Reflect for a moment... how can I help animals even when I no longer share their world...?

Through your request for animal protection to The Humane Society of the United States, your will can provide for animals after you're gone. Naming The HSUS demonstrates your lasting commitment to animal protection and strengthens the society for this task. We will be happy to send information about our animal programs and material that will assist in planning a will.

Please send: Will information
Name ________________________
Address _______________________
City __________________ State ______ Zip ______
Mail in confidence to: Murdough S. Madden, Vice President, Senior Counsel, The Humane Society of the United States, 2100 L. St., NW, Washington, DC 20037.

WILDLIFE

New Day for Wild Horses
Immunocontraception project begins in Nevada

On a shimmering cold day last December, The HSUS and the federal Bureau of Land Management (BLM) opened a new chapter in the management of the fabled wild horses of the American West. In a remarkable collaboration between researchers, the BLM, the University of Nevada at Reno, and The HSUS, 130 wild mares were rounded up, treated with an immunocontraceptive vaccine, and returned to their home ranges in the high desert of the northern Nevada.

The immunocontraceptive vaccine, which promises effective and safe wildlife-fertility control, was developed under the sponsorship of the HSUS by the research team of Jay F. Kirkpatrick, Ph.D., John W. Turner, Ph.D., and Irwin K. M. Liu, DVM, (see the Fall 1991 HSUS News). For six years free-ranging horses on Assateague Island, Maryland, have been darted with the vaccine, only twice has a treated mare produced a foal (the same mare both times). None of the mares treated with the vaccine has shown health problems or changes in behavior. The Nevada wild-horse contraception project will test three versions of the immunocontraceptive vaccine. One group of mares was given a two-shot treatment, administered in a three-to-four-week period. This treatment, used for the first five years of the Assateague research, virtually assures successful contraception for this group of mares. However, because the treated mares must be held for the interval between shots, which is both costly and potentially stressful to the horses, the other two groups were vaccinated with one-shot preparations.

Perhaps even more important than the potential scientific gain is the shift in attitudes toward wild-horse management symbolized by the Nevada project. For decades The HSUS and others have battled the BLM and livestock interests to assure humane treatment of western wild horses and to secure the horses' fair share of the public lands' natural resources. In our view the BLM has often initiated wild-horse-population reductions based on political pressure from livestock interests rather than on sound scientific data on horse populations and range conditions. "Surplus" horses removed from the wild have been put up for adoption or sent to ill-conceived "sanctuaries" or have languished for months in temporary holding facilities. All parties have agreed that none of these solutions has proven completely satisfactory.

The turning point came in June 1991 at a hearing of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior, when testimo-
ny by Dr. Kirkpatrick and HSUS Vice President, Wildlife and Habitat Protection, John W. Grandy, Ph.D., brought immunocontraception to the attention of Sen. Harry Reid of Nevada. Senator Reid immediately recognized the potential application of the immunocontraception research to western wild horses, the majority of whom live in his home state. With his support Congress provided funds to the BLM targeted specifically for a wild-horse immunocontraception project. In September 1992 the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the BLM, The HSUS, the research team, and the University of Nevada at Reno marked the formal beginning of the project.

The researchers, John Turner, Ph.D., Lisa Liu, Ph.D., HSUS senior scientist, Wildlife and Habitat Protection, John Grandy, Ph.D., and Irwin Liu with the University of California at Davis, executed a large-scale wild-horse roundup, a small army of portable corrals, and a portable treatment trailer to the attention of President, Wildlife and Habitat Protection. In the future, we also hope that the prudent application of fertility control technology will reduce the number of wild horses entering the adoption program. Scaling down the program should allow more careful screening of adoption applicants and improve the quality of the horses’ adoptive homes.

We hope that the cooperative spirit shown in the design and execution of the immunocontraceptive vaccine or a place­

HUMANE EDUCATION

What's Wrong with This Picture? Government lab-animal poster concerns HSUS

When I first saw it, says first-grade teacher Sheila Schwartz, E.D.O., "I thought it was laugh­

The full-color, cartoon-style poster shows a building with thirteen different animals and people, and a small animal of personnel. As BLM and contractor personnel sent horses through the maze of corrals, researchers Kirkpatrick, Turner, and Liu injected each adult mare with either the immunocontraceptive vaccine or a placebo. The horses were painlessly freeze-branded to allow later re-identification in the field. The researchers must wait until a turn to determine whether the vaccines successfully prevented pregnancies in treated mares during the summer breeding season. Prospects for success are bright:

preliminary evidence from the mares held for the second shot of the two-shot proto­
col suggests that they were responding well to the vaccine.

