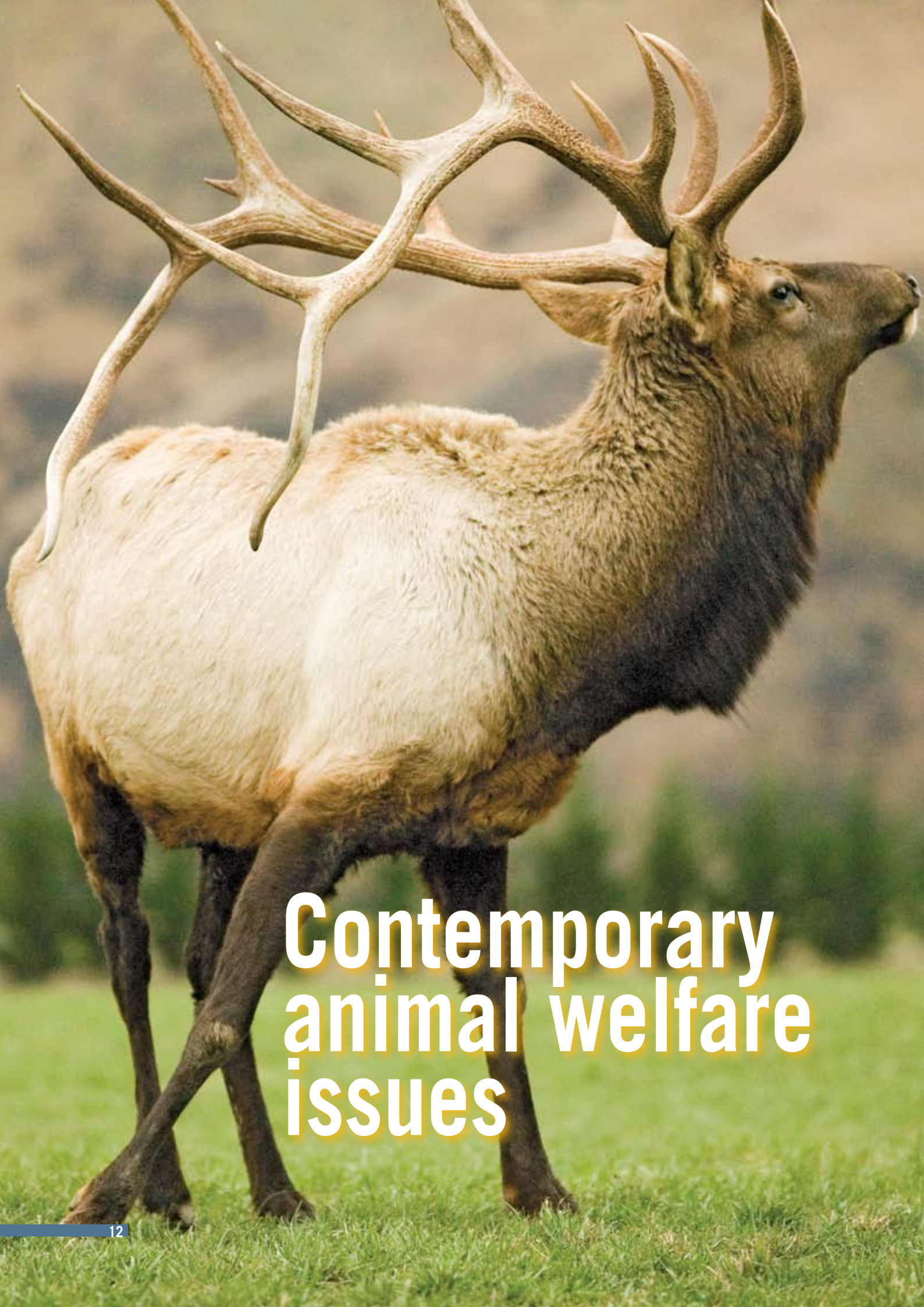
Operational research funded by MAF between 1993 and 2009 has included the following areas:

