



International Animal Welfare Standards on the Horizon

Dr. David Fraser Attends Global Conference on Animal Welfare in France.

Dr. David Fraser of the Animal Welfare Program at UBC helped to plan the Conference of the World Organisation for Animal Health in Paris in February this year. Our thanks to Dr. Fraser for writing to tell us of their efforts and progress.

In 2004 the OIE (World Organization for Animal Health) took another significant step toward realizing its goal of developing internationally harmonized standards for animal welfare.

The OIE has traditionally set standards to prevent the international spread of animal diseases. Its standards are widely followed and are recognized for purposes of international trade in animal products.

At its General Assembly in 2002, the 162 member nations unanimously passed a resolution to expand the OIE's activities into the development of animal welfare standards.

Recognizing that this new mandate will require close communication with the humane movement and animal-based industries, the OIE organized a "Global Conference on Animal Welfare" in February 2004, near its headquarters in Paris. The conference brought together some 400 delegates from 70 countries, with major representation from leaders of the animal protection movement, the animal industries, the veterinary profession and government.

Advice received during the conference will help guide the OIE as it develops standards. The initial four priorities will be slaughter, land transport, sea transport, and the killing of animals during disease eradication. The mass killing of influenza-infected chickens in Asia added a sense of urgency to the process. Committees have been created to prepare standards in each of the four areas, and initial statements of guiding principles will be presented to the General Assembly this year.

The conference set an excellent

tone of communication between the OIE and other interested parties. Delegates who expected a confrontational meeting were pleasantly surprised by the general spirit of willingness to find practical solutions to animal welfare problems.

As a member of the OIE Working Group on Animal Welfare, I had the privilege of helping to plan the conference, along with five other veterinarians and animal scientists from Europe, Asia, Africa and the South Pacific, together with OIE staff from Chile, Australia and Italy. Even the organizing committee was a mini-United Nations.

Developing international standards for animal welfare will be a long and contentious process, but given the strong mandate from the OIE General Assembly, international standards seem likely to become a tool for dealing with some of the world's most pressing animal welfare issues.

David Fraser
 Professor of Animal Welfare
 University of British Columbia



David Fraser (far right) in a panel discussion with speakers from Australia, the United States, Cameroons and France, at the Global Conference on Animal Welfare hosted in February by the World Organization for Animal Health in Paris.

CETFA LOBBIES FOR ANIMAL CRUELTY LEGISLATION (BILL C-22)

CETFA is gravely concerned that the Animal Cruelty Bill, for which we had lobbied so long, has been rejected by the Senate and has failed to become law. A letter dated March 29th 2004 was sent from CETFA to the Prime Minister with copies and covering letters to Mr. Stephen Harper, Mr. Bob Speller, Mr. Jack Layton, Mr. Stephen Owen and Mr. Gilles Duceppe.

Our letter to the Prime Minister was as follows: -

“Re: - Animal Cruelty Legislation

“Our group, Canadians for Ethical Treatment of Food Animals, is deeply concerned that the Senate has failed to approve the passage of Bill C 10B, which was to strengthen our animal cruelty legislation, and which was passed by the House of Commons.

“All animals, here in Canada, desperately need greater protection from inhumane treatment, with serious punishment for those inflicting cruelty upon them.

“Especially in the Agricultural industry, economic pressure needs to be applied in the form of severe financial penalties or prison when cases of cruelty have been established. We ask that your Government urgently bring about effective legislation which would have an impact on the animal cruelty which takes place here in Canada.

“Kindly inform us of the status of the bill at present. We look forward to an early reply.”

Together with this letter, the covering letter mailed with copies to other Party Leaders read: -

“I am herewith enclosing a copy of the letter Canadians for Ethical Treatment of Food Animals has written to the Prime Minister with regard the desperate need for more powerful legislation to deal with animal cruelty.

“We hope every Member of Parliament will work energetically towards the passage of legislation which will give animals the protection they so urgently require.”

A letter of April 19th, 2004 from L.A.Lavell executive Correspondence Officer, Office of the Prime Minister, and reads: -

“On Behalf of the Right Honourable Paul Martin, I would like to acknowledge receipt of your correspondence, in which you raised an issue that falls within the portfolio of the Honourable Irwin Cotler, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada.

