



UNIVERSITIES FEDERATION FOR ANIMAL WELFARE

The Old School, Brewhouse Hill, Wheathampstead, Hertfordshire AL4 8AN, UK.

Tel: +44(0)1582 831818 Fax: +44(0)1582 831414

Website: <http://www.ufaw.org.uk>

Email: ufaw@ufaw.org.uk

Media Release

From the Universities Federation for Animal Welfare (UFAW)

20th July 09

For Immediate Release:

Humane control of rats and mice

It is often necessary to control rats and mice when they come into conflict with human interests. It is a good principle to do so humanely: that is to prevent unnecessary suffering. Currently used methods can fall well short of this principle and because of the very large numbers of pest rodents killed, the control of rats and mice is a major worldwide animal welfare problem.

A Universities Federation for Animal Welfare (UFAW) Working Group has been considering ways to promote welfare improvements in the control of rodents and, as a result of these deliberations, UFAW has just published a document on '*Guiding principles in the humane control of rats and mice*'. The aim of this document is to provide guidance on the humaneness of current control methods to assist people in choosing suitable methods.

Rats and mice are trapped or killed for various reasons, including hygiene, public and animal health, protection of foods or crops, and sometimes to protect endangered species whose viability may be threatened by introduced non-native rodents. It is generally accepted that there are circumstances when rodents have to be killed. "However, like us, they can suffer fear and pain, and it is widely agreed that we should use methods that are as humane as possible." says James Kirkwood, UFAW's Chief Executive and Scientific Director.

'*Guiding principles in the humane control of rats and mice*' reviews control methods available for use in the UK and provides information on welfare aspects of these methods. Because various methods have advantages and disadvantages depending on the circumstances, it is not possible to reach a simple conclusion about which is the best, but it is hoped that the review will be helpful to members of the public who find themselves having to control rodents.

One over-riding conclusion is that the world lacks a wholly satisfactory method for rodent control. The Working Group recognises the size of the challenge needed to improve this situation. Nonetheless, they remain committed to working towards the ideal of improving welfare standards for the control of rodents.

'*Guiding principles in the humane control of rats and mice*' (UFAW, November 2008) is available at the UFAW website www.ufaw.org.uk, or from the UFAW office at The Old School, Brewhouse Hill, Wheathampstead, Herts AL4 8AN. Telephone 01582 831818, email ufaw@ufaw.org.uk.

-ENDS-

Media contact:

Dr James Kirkwood, Chief Executive and Scientific Director, UFAW. Tel: 01582-831818,
email kirkwood@ufaw.org.uk

SCIENCE IN THE SERVICE OF ANIMAL WELFARE

Chief Executive and Scientific Director: James K Kirkwood BVSc PhD CBiol FIBiol MRCVS
Secretary: Donald C Davidson
Registered Charity No. 207996 (Registered in England) and Company Limited by Guarantee No. 579991



UNIVERSITIES FEDERATION FOR ANIMAL WELFARE

The Old School, Brewhouse Hill, Wheathampstead, Hertfordshire AL4 8AN, UK.

Tel: +44(0)1582 831818 Fax: +44(0)1582 831414

Website: <http://www.ufaw.org.uk>

Email: ufaw@ufaw.org.uk

Note to Editors:

The Universities Federation for Animal Welfare (UFAW) is an internationally recognised, independent scientific and educational animal welfare charity. It works to improve knowledge and understanding of animals' needs in order to achieve high standards of welfare for farm, companion, research, captive wild animals and those with which we interact in the wild.

UFAW improves animal welfare worldwide through its programme of awards, grants and scholarships; by educational initiatives, especially at university and college level; by providing information in books, videos, reports and in its scientific journal *Animal Welfare*; by providing expert advice to governments and others, including for legislation and 'best practice' guidelines and codes; and by working with animal keepers, scientists, vets, lawyers and all those who care about animals.

This work relies on the support of members, subscribers and donors.

SCIENCE IN THE SERVICE OF ANIMAL WELFARE

Chief Executive and Scientific Director: James K Kirkwood BVSc PhD CBiol FIBiol MRCVS

Secretary: Donald C Davidson

Registered Charity No. 207996 (Registered in England) and Company Limited by Guarantee No. 579991