- On-farm husbandry practices.
- Providing pain relief during painful husbandry procedures.
- The relationship between body condition score and welfare in dairy cows.
- The economic effects of, and social influences on, improving animal welfare.
- Indicators of welfare in farm animals.
- Societal attitudes to the use of animals in research, testing and teaching.
- Welfare on organic farms.
- Shade and shelter on farms.
- Revision of the severity scale for assessing the impact of live animal manipulations in research, testing and teaching.
- Effects of calf roping in rodeos.
- Transport of livestock.
- Vertebrate pest control methods.
- Livestock slaughter methods.
- Welfare assessment of farm animals.





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Contemporary animal welfare issues

New Zealand's strategic approach to animal welfare involves incremental, science-based change management over realistic time frames, with the active involvement of all affected and interested parties.

In responding to research which has taken place either here in New Zealand or overseas and which indicates that animal welfare can be improved, practices used in the management of animals are constantly being refined and improved to enhance animal welfare. The development of new technology or husbandry practices for a new type of livestock farming may also be the stimulus for change, so that the issues that are current or undergoing review vary from time to time.

The following examples show how some contemporary animal welfare issues have been managed in New Zealand within economic, environmental, technological, social and international contexts.

ECONOMICS

Increasingly, in the developed world at least, consumers' purchase decisions may be influenced by animal welfare, food safety and environmental considerations, as well as price and other suitability factors. Some consumers want to know that the animals that produced the meat, eggs or milk products on their supermarket shelves were treated humanely. The value of animal welfare in an economic sense is also demonstrated by the involvement of the International Finance Corporation (IFC), which was established by the World Bank Group to promote sustainable private sector investment in, for example, livestock and aquaculture projects and production facilities in developing countries. In October 2006, the IFC, in releasing a Good Practice publication on Animal Welfare in Livestock Operations, as part of an initiative to provide enhanced support to its clients in the development of a responsible and forward-looking approach to livestock operations, acknowledged that animal welfare is important for commercial as well as ethical reasons.

While opposing the use of animal welfare issues to protect trade, New Zealand aims to ensure that our domestic regulatory framework, coupled with science-based auditable quality assurance programmes, are robust so that producers and exporters can use them to contribute to optimum product positioning and commercial return in premium-priced markets.

VERTEBRATE PEST CONTROL

Vertebrate pest control is required for introduced species that pose a threat to human and animal health, the environment, and the economic sustainability of production systems in New Zealand. Animals such as possums, mustelids, rabbits, rodents and Canada geese all have the potential to adversely affect agriculture and the environment, and to disrupt efforts to conserve indigenous species. The challenge is to find affordable, humane and practical systems for controlling and, where possible and necessary, eradicating these pests.

Vertebrate pest control in New Zealand relies heavily on the use of poisons and traps, and more recently there has been a focus on minimising the welfare impacts of these tools. Guidelines for assessing the welfare performance of both traps and vertebrate toxic agents have been developed to enable the relative welfare impacts of commercially available products to be evaluated. As a result, some leg-hold traps have been prohibited, and users of vertebrate toxic agents can now make an informed choice on what toxins to use to minimise the welfare impacts of their control operations.

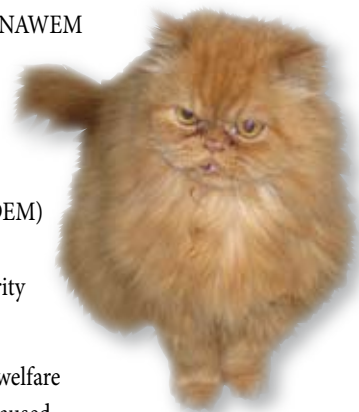
Additionally, guidelines have been developed to promote the best-practice use of traps, to ensure trappers minimise any possible welfare impacts.

