

# Essay Competition

## Animal-based research in New Zealand – Where to from here?

In New Zealand, animal-based research helps to:

- Investigate human and animal diseases;
- Develop surgical and medical treatments (including vaccines) for both humans and animals;
- Ensure the safety of some food and medical products;
- Improve the welfare, management and productivity of farmed animals;
- Conserve endangered species by developing humane pest management techniques.

New Zealand has an international reputation as a leader in animal welfare and animal welfare legislation. Animal-based research is one aspect of our involvement with animals that is regulated by the Animal Welfare Act 1999. This law is designed to:

- Prevent the ill-treatment and inadequate care of animals;
- Ensure that the physical, health and behavioural needs of animals are met;
- Alleviate animal pain or distress.

While the health of humans and animals has clearly improved as a result of animal-based research, different people or groups have a variety of views and opinions about the use of animals in research. Here are two examples of opposing views:

*Animals have the right to be treated as beings of value in themselves, not as the means to human ends; this principle must be applied in order to guarantee the end of cruelty to animals. The application of this principle means that animals should never be experimented upon whatever the potential gain for humanity. Thomas Dixon, research fellow of Churchill College, Cambridge, UK, 2009.*

<http://www.idebate.org>

*“The benefits or successes of animal-based science are so widespread that it is hard to imagine any area of our lives that is unaffected by them.*

*Higher order animals are used in research, teaching and testing because of the benefits they bring to both animals and people. Those benefits are the reasons why a research, teaching or testing procedure is done in the first place...*

<http://www.adelaide.edu.au/ANZCCART/humane/benefit.html>

### Essay Brief

The National Animal Ethics Advisory Committee (NAEAC) aims to provide independent, high quality advice to the Minister of Agriculture on policy and practices relating to the use of animals in research, testing and teaching and invites Year 11, 12 and 13 students to write an original essay between 1200 and 1500 words in length (excluding reference list or bibliography) that demonstrates an understanding of animal-based research in New Zealand.

Students should use a variety of sources (for example newspaper and magazine articles, books, the internet, personal interviews) to address the following topic:

Provide an overview of animal-based research in New Zealand, including examples of why animals are used and how their use is regulated and controlled. Include a variety of views on this issue and your own, justified opinion on the future of animal-based research in New Zealand including whether current legislation is sufficient to safeguard research animals.

You must provide a bibliography at the end of the essay and reference all non-original material within the body of the essay using quotation marks, footnotes or references which clearly indicate the source of information.

### Why Enter?

You may be able to use this essay towards internal assessment of the Biology Achievement Standard 3.2 (AS90714 version 2) – Research a contemporary biological issue, which is worth three Level 3 credits.

In addition to the above, the author of the winning essay will receive a \$500 voucher to spend at a retail store of their choice and have the opportunity for their essay to be published in a future issue of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry's (MAF's) magazine Welfare Pulse.

### Closing date

The closing date for essay submissions is Friday the 30th of July. Your essay and completed entry form must be submitted electronically to the following email address: [NAEAC@maf.govt.nz](mailto:NAEAC@maf.govt.nz). Entry forms are available from [www.biosecurity.govt.nz/regs/animal-welfare/nz/naeac](http://www.biosecurity.govt.nz/regs/animal-welfare/nz/naeac)