“Please be assured that your comments have been carefully reviewed. In view of his interest in this matter, I have taken the liberty of forwarding a copy of your correspondence to the Minister, for his information and review. I am certain that he will wish to give you every consideration.

“Thank you for writing to the Prime Minister.”

The reply dated April 28th, 2004, to CETFA from the Honourable Irwin Cotler, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada reads: -

“The office of the Prime Minister has forwarded to me a copy of your correspondence on behalf of Canadians for Ethical Treatment of Food Animals, expressing your views on animal cruelty and urging legislative reform to address this serious issue.

“As you may be aware, on March 8, 2004, Bill C-10B, *An Act to amend the Criminal Code (cruelty to animals)*, was reinstated in the House of Commons as Bill C-22. The bill is now before the Senate Standing Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs.

“Bill C-22 has two primary objectives concerning cruelty to animals. The first is to consolidate, modernize and simplify the existing scheme of animal cruelty offences, and the second is to increase existing maximum penalties in the *Criminal Code* and provide new sentencing tools that will make the law more effective.

“The first objective is achieved by removing inconsistent and confusing terminology, as well as archaic distinctions between different types of animals. For example one section of the code currently deals exclusively with cattle, another only with birds. The amendments in the Bill distinguish between offences of criminal negligence and those requiring subjective intent and also provide separate penalty regimes.

(continued on page 3)

REPLY FROM MINISTER OF JUSTICE AND ATTORNEY GENERAL OF CANADA *(continued)*

(continued from page 2)

"In addition Bill C-22 creates a new part of the Code for animal cruelty offences, which serves to modernize and simplify the law. The new part better reflects the policy of the existing law, in place since 1953, that society has an interest in protecting animals from intentional cruelty and criminal neglect and that this interest is separate from their status as property. Further, those involved in the investigation and prosecution of cruelty offences report that some criminal justice officials fail to treat cruelty offences with sufficient seriousness, tending to view them merely as property crimes, such as simple mischief. However, mounting scientific evidence of a link between animal abuse and violence in general illustrates the true nature of this crime as violent.

"The second objective of increasing available penalties is achieved by increasing the maximum penalty to five years' imprisonment for the most serious cases. Additionally, the maximum fine is increased to as much as \$10,000 in certain cases. A convicted offender may also be prohibited from owning or having custody of an animal for life, and the courts are given a new power to order an offender to repay the costs of caring for an abused animal.

"At the same time, with the exception of creating a new offence of killing an animal with brutal or vicious intent, the proposed amendments do not change the test for liability for intentional cruelty or for criminal neglect. People in industry and research who carry out their work without inflicting unnecessary pain, suffering, or injury do not commit an offence under this bill.

"The Government remains committed to improving the efficacy of animal cruelty laws in Canada and ensuring that such deplorable behaviour is treated appropriately by its justice system.

"I appreciate being made aware of Canadians for Ethical Treatment of Food Animals' views regarding this important issue.

"Yours sincerely, Irwin Cotler"

It is gratifying to note that our government is now aware of the link between animal abuse and violence in general and that there is a need to protect animals which is quite separate from their status as property. Sadly, there is no indication as to how long it will take for this Bill to become law. It has not been a high priority with our government for close to five years and we need to put on all the pressure we can to make it become law before the next election. If it does not become law now, it will die as it has already done at the last election. As you can see, Bill C-22 to strengthen our animal cruelty laws has now been returned to the Senate again. We ask our readers to write to the Senate, in the strongest possible terms, requesting that this Bill be made law immediately.

ACTION CORNER

PLEASE CONTACT as many members of the Senate as you can and make them understand the desperate need for Bill C22 to become law **NOW**.

PLEASE COMPLETE enclosed letter to Liberal Members of Senate and mail it to them.

PLEASE USE ANY OPPORTUNITIES you may have to take photographs related to issues of concern to CETFA and send them to us together with any information that you may have that could further CETFA's goals.