Increasingly, consumers' purchase decisions may be influenced by animal welfare, food safety and environmental considerations.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

The National Animal Welfare Emergency Management Liaison Group (NAWEM) was established in 2006 to provide a national co-ordination point for the management of animal welfare in emergencies. NAWEM maintains an overview of animal welfare issues for all animals, from domestic to production to scientific animal populations, though its focus is on companion animals. NAWEM provides advice to the Civil Defence and Emergency (CDEM) sector when required, but has a wider mandate, looking also at animal welfare issues in biosecurity breaches and other emergencies.

The group provides technical advice on animal welfare issues during emergencies – large-scale events caused



either by adverse weather or the outbreak of an exotic disease. Recent overseas emergencies, such as Hurricane Katrina in the United States, or the bird flu pandemic in southeast Asia, have highlighted some of the animal welfare issues that can occur if there is not appropriate preparedness prior to such events.

NAWEM members are representatives from:

- Ministry of Civil Defence and Emergency Management (MCDEM).
- Federated Farmers of New Zealand (FFNZ).
- Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA).
- World Society of the Protection of Animals (WSPA).
- New Zealand Veterinary Association (NZVA).
- New Zealand Companion Animal Council.

The overall goal of NAWEM is to facilitate the implementation of appropriate animal welfare standards in the event of a national emergency in New Zealand.

INTERNATIONAL

Dependence on trade in animal products makes New Zealand attentive to the concerns and expectations of its international customers. Responsiveness to developing international animal welfare standards is complemented by New Zealand's positive approach to standards setting.

Within New Zealand, industry-led, science-based quality assurance programmes which incorporate animal welfare standards are able to be used to meet international consumer demand for assurances about animal welfare.

To ensure a mutual understanding of animal welfare policies and initiatives with international colleagues, New Zealand confers regularly with other government departments and a number of different groups including:

- The Trans-Tasman Animal Welfare Committee (AWC).
- The Farm Animal Welfare Council (UK).
- The New Zealand/European Commission Animal Welfare Co-operation Forum.

- The EU Welfare Quality Project.
- The Council for Europe Standing Committee of the European Convention for the Protection of Animals Kept for Farming Purposes.
- The Quads Animal Welfare Group (New Zealand, Australia, USA and Canada).
- European Forum of Animal Welfare Councils (EuroFAWC).

The Office International des Épizooties (OIE) is the Paris-based World Organisation for Animal Health. Formed in 1924, it has 175 member countries and territories. The OIE's animal welfare role has, in recent years, become much more sharply focused, with the identification of animal welfare as a key strategic objective and the formation in 2002 of an eight-member Permanent Working Group on Animal Welfare which New Zealand has chaired since its inception.

In 2004, the OIE's member countries endorsed a series of animal welfare guiding principles and the OIE Animal Health Code Commission agreed a series of scientific principles to underpin welfare guidelines.

In May 2005, the International Committee of OIE Member Countries adopted four animal welfare standards to be included in the OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Code. These standards are:

- slaughter for human consumption;
- killing for disease control purposes;
- land transportation;
- sea transportation;
- air transportation.

Further *ad hoc* groups have been set up to develop welfare guidelines for laboratory animals, production animals, wildlife and transportation and slaughter of aquatic animals.

The OIE announced in May 2009 an expansion to the Massey University Animal Welfare Science and Bioethics Centre which sees five agencies in New Zealand and Australia formally linked and internationally recognised as a collaborating centre of animal welfare science excellence.

The primary role of the centre is the provision of expert scientific, bioethical and educational advice for the OIE. Other roles will include the provision of scientific and technical training, the organisation of appropriate scientific meetings, and the co-ordination of scientific and technical studies in collaboration with other organisations.



Dependence on trade in animal products makes New Zealand attentive to the concerns and expectations of its international customers.



