



Media Release

From the Universities Federation for Animal Welfare (UFAW)

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Young Animal Welfare Scientist of the Year awards announced by UFAW

The winners of the inaugural UFAW Young Animal Welfare Scientist of the Year awards were announced by the Universities Federation for Animal Welfare at its recent International Symposium held in Portsmouth, UK, on the 28th and 29th June.

The UFAW Young Animal Welfare Scientist of the Year award is to recognise the achievements of young scientists who have made significant contributions to improving the welfare of animals. It is open to postgraduate students, anywhere in the world, currently studying for a doctoral degree or in post-doctoral work within six years of their PhD. This year, the first that this award has been made, saw three winners presented with their prize of £1,000 and award certificate by Professor John Webster of the University of Bristol on behalf of UFAW. The recipients were: Dr Lucy Asher, Lecturer at Nottingham School of Veterinary Medicine and Science; Dr Emma Baxter, Research Scientist at the Scottish Agricultural College; and Dr Lisa Collins, Lecturer at Queen's University, Belfast.

“The standard of applications for this award was extremely high,” said Dr James Kirkwood, UFAW Chief Executive and Scientific Director. “All three winners have accomplished a great deal of successful and significant work in animal welfare science and have contributed much to future development in their respective fields.”

Lucy Asher's PhD research at Newcastle University involved methods of quantifying repetitive behaviours in captive starlings. More recently she has worked in a BBSRC funded post at the Royal Veterinary College on projects at London and Bristol including welfare of chickens and pedigree dogs, and continued her studies on mathematical approaches for describing behaviour.

Emma Baxter, amongst other things, has made two important and internationally recognised contributions to the issue of farrowing crates. Her PhD into piglet mortality in non-farrowing crate systems showed the potential for genetic selection in tackling this problem. In her first post-doctoral post she has made great progress in designing and developing the non-crate system known as PIGSAFE and has worked with industry to encourage its uptake.

Lisa Collins undertook her PhD studies at Oxford University into welfare aspects of stocking densities in broiler chickens. Subsequently she took up a research fellowship at the Royal Veterinary College and is now Lecturer in animal behaviour at Queen's University, Belfast. Her main research interests since completing her PhD have been in developing statistical tools for welfare assessment and in welfare issues associated with dog breeding. She and Lucy Asher were authors of a paper published in the Veterinary Journal on inherited defects in pedigree dogs which has been in the top 10 most downloaded papers in that journal since its publication.

(more...)

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In addition to the three winners, Laura Fox-Clipsham, Animal Health Trust, and Kirsten Walker of the University of Calgary, Canada, were highly commended.

-ENDS-

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Attached photo: The winners of the 2011 UFAW Young Animal Welfare Scientist of the Year award: (l to r) Lucy Asher, Lisa Collins, Emma Baxter.

Notes to Editors:

UFAW

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.

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