

# The scientific assessment of animal welfare

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Scientific interest in animal welfare has grown dramatically, over the last 20 to 30 years, as reflected by an increase in the relevant, peer-reviewed scientific literature and the publication of an ever-increasing number of books devoted to the subject. The recognition of animal welfare science, as an area of legitimate academic interest, is also reflected in the establishment of Chairs in Animal Welfare Science in various Universities around the world.

This paper will review the following:

- the historical development of animal welfare science
- the role played by a range of established scientific disciplines in supporting the scientific assessment of animal welfare
- the importance of animal-based welfare indicators
- the importance of veterinary involvement in animal welfare science

The importance of a science-based approach to establishing animal welfare policies and standards at both a national Government level and at an international inter-Governmental level.