A photograph of a llama standing in a field. The llama is the central focus, shown in profile facing left. It has a white face and neck with some greyish-brown patches around its eyes and ears. Its body is covered in thick, shaggy wool that is white on the sides and brown on the back. The background is a dense, green forest of trees, slightly out of focus. The overall lighting is soft and natural.

New Zealand's animal welfare infrastructure

New Zealand has traditionally taken an inclusive approach to the legislation and codes that protect the welfare of our animals.

POLICY AND PRACTICE

Within the animal welfare framework administered by MAF there is a highly cohesive structure for the promotion of animal welfare policy and practice. There is a high level of consultation between those groups with interests in the issue and industry, research, professional and voluntary organisations all provide input into one or more of the following areas:

- education and training;
- technical standards;
- research;
- development of quality systems.

ADMINISTRATION AND ENFORCEMENT

MAF has a wide range of animal welfare functions, with different groups taking the lead on specific tasks. In addition, the New Zealand Food Safety Authority and the RNZSPCA play an important role in relation to animal welfare compliance and enforcement.

Specifically, MAF:

- ensures effective discharge of statutory responsibilities under the Animal Welfare Act 1999;
- provides scientific and policy advice to the Minister of Agriculture on animal welfare and ethical issues arising from the use of animals for production, scientific, companionship, recreation, trade, and other purposes;
- ensures the mitigation of unnecessary or unreasonable pain or distress and ensure animals are provided with appropriate care to meet their physical, health and behavioural needs;
- identifies areas of animal welfare research needed to support policy formulation or standard development, and liaises with research providers and funding agencies both domestically and internationally;
- liaises with key stakeholders and the public to ensure that animal welfare standards and practices are the subject of wide consultation, are based on available science, and that any necessary change is appropriately managed and communicated;
- contributes to, and provides support for, NAEAC and NAWAC;

MAF enforces the animal welfare legislation and audits the activities of the approved organisations which assist it in this role.

- develops and implements measures to ensure animal welfare during national emergencies caused by an exotic disease outbreak or adverse climatic event;
- develops policy and standards to support compliance with the Animal Welfare Act 1999, including developing and implementing proactive compliance and communication programmes to reduce offending and maximise voluntary compliance;
- investigates animal welfare complaints received and recommends or takes appropriate action, ranging from providing advice to criminal investigation and prosecution;
- verifies compliance with animal welfare related market access requirements;
- manages the government's relationship with non-governmental providers of compliance services;
- liaises with stakeholders to effectively communicate animal welfare policy, practice and compliance information;
- maintains international networks to ensure that New Zealand is acknowledged as a "welfare-responsible" country, and contributes to dialogue and policy formulation on the role of animal welfare in international trade;
- contributes to the OIE strategic initiative on animal welfare.

MAF enforces the animal welfare legislation and audits the activities of the approved organisations (RNZSPCA and the Animal Welfare Institute of New Zealand) which assist it in this role. MAF and these organisations investigate complaints made about possible non-compliance with the legislation. While the vast majority of such complaints are dealt with through consultation and education, successful prosecutions against persistent or blatant offenders are undertaken routinely. A number of private sector organisations have signed Memoranda of Understanding with a commitment to collaborate on animal welfare issues, including situations where an animal welfare complaint has been made.



CONSULTATION

MINISTERIAL ADVISORY COMMITTEES

NAWAC advises the Minister on issues including research and legislative proposals, relating to the welfare of all animals. It also develops and advises on codes of welfare.

NAEAC advises the Minister on ethical and animal welfare issues arising from the use of animals in research, testing and teaching. It also provides advice and information on the development and review of codes of ethical conduct.

ANIMAL BEHAVIOUR AND WELFARE CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE (ABWCC)

The ABWCC is a forum for the exchange of information about animal welfare, behaviour and related issues between New Zealand animal industry groups, animal welfare researchers, government departments, the veterinary profession, public animal welfare organisations and research funders. The committee encourages dialogue between member groups, promotes a scientific

approach to animal welfare and is a clearing house for the dissemination of research results.

