



**Animal Alliance/
Environment Voters
Party of Canada**



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of Canada**

**A Brief to Dr. Elizabeth Stone
Dean, Ontario Veterinary College
Guelph, Ontario N1G 2W1
519.824.4129, ext 54401**

Proposed Alternatives To Live Animal Labs For Veterinary Students At The University of Guelph

April 2009

Prepared by

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Dr. Elizabeth Stone
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April 22, 2009.

Dear Dr. Stone,

Thank you so much for meeting with Karen Levenson and myself regarding our proposed alternatives to the use of live animals for training veterinary students at the University of Guelph.

Our submission includes this letter, our recommendations and proposed alternatives, and a discussion paper on pound release or pound seizure titled *The Political, Animal Services, and Scientific Case Against Pound Seizure*.

We have two areas of concern. Our first concern involves the use of live animals for surgical training, often twice, before being euthanized. We urge you to consider alternatives such as those that are being developed at Tufts University School of Medicine. In 2000, Tufts ended terminal surgical labs.

As Gary Patronek, then head of the Tufts' Centre for Animals and Public Policy states,

"This step is the culmination of a series of efforts since 1989 to provide top quality veterinary surgical training while at the same time promoting the humane treatment of animals...After a period of evaluation, Tufts has found no distinguishable difference in the skill-level between students who have or have not taken the elective surgical lab. This has been supported through post-graduate employer feedback."

(www.neaves.org/programs/victories/v_tuftsuniversity.htm)

Our second concern involves the impact of "pound release", sometimes referred to as "pound seizure" on animal services in Ontario and beyond.

It is our understanding that the live animals who are used at OVC for terminal surgical training are lost and abandoned pets from pounds in Ontario and possibly Quebec. It is our hope that OVC will bring an end to this practice.

Ontario is the only remaining province in Canada which mandates the sale of lost pets to research through the Animals for Research Act. According to the 2007 figures provided by the Canadian Council on Animal Care, of the 4,243 cats used in "research", 75% or 3,170 were random sourced cats. Of the 11,483 dog used in research, 52%, or 6,005, were random sourced dogs.

Ontario was the largest user of cats at 2,207, or 52%, and was the second largest user of dogs at 3,103 or 27%. A total of 28% of the cats and 26% of the dogs who were used for education and training (PAU5), as they are at OVC, were subjected to Category D experiments which are allowed to cause "moderate to severe distress or discomfort".

We thank you for the opportunity to meet and discuss our concerns. We hope you will give our recommendations due consideration.

In addition, we would appreciate an opportunity to appear before the governing body of OVC to discuss our recommendations in greater detail.

Sincerely,

Liz White
And on behalf of Karen Levenson



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Recommendations: Proposed alternatives to live animal labs for veterinary students at the University of Guelph

We make the following recommendations:

1. That the Ontario Veterinary College (OVC) consider ending live animal labs, where healthy animals are used as tools for surgical training, often twice and as an alternative implement a programme similar to the one in practice at Tufts University School of Veterinary Medicine which culminated in 2000 with an end to the "terminal surgical lab elective";
2. That OVC consider implementing a similar programme to the one developed by Tufts where the students provide medical and surgical services to assist lost and abandoned animals at animal shelters who are sick, injured or have behavioural challenges;
3. That OVC consider establishing its own spay/neuter clinic which would provide a service to the community and provide an opportunity for "an excellent way of learning the fundamentals of good surgical technique";
4. That OVC consider the use of animal cadavers as an alternative to live animals and that OVC ensure that the cadavers are ethically acquired from such sources as the Educational Memorial Programmes, a practice that has been implemented by University of California at Davis, Texas A&M University, Tufts University, University of Florida (for large animals only) and University of Pennsylvania (See Appendix #2); and
5. That OVC consider establishing a working group, including but not limited to the local humane society, an advocacy animal protection organization; an OVC veterinary representative; and a veterinary student representative to research the issue and advise OVC how to move forward on this initiative.