

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### *Balance in Animal Welfare*

Congratulations on the standard of quality set by the first issues of your new Journal. I was especially impressed with the balanced approach taken by the authors of the review articles as well as the editorial comment you have provided.

While conducting research on livestock bruising, I became quite aware that much of the conflict that matters of animal welfare generate results from the different perspectives of the participants. Animal "welfarists" often criticize the dehorning of cattle. They are correctly upset at the suffering and pain which attend the bruising of cattle prior to slaughter. Both events are separated in space and time, but a tradeoff occurs between them. Dehorning cattle reduces bruising. From the perspective of the farmer, the balance is in favor of horn removal in spite of the criticism, because his loss can be most acute at the time of slaughter.

Since bruising is still one of the few objective measures of food animal abuse, it is hoped that further research will identify more factors where the balance of suffering and pain tilts in favor of the long-term welfare of the animal and its farmer. The review by Temple Grandin in the second issue of your Journal (1(2):121-137, 1980) does much to place research in bruising into this potentially constructive context.

Yours faithfully,  
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AUSTRALIA  
30 April 1980

*Although Temple Grandin cites the Australian studies as evidence for the significant role of horns in livestock bruising, she also states: "The number*

*one cause of bruises on all types of livestock is rough, abusive handling which may account for up to 50% of all bruises" (p. 125). Clearly, this is a highly debatable subject, and we encourage letters such as Dr. Meischke's to help the Journal maintain a balanced approach — Ed.*

### *Efficacy of Furosemide in the Equine*

An article appearing in the *Int J Stud Anim Prob* 1(1):53, 1980 entitled "Horse Racing and Drug Abuse" quotes Dr. George Maylin of Cornell University as stating that "in clinical trials, some, but not all 'bleeders' respond to furosemide therapy."

I have recently completed an extensive literature search on the use of furosemide in the equine and am unaware of any clinical trials which have been conducted to determine the efficacy of furosemide in preventing epistaxis in the horse. Not only has there been a lack of experimental evidence of furosemide's efficacy in preventing epistaxis, there seems to be no objective rationale for using a diuretic, such as furosemide, as a prophylaxis against epistaxis (pulmonary hemorrhage).

Unfortunately, furosemide treatment of race horses is just another example of the empirical veterinary medicine which is so prevalently employed by racetrack practitioners.

Sincerely,  
Robert O. Baker  
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10 April 1980

*Dr. Maylin was referring to general claims by representatives of the American Association of Equine Practitioners that clinical trials have yielded evidence in support of furosemide therapy for equine epistaxis. The quotation was misleading in that it falsely implied first-hand knowledge of and/or participation in such trials by Dr. Maylin. We apologize. — Ed.*