PRIMARY INDUSTRY ORGANISATIONS

Representing all stages from on-farm production to livestock purchasing, transport and meat processing, these organisations make an indispensable contribution to the development of new operating practices, policy and standards for animal welfare. They carry out a considerable amount of research and development, training and educational work within their own industries to enhance animal welfare standards. Such standards often lead to improvements in product quality.

PROFESSIONAL AND OTHER ORGANISATIONS

THE NEW ZEALAND VETERINARY ASSOCIATION (NZVA) – by virtue of their professional expertise in, and day-to-day involvement, with animal health and welfare, veterinarians provide invaluable input into the development of standards and policy, as well as acting as disseminators of sound welfare advice to their clients.



THE ROYAL NEW ZEALAND SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS (RNZSPCA) – the Society has dual roles: firstly, as an advocate for animal welfare, it is involved in policy and standards input and has a major educative function. Secondly, it is involved with enforcement of the Act as an approved organisation.

ANIMAL WELFARE INSTITUTE OF NEW ZEALAND (AWINZ) – is involved with enforcement of the Act as an approved organisation.

THE NEW ZEALAND VETERINARY NURSES' ASSOCIATION (NZVNA) – provides valuable input into standards development from a unique perspective.

THE NEW ZEALAND COMPANION ANIMAL COUNCIL (NZCAC) – representing a wide range of animal groups, the NZCAC has taken a major role in code development in the companion animal area.

AUSTRALIAN AND NEW ZEALAND COUNCIL FOR THE CARE OF ANIMALS IN RESEARCH AND TEACHING (ANZCCART) – promotes excellence in the care of animals used in research and teaching to ensure the outcomes of the scientific uses of animals are worthwhile and to foster informed and responsible debate within the scientific and wider community regarding the scientific uses of animals.

ASUREQUALITY LTD – provides a variety of field services, farm quality assurance services, and processing assurance services for the verification of animal welfare.

EDUCATION AND RESEARCH

Education and research contributes a definite focus on providing a sound scientific basis to decisions involving the welfare of animals, research, the education of potential researchers, and dissemination of the results of research.

FOUNDATION FOR RESEARCH, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (FRST) – is an important source of funding for animal welfare research through the Public Good Research Fund. This is additional to funds provided through MAF sources such as the Operational Research Fund and the Sustainable Farming Fund.

MASSEY UNIVERSITY is an important centre for agriculture and animal-related subjects, with a focus on animal welfare including the **ANIMAL WELFARE SCIENCE AND BIOETHICS CENTRE (AWSBC)** – a major centre for animal health and welfare research, education and bioethical analysis.

There is a high level of consultation between those groups with interests in the issue and industry, research, professional and voluntary organisations.

THE NEW ZEALAND THREE RS PROGRAMME WITHIN THE AWSBC – established with MAF's help to promote the Three Rs (replacement, reduction and refinement) in research, testing and teaching in New Zealand.

ANIMAL BEHAVIOUR AND WELFARE RESEARCH CENTRE, AGRESEARCH LTD, RUAKURA – a major centre for animal behaviour and welfare research.

UNITEC INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY – runs animal-related courses including the training of inspectors under the Act. It also has a focus on research into companion animal behaviour and welfare.

LANDCARE RESEARCH NEW ZEALAND LTD – carries out research that aims to maintain New Zealand's native and production ecosystems, with a welfare focus in the development of new pest animal control options that are as humane and target-specific as possible.

ANIMALS IN SCHOOLS EDUCATION TRUST (Aiset) – works to provide resources designed by teachers to promote the inclusion of animal topics in the New Zealand school curriculum, with the aim that school pupils gain acceptance of the obligation to have concern for the welfare of animals and to obtain a balanced view of people's relationship with animals.





