



## December 2010

### Rules on Dog Vaccines

The American Veterinary Medical Association revised its position on annual vaccinations for all dogs last year, though the word is still spreading among veterinarians.

“For many years, a set of annual vaccinations was considered normal and necessary for dogs and cats. There is increasing evidence to support that immunity triggered by some vaccines provides protection beyond one year while the immunity triggered by other vaccines may fail to protect for a full year,” says AVMA. “Consequently, one vaccination schedule will not work well for all pets. Your veterinarian will determine a vaccination schedule most appropriate for your pet.”

According to AVMA, vaccines are now divided into two categories – core and non-core. Core vaccines are recommended for all puppies and dogs by AVMA and by the Animal Hospital Association Canine Vaccine Task Force, and include: Canine Distemper virus; Canine parvovirus; Canine Adenovirus; Rabies Virus

Other non-core vaccines are recommended only in special circumstances. These include:

- Distemper-measles virus
- Leptospira -- Most animals that spread leptospirosis don't seem sick. When they urinate, they shed leptospira and pets can become infected by sniffing this urine or by wading, swimming or drinking contaminated water. Dogs that spend their time in wooded and swampy areas are most at risk. The vaccination is unreliable and doesn't last long.
- Borerelia Burgdorferi or Lyme Disease -- an acute, recurrent inflammatory infection, transmitted by ticks.
- Canine Parainfluenza virus
- Bordetella bronchseptica, or Kennel Cough – often required for dogs that are going to be boarded or cared for in the company of other dogs.

After vaccination, says Dr. Hudson, “it's not unusual to detect some lethargy in your dog. You may see some ‘thickening’ or a lump at the vaccination site. If the lump doesn't go away in a week or so, you should call your veterinarian. And of course if your dog has difficulty breathing, or has diarrhea or vomiting, call immediately.”

“If the vaccine is administered properly,” he says, “the immunity should last more than a year, and often several years. Most dogs with low-risk lifestyles can be vaccinated every three years with the ‘core’ vaccines, but every dog is unique – and every dog's circumstances are unique.” *Source: Examiner.com*

## Judge Rules Non-Vets Can Do Dental Care on Horses

AUSTIN — A three-year legal fight over who can take care of horse teeth has ended.

An attorney representing Texas horse dentists said Wednesday that an Austin judge has ruled that the Texas Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners violated state law when it changed its policy to prohibit anyone but licensed veterinarians from giving horses dental care.

Before the policy shift in 2006, horse dentists, known as teeth floaters, could file down horses' teeth about twice a year for proper length and alignment. The animal's teeth grow throughout their lives.

In 2007, a group of dentists filed a lawsuit against the board, claiming they are better trained in horse dental needs than most licensed vets.

Dewey Helmcamp, the board's executive director, said it is unlikely the board will appeal the ruling.

*Source: AP Texas News*

## UCLA Researcher Receives Threatening Package

A UCLA neuroscientist who conducts animal research received a package with razor blades and a threatening message, a university spokesman said Tuesday afternoon.

David Jentsch, who does research on rodents and primates, received the package earlier this month, spokesman Phil Hampton said.

In a news release issued Tuesday, the Animal Liberation Front said it had obtained statements from animal activists called "The Justice Department of UCLA," which claimed responsibility for sending AIDS-tainted razor blades to Jentsch, whom the group alleges has injected the rodents with addictive drugs.

"How would Jentsch like the same thing he does to primates to be done to him?" the statement said.

Hampton said the incident is under investigation by the FBI and UCLA police. Activists claimed to have sent a similar package to one of Jentsch's researchers, but there is no evidence that package was received, UCLA said.

For several years, UCLA researchers have been harassed by groups seeking to halt animal research.

In March 2009, Jentsch's vehicle was blown up outside his home, an incident for which extremists also claimed responsibility, UCLA said in a statement.

Jentsch's work, much of it funded by the National Institutes of Health, has provided key information on biochemical processes that contribute to methamphetamine addiction affecting teens and disabilities affecting speech and behavior of schizophrenia patients, UCLA said.

"Responsible use of animals in research aimed at improving the health and welfare of the mentally ill is the right thing to do," Jentsch said in a statement. "We will continue to do so because we have a moral responsibility to society to use our skills for the betterment of the world."

**[For the record 6:26 p.m:** An earlier version of this post said the Animal Liberation Front had claimed responsibility for sending the razor blades.]