Excellent New Video

**PEACABLE
KINGDOM**

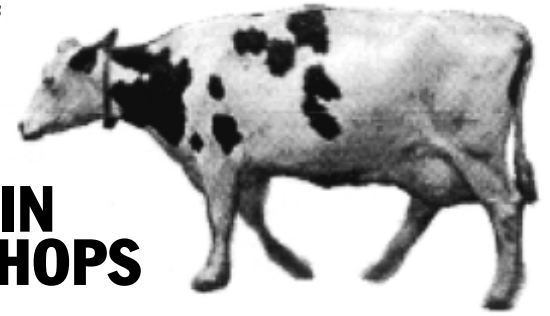
A Tribe of Heart Documentary

Their web site is: -
www.TribeofHeart.org

*See our next Newsletter for CETFA's
review of this special video*

CATTLE LAMENESS

Frances Flower, a graduate student from the Animal Welfare Program at UBC, tells us that one of the areas the Program is working on is lameness in dairy cattle. Over several months they have developed and organised a series of lameness workshops for dairy producers, emphasising the importance of early identification of hoof problems and on-farm risk factors that are associated with lameness. Frances tells us that there has been a huge amount of interest in this area by the dairy industry and that the workshops were very successful.



Thank you, Frances, for providing the following article for our readers.

FARMERS SHOW HUGE INTEREST IN DAIRY CATTLE LAMENESS WORKSHOPS

Today it is estimated that more than 600,000 dairy cows in Canada suffer from lameness. Due to the large number of animals involved and the long-term nature of pain associated with this ailment, lameness is considered one of the most important welfare issues facing the dairy cow today. Unfortunately, early detection of lameness is often difficult, as cattle tend to show little behavioral response to pain until injuries are advanced.

Graduate students from the UBC Animal Welfare Program recently ran a series of successful lameness workshops for dairy farmers, hoof trimmers and others in the dairy industry, based, in part, on their research. Working in small groups farmers were able to openly discuss their concerns about lameness on their farms.

The 3-hour workshop covered:

1) **Hoof health** – demonstrating what healthy cow hooves should look like and how to identify different

hoof injuries and disease.

2) **Gait scoring** – showing dairy cow behaviours and postures when walking, using video clips to illustrate the behavioural changes associated with animals suffering from hoof injuries and disease.

Also training was provided in how to use a lameness scoring system to identify lame animals.

3) **Environmental risk factors** – discussing how flooring, manure management and bedding may influence the prevalence of hoof disorders.

The workshops received a lot of positive feedback, with comments such as “I knew little about foot diseases and why they are caused. Now I have more confidence in managing foot problems” and “This [gait] scoring will help out on my farm. It was hard to see the lame cows at first but got easier.”


In talking to farmers it is clear that lameness is a top concern for them and this was reflected by the

huge interest in the workshops, which were fully booked. One participant suggested that we hold similar workshops annually at various dairy events. Dairy Farmers of Canada and a provincial group have expressed interest in running a version of these workshops. Our hope is that such organisations can make use of the material we have developed to get this information and skill set out to dairy farmers throughout Canada.

Written by Frances Flower
April 2004



Frances Flower (left) and Erin Bell with a dairy cow from Agassiz, BC. Both study lameness at the Animal Welfare Program.



Canadians for Ethical Treatment of Food Animals

Annual Membership
\$10.00

Application for New ___ Renewal ___ Membership

Name: _____ Telephone: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Postal Code: _____

We believe that animals raised for food should have a pain and stress free life and a humane death.

<p>I might be able to help with:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Writing Letters</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Assisting at information tables</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Maintaining Website</p>	<p>Please make your membership fee payable to:</p> <p>Canadians for Ethical Treatment of Food Animals Box 18024, 2225 West 41 Avenue Vancouver, BC V6M 4L3</p>
--	---

CETFA's PURPOSE

CETFA is a volunteer society whose purpose is to promote the humane treatment of animals raised for food. We work towards the compassionate treatment of food animals so that their lives may be free from pain and fear, followed by a humane death.

CETFA'S GOAL

CETFA's goal is to provide accurate, factual information about Canada's Food Industry and to educate the public about the horrendous cruelty which has become "accepted practice" in the factory farming industry.

CETFA cannot give tax receipts because we choose not to be a registered charity due to restrictions on what we could do.