

ANIMAL TESTING



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Most tests are to increase profits of the agricultural industry



Every day in this country and around the world, animals are being tortured and experimented on in vivisection laboratories. Vivisection literally means “to cut up alive” and it could involve painful mutilation, electric shocks, lethal toxicological tests, cutting or freezing and burning without pain relief. Many laboratory animals are forcibly restrained to undergo cruel and invasive experiments.

Animal testing in New Zealand

In 2008, there were 341,520 animals used for research, testing and teaching - a 38.5% increase of animal testing from the previous year and the highest number used in the last ten years. The majority of animal experiments conducted in New Zealand are aimed at increasing the profits and productivity of the agricultural industries. The rest is for commercial and medical purposes.

The most common species used in experiments in 2008 were mice, sheep, cattle and fish. Other species used in experiments include rabbits, guinea pigs, chickens, goats, cats, dogs, protected birds, marine mammals and horses.

According to the National Animal Ethics Advisory Committee report in 2008, the number of animals that went through “severe” to “very severe impact” during “manipulation” was 21,233. Again, a huge increase from 2007 statistics. These are the animals that went through invasive and painful experiments that caused very severe suffering. They include species such as guinea pigs, mice, birds, rabbits and sheep.

Animal testing in this country is shrouded in secrecy. The torture of lab animals always happens behind closed doors. Although a lot of experiments are government-funded, very few details about actual tests are accessible to the public.

Medical testing

Medical testing actually makes up a small percentage of animal experiments done in New Zealand. 10.4% of animals were used for medical research in 2008. Animal testing for human health is neither useful nor necessary, both humans and animals suffer as a result. Humans and other animal species have different physiologies and it is scientifically fraudulent to use animal models for human medical research. Institutions that carry out vivisection for medical research: Auckland University Medical School, Cancer Society, Liggins Institute, Living Cell Technologies, Schering-Plough

Agriculture

Most animal testing done in New Zealand is to improve the productivity of the agriculture industry in order to maximise profits made from animal exploitation. Almost 25,000 sheep and cows were used in experiments to improve “reproductive efficiency”, it involves tests on live pregnant sheep that monitor the growth of the fetus

by implanting electrodes in the womb.

Institutions that carry out vivisection for agricultural research:

Massey University, Landcare Research, Agresearch, Canterbury University, Lincoln University, University of Auckland

Companies that test on animals

Valley Animal Research Centre is a private contract animal testing facility that uses approximately one hundred beagles every year for medical and toxicological experiments, as well as a number of other animal species. Beagles are often used in animal experiments because of their friendly and trusting nature, but in the VARC breeding facilities and labs they lead a miserable existence. For more info: www.varc.org.nz

Other companies involved in animal testing are Procter and Gamble, Schering-Plough and Unilever. GlaxoSmithKlein, Astrogenica, and Novartis are clients of the world’s largest contract animal testing company, Huntingdon Life Sciences. For more info: www.shac.net. Living Cell Technologies are involved in the development of xenotransplantation (the use of pig organs in diabetes treatment).

Stop the torture, stop the pain! Get involved in the Stop Animal Testing campaign!

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