*Source: Los Angeles Times <http://tinyurl.com/2ecfxh7>*

## Prosthetic Retinas Let Blind Mice See

A prosthetic device capable of deciphering the code that allows the brain to make sense of visual stimuli has allowed blind mice to see clearly.

A human version could one day give back vision to the millions of people who have lost their sight through retinal degeneration.

In a healthy eye, light enters the retina and activates light-sensitive photoreceptors which process and send information to ganglion cells that in turn transmit the message on to the brain as a pattern of electrical activity. People with retinal degeneration lose the use of their photoreceptor cells. As a result their retinas can no longer pick up images, so no visual information gets sent to the ganglion cells, or to the brain.

Prosthetic retinas usually work by stimulating the ganglion cells directly.

However, they don't use the patterns, or "code" that the ganglion cells normally use when communicating with the brain, and so are only capable of restoring a person's ability to see simple things like spots of light and edges.

Sheila Nirenberg at Weill Cornell Medical College in New York and colleagues compared the signals going into healthy mice retinas with the output from ganglion cells, and produced an algorithm to recreate this pattern.

### Gene therapy

Nirenberg's team then used gene therapy to transfer a protein into the ganglion cells of blind mice, in order to make them responsive to light. To mimic the behavior of the photoreceptors, they used a pair of glasses with a tiny embedded video camera, computer processor and Nirenberg's algorithm to encode images into rapid pulses of light which are shone into the eye using LEDs. This drives the protein-treated ganglion cells to send signals to the brain that it can interpret in the normal way.

To test the device, Nirenberg measured the ganglion cell output when an image of a baby's face was presented to blind mice. Patterns from mice with the new prosthetic system resembled the output from sighted mice, whereas those from devices that lacked the code presented a more pixelated version of the face.

### Mimic real vision

"We think this system gives enough information to reconstruct faces, newsprint, landscapes, essentially anything," says Nirenberg.

The group is about to start tests on primates in the hope that human clinical trials can soon follow. They are collaborating with Bill Hauswirth, a geneticist from the University of Florida who has developed a safe and effective way of delivering genes into primates.

The research was presented at this week's Society for Neuroscience meeting in San Diego.

Source: *New Scientist* <http://tinyurl.com/2wfy5v7>

## Collars and Microchips for Cats

Lord LK, Griffin B, Slater MR et al: Evaluation of collars and microchips for visual and permanent identification of pet cats, J Am Vet Med Assoc 237:387, 2010.

The objective of this study was to determine the percentage of pet cats still wearing collars and having a functioning microchip six months after application. In prior studies, only 14% of cats were wearing any form of visual identification such as a collar or tag at the time they were lost and only 7% had a microchip. Less than 2% of cats entering a shelter with unknown owner status were reunited with their owners. The primary reasons owners give for not providing a form of identification for their cats are because the cats are kept exclusively indoors, their cats did not get lost, and a belief that their cats won't tolerate a collar or will be hurt by collars or that microchips are too expensive. Most cats successfully wore their collars (approximately 75%). The plastic buckle collars stayed on better than the plastic breakaway buckle form or elastic stretch plastic collars. However, it was noted that owner willingness to replace a collar repeatedly if it did come off and owner expectations for success were more important than collar types. The results also found that many owners do not think to put a collar on their cat though are willing to do so once educated. Each cat in the study was also microchipped and of the 478 microchips scanned at the conclusion of the study, only one was found to be non-functioning. Microchips are considered a good backup, long-term identification system following the use of a visual form of identification. Since one earlier study showed that 40% of all cats lost were considered to be exclusively indoors, veterinarians should recommend some form of identification to cat owners. [VT]

### Related articles:

Lord LK, Ingwersen W, Gray JL et al: Characterization of animals with microchips entering animal shelters, J Am Vet Med Assoc 235:160, 2009.

More on cat health: [Winn Feline Foundation Library](#)

## Is Nebraska Next on HSUS' Hit List?

*Brownfield Ag Network* By Ken Anderson November 18, 2010

HSUS president and CEO Wayne Pacelle won't say as much, but his upcoming visit to the state is fueling speculation. David Martosko, editor-in-chief of HumaneWatch.org, a web site that closely monitors HSUS' activities, sees Pacelle's visit as a possible first step towards a Nebraska ballot initiative in 2012.

"I think it's very likely that he's coming to town to try to build some sort of a grassroots base," Martosko says, "because eventually, if he's going to put an initiative on the ballot in 2012 in Nebraska, he's going to need people—you know, peasants with pitchforks—to carry the clipboards around and collect signatures. And meetings like this tend to be where those lists are built."