Wild horses, who are strangers to con­finement and alarmed by the close pres­ence of humans, are severely stressed by roundups. We hope that the fertility-con­
trol technology being tested in this project will reduce the need for such roundups in the future. We also hope that the prudent application of fertility control will reduce the number of wild horses entering the adoption program. Scaling down the program should allow more careful screening of adoption applicants and improve the quality of the horses’ adoptive homes.

We hope that the cooperative spirit shown in the design and execution of the immunocontraception study will increase BLM sensitivity to other HSUS concerns about wild-horse management. The HSUS will continue to press for public-land-management policies that are scien­
tifically sound and even-handed and allow Wild horses to be wild—Steven T. Ru­
berg, Ph.D., HSUS senior scientist, Wildlife and Habitat Protection.

The researchers must wait until au­

In the poster created by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, cheerful monkeys housed in Room 13 fricic in jungle-gym enclosures. Their real-life counterparts often languish, isolated, in grim cages.

Doubt enjoy playing. The poster is accompanied by a pre­

At NAHEE, we deliberately steer clear of contro­

The lucky mice of Room 7, the testing lab, are all smiling playfully. In Room 7, the testing lab, a happy monkey presses buttons on a computer panel. The lucky mice have been given a cage of grim cages, but a delightful jungle-gym affair in which many children would no

About an issue without scaring young chil­

who have not been trained as educators may think that you can teach any subject to young children so long as you simplify the language. In fact, learn­ing the age at which children are cogni­tively ready to understand different kinds of information is a big part of teacher training.

With assistance from HSUS Vice Pres­ident, Laboratory Animals, Martin Ste­phens, Ph.D., NAHEE staff members be­gan to evaluate the materials more fully and to develop an approach for alerting educators to the problems they found. A number of concerns emerged. Not only did the poster exploit children’s nat­

"Animals in laboratories, that young children do not have the cognitive ability to com­prehend fully. People may think that you can teach any subject to young children so long as you simplify the language. In fact, learning the age at which children are cogni­tively ready to understand different kinds of information is a big part of teacher training."

"When I first saw it, says first-grade teacher Sheila Schwartz, E.D.O., "I thought it was laugh­able. All those happy, smiling monkeys in cages. Then I said to myself, 'This poster thought it was laugh­able. The lucky mice of Room 7, the testing lab, are all smiling playfully. We hope that the cooperative spirit shown in the design and execution of the immunocontraception study will increase BLM sensitivity to other HSUS concerns about wild-horse management. The HSUS will continue to press for public-land-management policies that are scien­
tically sound and even-handed and allow Wild horses to be wild—Steven T. Ru­berg, Ph.D., HSUS senior scientist, Wildlife and Habitat Protection.

The researchers must wait until au­tumn to determine whether the vaccines successfully prevented pregnancies in treated mares during the summer breeding season. Prospects for success are bright:

preliminary evidence from the mares held for the second shot of the two-shot proto­
col suggests that they were responding well to the vaccine.

Wild horses, who are strangers to con­finement and alarmed by the close pres­ence of humans, are severely stressed by roundups. We hope that the fertility-con­
trol technology being tested in this project will reduce the need for such roundups in the future. We also hope that the prudent application of fertility control will reduce the number of wild horses entering the adoption program. Scaling down the program should allow more careful screening of adoption applicants and improve the quality of the horses’ adoptive homes.

We hope that the cooperative spirit shown in the design and execution of the immunocontraception study will increase BLM sensitivity to other HSUS concerns about wild-horse management. The HSUS will continue to press for public-land-management policies that are scien­
tically sound and even-handed and allow Wild horses to be wild—Steven T. Ru­berg, Ph.D., HSUS senior scientist, Wildlife and Habitat Protection.
Laboratory Animals

Public concern over the use of animals in research has led many western nations to regulate and monitor animal experimentation. As part of their oversight of biomedical research, Great Britain, Germany, the Netherlands, Australia, and other countries issue annual reports to the public and other interested parties with profiles of laboratory-animal use nationwide. Such reports provide a wealth of information about current and historical trends in animal use.

In the United States, corresponding reports are issued by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), which enforces the Animal Welfare Act. The USDA’s Animal Welfare Enforcement reports are the only annual profiles of animal use available in this country. Unfortunately, they pale in comparison to the comprehensive profiles of laboratory-animal use issued by many other countries.

The USDA reports don’t provide the total number of animals used in research because the agency keeps no figures on the species that make up the vast majority of the animals used in research, such as rats, mice, and birds. They contain no information about controversial procedures such as the Draize Eye-Irritation Test, in which chemicals are tested in the eyes of rabbits, and the Lethal Dose 50 Percent (LD50) Test, in which animals are poisoned to death.

The data on primates are grossly inadequate. There is no information about how these animals are used or from what sources they are obtained. For example, the reports contain no information about chimpanzee use. Instead, data on chimpanzees are lumped together with information about all other nonhuman primates.

