



MEDIA RELEASE

EMBARGOED UNTIL 1300 hrs GMT : Thursday 4 July 2019

RECOGNITION FOR PIONEERING RESEARCH ON THE ROLE OF HUMAN- ANIMAL INTERACTIONS

**Prestigious UFAW Medal awarded to top Australian
scientist Professor Paul Hemsworth in
acknowledgement of his exceptional work for animal
welfare over 40 years**

The 2019 winner of the Universities Federation for Animal Welfare (UFAW) Medal for Outstanding Contributions to Animal Welfare Science has been announced as Professor Paul Hemsworth of the Animal Welfare Science Centre at the University of Melbourne, Australia.

For almost four decades Professor Hemsworth pioneered and led internationally acclaimed research on the role of human-animal interactions on the welfare and productivity of farm livestock.

His research (over 500 publications and 200 peer reviewed papers) has shown how human characteristics, such as attitudes and behaviour towards farm animals, affect their fear and acute and chronic stress responses - seriously limiting both farm animal welfare and productivity. By understanding the influence of human attitudes and behaviour on animal fear, stress, productivity and welfare, this research underpinned the development and application of purpose-designed training programmes in the dairy, pig and poultry industries. These programmes successfully modified key human characteristics and resulted in improvements in farm animal welfare and productivity.

His research programme was multi-faceted, evolving from studies in laboratories and farms, then extended to psychological investigation of both the impact of stockperson attitudes on farm livestock and motivational modification of stockpersons - resulting in welfare and productivity improvement. Most recently he has extended his work to human-animal interactions in zoos and domestic settings.

In 1997, Professor Hemsworth jointly established the Animal Welfare Science Centre (AWSC) with the University of Melbourne, Monash University and the Department of

SCIENCE IN THE SERVICE OF ANIMAL WELFARE



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Natural Resources and Environment (Victoria). As Director (a post he held until 2017), he led it to become the pre-eminent such Centre in Australia and for it to deservedly enjoy a reputation internationally as an innovative major contributor to animal welfare science developments involving the key disciplines of animal behaviour, psychology, stress physiology and veterinary medicine.

The Centre's influence on animal welfare thinking under Professor Hemsworth's leadership and active involvement in supervision has been widely spread by its 45 postgraduate students who successfully completed PhD, Masters and Honours degrees.

Professor David Fraser who was one of Professor Hemsworth's nominees said: *"Paul has led the country's most productive research group, has trained many of its younger animal welfare scientists and plays a leading role in the practical development of animal welfare standards and practices in Australia and elsewhere. He is undoubtedly the country's leading exponent of science-based approaches to animal welfare and the field worldwide has benefitted greatly from his leadership in the area of human-animal interaction as a key determinant of animal welfare."*

Fellow nominee Professor Peter Sandøe added: *"The main reason why Paul deserves to be awarded the UFAW medal is his seminal and highly original contribution to the study of the effect of human-animal interactions on farm animal welfare...Paul and his team have not only studied the role of the stockperson for farm animal welfare but also developed ways to implement their findings through training programmes for stockpeople."*

Throughout his career Paul has also put a warm human face on the field of animal welfare science, welcoming scientists to his group and supporting his colleagues and ensuring that they received full credit for their contributions to their joint projects. Earlier this year, he was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) in the Queen's Birthday 2019 Honours List for significant service to agricultural science and animal welfare.

UFAW's Chief Executive Dr Robert Hubrecht, who presented the award, said: *"Professor Hemsworth has led the field in the area of human-animal interaction research, with outstanding results that have benefitted farm animals worldwide and laid foundations for the next generation of animal welfare scientists to continue. His exceptional body of work over 40 years has been truly outstanding."*

The commemorative medal and award was presented to Professor Paul Hemsworth at UFAW's 2019 International Symposium in Bruges, Belgium on the 4th of July.

The UFAW Medal recognises exceptional achievements of individual scientists who have made fundamental contributions to the advancement of animal welfare over a number of years. The award is open to individuals, anywhere in the world, whose research, teaching, service and advocacy has significantly benefited the welfare of animals.

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5 July 2019

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

Professor Paul Hemsworth

A fuller synopsis of Professor Hemsworth's work can be found on the UFAW website

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