Martosko compares the situation in Nebraska to that of Missouri, where an initiative regulating dog breeders was defeated in 103 of the state's 114 counties, but still passed with 51 percent of the vote. "They took it to the urban audiences and got Kansas City and St. Louis to carry them over the top," he says. "I imagine they've made a similar calculation about some of the city dwellers in Nebraska and how they could leverage them to overrule the wishes of the rural farmers."

To this point, HSUS has focused most of its efforts on the egg and swine industries. Nebraska is mainly a cattle state. So why would HSUS be so interested in the Cornhusker state?

“Every state that they get their law in the books is one more precedent they can use to get their eventual goal, which is a federal law to outlaw cages for egg-laying hens and gestation crates for sows,” says Martosko. “So they may very well be banking on the idea that the cattlemen of Nebraska won’t rush to the aid of the relatively fewer pig farmers and egg producers.”

Pacelle will speak at an HSUS town hall meeting in Lincoln this Sunday evening.

[AUDIO: David Martosko \(6 min MP3\)](#)

<http://brownfieldagnews.com/2010/11/18/is-nebraska-next-on-hsus-hit-list/>

## **New Ohio Ag Director Will Review HSUS Livestock Deal**

By JOHN SEEWER The Associated Press November 22, 2010

Ohio's next agriculture director plans to take a closer look at a deal arranged by the outgoing governor and animal rights activists that would bring tougher laws governing farm animals.

The agreement calls for a ban of certain crates and cages and prohibiting strangulation as a form of euthanasia for sick or injured animals.

"There are a lot more unanswered questions," James Zehringer, a former poultry farmer who's been a state lawmaker the past three years, said during an interview with The Associated Press.

His biggest concern is that the proposed regulations could make it too costly for new farm owners who want to get into the business by forcing them to make changes to existing farms.

"We want to grow agriculture," he said. "Ohio is losing 700 farms a year."

Ohio's largest farm organizations agreed to the new regulations last summer in a deal brokered by Gov. Ted Strickland because they wanted to thwart animal rights activists from asking voters to force farmers to change how they house livestock.

The state's agriculture leaders agreed to the compromise because they wanted to avoid a costly ballot fight, and the deal allowed them to delay some of the changes the animal rights groups wanted.

Changing or canceling the agreement most likely would lead to a statewide vote that the agriculture industry tried to avoid.

That's why Zehringer and incoming Republican Gov.-elect John Kasich will move carefully before deciding whether to make any revisions.

The Humane Society of the United States, which pushed for the new rules, already has said that it will revive the ballot issue if the deal falls apart.

Wayne Pacelle, president and chief executive of the Washington, D.C.-based group, said he would be surprised if changes are made because the state's agriculture industry leaders backed the proposals. "It would be a shame to derail it when we're so close on an agreement," he said.

The incoming administration has signaled that it might not be as willing to work with animal rights groups, saying they don't want out-of-state organizations dictating policy in Ohio.

"We're not going to stick our heads in the sand when it comes to the out-of-state activists," Zehringer said.

He's not convinced the animal rights groups will stop with what was outlined in the agreement, including a ban on the buying of exotic animals -- such as bears, tigers and alligators -- for pets. "What's next?"

Zehringer said. "Zoos and circuses? Outlawing horse racing? Eliminating fishing? There has to be an end."

Those within the agriculture industry have acknowledged that they have not done enough to explain why they use cages to house chickens and pigs. They contend that the cages protect animals from predators and each other, keep barns cleaner and make it easier to inspect and treat the animals.

They also must combat an image problem that has grown out of graphic videos that show what looks like inhumane treatment. "Those images, I couldn't even watch them," Zehringer said. "That tells you how effective they are."

Still, he said nearly all farmers do things the right way and that those who don't should be prosecuted.

He sees a big part of his new job as being a cheerleader for agriculture, bridging the gap between farmers and those who have no idea how a modern farm operates.

"It's a different type of farm," he said. "It's much better. It's not that Rockwell painting."

*Source: Business Week*

## **Morris Animal Foundation Announces \$6 Million for Canine Health Studies**

Helping dogs enjoy longer, healthier lives requires ongoing research to give veterinarians the tools they need to better diagnose and treat "man's best friend." Morris Animal Foundation, a world leader in supporting research to prevent, treat and cure disease in companion animals, horses and wildlife, will manage about 300 animal health studies in 2011, with support for those studies totaling \$17 million over the next three years. During this time, more than \$6 million will go toward canine health and welfare research.