In the fall of 1992, The HSUS filed an administrative petition that calls upon the USDA to overhaul its reporting system. The petition recommends that the USDA discard its misleading system for classifying experiments according to whether or not anesthesia was administered and replace it with a “pain scale” such as that used in many other countries. This scale would provide more meaningful information about levels of pain and suffering. The petition also recommends that the USDA categorize the purpose of experiments. The current system does not distinguish among the broad categories of research, testing, and education. We also call upon the USDA to disclose whether animals were obtained from the wild or from animal shelters or were bred specifically for research. Additional recommendations are presented in the petition.

If the USDA adopts The HSUS’s recommendations, research facilities will need to submit more information to the USDA, and the agency, in turn, will have to process these additional data. “We recognize that our recommendations would increase the administrative burden on laboratories and the USDA,” noted Martin L. Stephens, Ph.D., HSUS vice president, Laboratory Animals. “This is a small price to pay for the privilege of continuing to use animals in research, a privilege that society is at least currently willing to grant to ensure important breakthroughs.”

The USDA has an opportunity to demonstrate that it takes seriously the public’s concern about the use of animals in experiments. The public should not be kept in the dark about a practice financed largely by public funds, ostensibly conducted for the public welfare, and undertaken at public institutions. Public disclosure is all the more imperative given the controversial nature of animal experimentation.

This issue goes beyond the public’s right to know. Humane reform of animal experimentation depends on open and informed discussion of all dimensions of the issue. Without accurate profiles of the status quo, how can policymakers—in regulatory agencies, legislatures, industry, academia, and elsewhere—chart progress in reducing the suffering and use of animals in experimentation?

At press time, the petition remained under review by the USDA.

Wanted: Better USDA Reporting
HSUS seeks more information on lab-animal use

Laboratory animals

Discard its misleading system for classifying experiments according to whether or not anesthesia was administered and replace it with a "pain scale" such as that used in many other countries. This scale would provide more meaningful information about levels of pain and suffering. The petition also recommends that the USDA categorize the purpose of experiments. The current system does not distinguish among the broad categories of research, testing, and education. We also call upon the USDA to disclose whether animals were obtained from the wild or from animal shelters or were bred specifically for research. Additional recommendations are presented in the petition.

If the USDA adopts The HSUS's recommendations, research facilities will need to submit more information to the USDA, and the agency, in turn, will have to process these additional data. "We recognize that our recommendations would increase the administrative burden on laboratories and the USDA," noted Martin L. Stephens, Ph.D., HSUS vice president, Laboratory Animals. "This is a small price to pay for the privilege of continuing to use animals in research, a privilege that society is at least currently willing to grant to ensure important breakthroughs."

The USDA has an opportunity to demonstrate that it takes seriously the public's concern about the use of animals in experiments. The public should not be kept in the dark about a practice financed largely by public funds, ostensibly conducted for the public welfare, and undertaken at public institutions. Public disclosure is all the more imperative given the controversial nature of animal experimentation.

This issue goes beyond the public's right to know. Humane reform of animal experimentation depends on open and informed discussion of all dimensions of the issue. Without accurate profiles of the status quo, how can policymakers—in regulatory agencies, legislatures, industry, academia, and elsewhere—chart progress in reducing the suffering and use of animals in experimentation?

At press time, the petition remained under review by the USDA.

Laboratory animals

Discard its misleading system for classifying experiments according to whether or not anesthesia was administered and replace it with a "pain scale" such as that used in many other countries. This scale would provide more meaningful information about levels of pain and suffering. The petition also recommends that the USDA categorize the purpose of experiments. The current system does not distinguish among the broad categories of research, testing, and education. We also call upon the USDA to disclose whether animals were obtained from the wild or from animal shelters or were bred specifically for research. Additional recommendations are presented in the petition.

If the USDA adopts The HSUS's recommendations, research facilities will need to submit more information to the USDA, and the agency, in turn, will have to process these additional data. "We recognize that our recommendations would increase the administrative burden on laboratories and the USDA," noted Martin L. Stephens, Ph.D., HSUS vice president, Laboratory Animals. "This is a small price to pay for the privilege of continuing to use animals in research, a privilege that society is at least currently willing to grant to ensure important breakthroughs."

The USDA has an opportunity to demonstrate that it takes seriously the public's concern about the use of animals in experiments. The public should not be kept in the dark about a practice financed largely by public funds, ostensibly conducted for the public welfare, and undertaken at public institutions. Public disclosure is all the more imperative given the controversial nature of animal experimentation.

This issue goes beyond the public's right to know. Humane reform of animal experimentation depends on open and informed discussion of all dimensions of the issue. Without accurate profiles of the status quo, how can policymakers—in regulatory agencies, legislatures, industry, academia, and elsewhere—chart progress in reducing the suffering and use of animals in experimentation?

At press time, the petition remained under review by the USDA.