Animal welfare policy & practice in New Zealand

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY
MAF BIOSECURITY NEW ZEALAND ANIMAL WELFARE DIRECTORATE
MAF BIOSECURITY NEW ZEALAND POLICY AND RISK DIRECTORATE
MAF ENFORCEMENT DIRECTORATE
MAF INTERNATIONAL POLICY GROUP
- Legislative review
- Policy advice
- Standards
- International liaison
- Commissions audits of performance of non-Crown enforcement agencies
- Communications

MINISTER
- Government policy
- Statutory functions
- Accountability

NATIONAL ANIMAL WELFARE ADVISORY COMMITTEE (NAWAC)
- Covers farm, companion and wild animals and pests
- Advises Minister on any matter relating to animal welfare including research and legislative proposals
- Develops, and advises the Minister on codes of welfare

NEW ZEALAND FOOD SAFETY AUTHORITY VERIFICATION AGENCY
- Animal Welfare Act compliance and enforcement
- Education and surveillance

NATIONAL ANIMAL ETHICS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (NAEAC)
- Covers use of animals in research, testing and teaching
- Advises Minister
- Reviews codes of ethical conduct

AUSTRALIAN AND NEW ZEALAND COUNCIL FOR THE CARE OF ANIMALS IN RESEARCH AND TEACHING (ANZCCART)
- Promotes standards of care for animals used in research and teaching
- Encourages discussion of related ethical issues

NEW ZEALAND VETERINARY ASSOCIATION (NZVA)
- Practitioner role
- Policy input
- Standards input

ANIMALS IN SCHOOLS EDUCATION TRUST
- Promotes respect for animals
- Educational material

ROYAL NEW ZEALAND SPCA
- Inspector and auxiliary officer appointment recommendations
- Policy input
- Standards input
- Coordination role with branches/member societies
- Education and advocacy

FOUNDATION FOR RESEARCH SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (FRST)
- Public good research funding

SPCA BRANCES AND MEMBERS
- Animal Welfare Act enforcement
- Education

ANIMAL WELFARE SCIENCE AND BIOETHICS CENTRE, MASSEY UNIVERSITY
- Animal health and welfare research
- Education
- Bioethical analysis
- Three Rs programme
- OIE Collaborating Centre

OTHER ANIMAL WELFARE ORGANISATIONS
- Policy input
- Education
- Future enforcement role

ANIMAL BEHAVIOUR AND WELFARE CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE (ABWCC)
- National forum for information exchange between researchers, industry, government and non-governmental organisations

UNITEC SCHOOL OF NATURAL SCIENCES
- Courses in animal technology, captive wild animals, veterinary nursing, animal welfare investigations and animal management
- Research in companion animal behaviour and welfare

FEDERATED FARMERS
- Primary care of farm animals
- Policy input
- Standards input

ANIMAL BEHAVIOUR AND WELFARE RESEARCH CENTRE (ABWRC), AGRESEARCH, RUAKURA
- Animal behaviour and welfare research and education
- OIE Collaborating Centre

PRODUCER BOARDS AND INDUSTRY ASSOCIATIONS
- Policy input
- Quality management systems
- Applied research funding

SPONSORS

THE SUPPORT OF THE FOLLOWING ORGANISATIONS TO ANIMAL WELFARE IN NEW ZEALAND AND THIS PUBLICATION IS GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGED.



Further information

For further information on animal welfare in New Zealand contact:

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WEBSITES

MAF Biosecurity New Zealand Animal Welfare
WWW.BIOSECURITY.GOV.TZ/ANIMAL-WELFARE

National Animal Welfare Advisory Committee (NAWAC)
WWW.BIOSECURITY.GOV.TZ/REGS/ANIMAL-WELFARE/NZ/NAWAC

National Animal Ethics Advisory Committee (NAEAC)
WWW.BIOSECURITY.GOV.TZ/REGS/ANIMAL-WELFARE/NZ/NAEAC



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