More than 50 active [canine health studies](#) are addressing serious health and welfare issues that dogs face, including blood and eye disorders, infectious diseases, orthopedic problems, pain management, early retirement of guide dogs and urinary problems. More than 25 studies, as part of the Foundation's Canine Cancer Campaign, are investigating new methods for [cancer prevention and treatment](#) in dogs. Learn more about the campaign at <http://www.curecaninecancer.org/>.

Individuals and groups have a unique opportunity to help animals by sponsoring these studies. Co-sponsorships begin at \$3,000. Sponsorship information is available on our [website](#), by calling 800.243.2345 or by e-mailing [sponsorship@MorrisAnimalFoundation.org](mailto:sponsorship@MorrisAnimalFoundation.org).



# NC Dept of Agriculture and Consumer Services Animal Welfare Study

Following the intense debate and defeat of SB 460 Commercial Dog Breeders, the General Assembly authorized a companion animal welfare study. The study will focus on current laws and regulations pertaining to the welfare of dogs and cats; the oversight of public and private animal shelters; the state's spay/neuter program; the scope of commercial breeding operations; the protection of consumers who purchase companion animals, and options to reduce the number of unwanted dogs and cats that are euthanized in the state each year.

As the end goal of animal rights is to end breeding of companion animals, activists need to draw a straight line between breeding and euthanasia, whether or not the logic used to make a case is flawed or the information presented is inaccurate. Breeders are the scapegoat and the standard pitch by activists to legislators is that reducing breeding will reduce shelter intake and therefore cut costs. However, the majority of an animal control budget is fixed cost which is not changed by the numbers of animals entering the shelter. According to figures obtained thru the NC Spay/Neuter Program, NC animal control budgets total \$29.9 million. With a population of 9.3 million, the cost breaks down to \$3.20 per person.

Activists cling to the myths that breeders are filling our public shelters with unwanted dogs when study after study proves that owner retention is the cause. Today, most professionals recognize that pet overpopulation is no longer an accurate catchphrase to describe the reasons for animals leaving their original homes, especially for dogs. Pet population is an extremely complex issue that involves not only the number of births, but whether these births are from owned or unowned animals. It involves reasons for relinquishment, income status, level of owner education, ownership rights, and the responsibilities of pet owners.

Continual, blind focus on blaming breeders for shelter populations and high euthanasia rates will never lead to measurable reduction in shelter euthanasia rates. It is estimated that at a minimum 75% of shelter dogs are mixed breed. There are no kennels purposely breeding lab/collie crosses or boxer/beagle mixes, and turning them loose to roam or dropping them off at the local shelter.

Communities, local and state governments must move away from punitive legislation tactics to shelter reform and solving owner retention problems.

Every effort should be made by city/county/state shelters to require that all adult dogs and cats being placed are altered before adoption. This is a critical factor in reducing irresponsible reproduction. While pediatric spay/neuter has been promoted for decades, studies are now showing dogs are at increased risks for distorted bone structure, bone cancer, and hip dysplasia from early spay/neuter. However, young dogs can be placed with contracts requiring spay/neuter at a specified age and shelter staff must be diligent with contract follow-up. The shelter must be able to confirm at least 90% of its adopted animals are sterilized to ensure that the shelter itself is not contributing to the pet overpopulation problem.

Animals leaving shelters should be microchipped. The best reason to have animals microchipped is the improved chance to get the animal back if it becomes lost or stolen. Studies have shown that the return rate of dogs with microchips is more than 2 times that of dogs without microchips.

Additional commentary is on the NCRAOA website. We encourage breeders and pet owners to submit comments to [animalwelfarestudy@ncagr.gov](mailto:animalwelfarestudy@ncagr.gov)

## **NCSU Seeks Candidates for Clinical Study on Feline Musculoskeletal Pain**

If your cat is not as playful as in the past, unable to jump, stiff when getting up or walking, and showing other signs of slowing down, your pet may be a candidate for a free clinical study being conducted by the [Comparative Pain Research Laboratory](#) at NC State University's Veterinary Teaching Hospital.

The purpose of the 10-week study is to develop an owner-based assessment system that veterinarians can use to determine the level of chronic musculoskeletal pain in cats before and after treatment.

“At present, there are no approved drugs for chronic pain in the cat,” says Dr. Duncan Lascelles, associate professor of small animal surgery and an expert in pain management in pets. “One reason for this is that there are no validated ways of determining if a cat is suffering from musculoskeletal pain. The questionnaire developed by this study will allow veterinarians to determine if a cat is experiencing pain, the level of that pain, and effectiveness of treatment. The tool may also help pharmaceutical companies assess the efficacy of medications for chronic pain in cats.”

To be eligible for the study, cats must be indoor pets without any clinically significant blood or urinary issues or currently be on steroids or pain killers. After completing a qualifying telephone interview, an owner will receive a questionnaire and consent form along with an appointment time to have their pet examined. The exam—at no cost to the owner—includes an orthopedic evaluation, blood work and urinalysis, and survey X-rays.

Study participants will be fitted with a collar containing an activity monitor. Every other week the owner will bring the cat to the hospital for a re-check appointment, to download monitor information, and to complete a questionnaire. In addition, owners will be given a liquid to administer to the pet for a two-week period beginning the second and sixth week. One treatment period will involve a nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drug (NSAID) and the second treatment a placebo. The cat will be thoroughly examined a second time to conclude the 10-week study.

For more information, review <http://cvm.ncsu.edu/docs/cprl/FelineOAquestionnairestudy.html>, call 919.513.6854, or e-mail [cvm\\_cprl@ncsu.edu](mailto:cvm_cprl@ncsu.edu).

The Veterinary Teaching Hospital is part of the NC State University College of Veterinary Medicine.

## **Charities & Holiday Giving**

As the holiday season approaches, many thoughts turn to helping those less fortunate. In fact, surveys have indicated that over 50 percent of all donations to charity are made between Thanksgiving and Christmas. It's important, however, that you don't make charitable contributions indiscriminately. By following a few precautions, you can ensure your generosity provides maximum benefits for the organizations that need your help.

Before you donate make sure your money supports a cause that meets your approval. Thoroughly investigate and understand both the animal-related issues and the programs or ideals that your donation will support. Will your donation go directly to help animals or will it be used for administrative costs and campaign funds?

**Suggestions for donations to benefit animals and people:**

**Canine Companions for Independence** - a national nonprofit that enhances the lives of children and adults with disabilities by providing highly-trained [assistance dogs](#) and ongoing support to ensure quality partnerships. For more information visit <http://www.caninecompanions.org/>

**AKC Canine Health Foundation** - The foundation works to develop significant resources for basic and applied health programs with emphasis on canine genetics to improve the quality of life for dogs and their owners. The foundation funds research and supports canine health scientists and professionals in their efforts to study the causes and origins of canine disease and afflictions in order to formulate effective treatments. [http://www.akcchf.org/donate/donate\\_now.cfm](http://www.akcchf.org/donate/donate_now.cfm)

**The Winn Feline Foundation** - a non-profit organization established by the Cat Fancier's Association, Inc. to support health-related studies benefiting cats. <http://www.winnfelinehealth.org/index.html>

**International Association of Assistance Dog Partners (IAADP)** - A non-profit, cross-disability organization representing people partnered with guide, hearing and service dogs. IAADP's mission is to (1) provide assistance dog partners with a voice in the assistance dog field; (2) enable those partnered with guide dogs, hearing dogs and service dogs to work together on issues of mutual concern;(3) to foster the disabled person / assistance dog partnership. This organization also functions as a busy information and referral resource for the general public, the disabled community, state and federal officials, trainers, new providers, rehabilitation counselors, parents and assistance dog partners throughout North America. <http://www.iaadp.org/>

**North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission** – Give back to wildlife this holiday season. The online NC Wild Store carries many different products, from books to posters to clothes, that make great gifts for hunters, anglers and other wildlife enthusiasts. Proceeds from each product go to support a correlating wildlife project or program. To see all items available for purchase visit [www.ncwildstore.com](http://www.ncwildstore.com)

**Morris Animal Foundation Canine Cancer Campaign** - The Canine Cancer Campaign supports: new treatments; Tumor tissue bank & repository which includes samples of the most common canine cancers; Prevention strategies; Training for students who plan to become scientists specializing in cancer. <http://www.curecaninecancer.org/cancer-research.html>

**Local rescues and shelters** – normally work on very tight budgets and have extensive wish lists and needs in order to better care for animals waiting for new homes.

***Protecting your right to responsibly own and breed animals.***

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For more information on animal health, training, reports on pet issues, animal sheltering, or to learn the difference between animal welfare and animal rights – visit our website at [www.ncraoa.com](http://www.ncraoa.com)



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