

Universities Federation for Animal Welfare



Science in the service of animal welfare

March 2016

Genetic welfare problems website expanded

Valuable resource for prospective owners and breeders now includes 52 breeds of dog as well as cats, rabbits, horses, guinea pigs, birds and fish

The UFAW genetics website was launched in 2011. Over the last year the charity, with the assistance of the UFAW/RVC Health and Welfare Research Assistant Dr Emma Buckland, has been busy expanding this resource to provide information on more conditions affecting dogs, cats and other companion animals. Since Dr Buckland started her work, over 28 new conditions have been added to the database, and more are planned.

Many genetic diseases occur in companion animals and, in recent years, concern has

been growing about the prevalence of genetics-related health and welfare conditions. The problem of health issues related to unsuitable breeding was listed as the top welfare concern of vets and vet nurses in the PDSA's Animal Wellbeing Report in 2011.

UFAW started this project to describe the genetic conditions affecting companion animals and to explain why they cause pain or discomfort and how these impact on an animal's quality of life. By providing this information, UFAW hopes to help reduce the severity and incidence of breed-related welfare problems in companion animals.

The website is aimed at providing potential purchasers with information on inherited welfare problems that may occur and what checks may need to be made with breeders or suppliers in order to avoid buying affected or carrier animals and, in so doing, unintentionally perpetuate the problem.

If you would like to support our work, your donation however small, will help us to continue to develop initiatives which will make a difference to millions of animals – thank you. ■

The UFAW genetic welfare problems site has been produced with kind support in memory of *Rosa Cliff Ward* and her niece *Barbarie Penelope Davies*, long-time supporters of UFAW

Case study: Although short muzzles are an increasingly popular face shape in pet dogs, flattened faces were found to greatly increase the risk of developing a



Credit: Rowena Packer

debilitating, lifelong respiratory condition, leaving dogs chronically short of breath. Brachycephalic Obstructive Airway Syndrome (BOAS) is caused by shortening of the bones of the canine muzzle, without an equivalent reduction in the soft tissues held within them, causing the tissue to become 'crammed' within the skull. This tissue can block the airway, and is often accompanied by narrowed nostrils, making it difficult for air to pass through the dog's nose. These blockages can mean that dogs struggle to breathe, leaving them unable to exercise, play or eat normally, and in some cases they overheat and collapse. BOAS can even cause early death.



For further information on the study, and other genetic conditions affecting the welfare of many dog breeds, visit: www.ufaw.org.uk/genetics



CHAIRMAN'S COMMENT

Welcome to the new-look Spring Newsletter, which has been refreshed to provide more space for UFAW news and updates.

This issue highlights the progress made on the genetic welfare problems section of the website, which describes genetic conditions affecting companion animals and why they cause pain and discomfort. You can find out more about genetic conditions here, including a case study, as well as on our website.

The University LINK Scheme, UFAW's outreach programme, has continued to gradually expand with new LINKS coming on board across Europe. The scheme is so important in encouraging interest and engagement with animal welfare science as well as promoting the work of UFAW and its sister charity the Humane Slaughter Association. See page 5 for a selection of updates from our LINKS.

All of the work highlighted in this newsletter wouldn't be possible without your ongoing support and commitment to animal welfare, for which we are extremely grateful. From its foundation in 1926, UFAW has always valued its supporters and donors and operated with the highest integrity and transparency. On page 8, you can read in more detail about our commitment and fundraising promise to you.

R. M. Bennett

UFAW enables website development for the Garden Wildlife Health project

Garden Wildlife Health (GWH) is a collaborative project investigating the health of species ranging from garden birds and amphibians to reptiles and hedgehogs between the Zoological Society of London, the British Trust for Ornithology, Froglife and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds.

UFAW is supporting this project by providing a grant over three years to enable the GWH to develop website tools to better collect and analyse vital data on the health of wildlife populations from sightings provided by the public of sick or dead wildlife. By capturing this data, the GWH team can assess the impact a disease is having on a population and aid conservation plans to safeguard British wildlife. Diseases of free-living wildlife can adversely impact their welfare and also be of conservation concern, with some conditions having been associated with global population declines and local species extinctions in recent decades. In

addition, some diseases of wildlife have the potential to cause ill health in humans, livestock and companion animals. Therefore, monitoring trends in wildlife diseases is essential to detect new threats and assess their impact on animal welfare and biodiversity as well as on public and domestic animal health.

Findings from the data are used to inform government and NGO policies on conservation management and the relevant agencies are notified when a possible domestic animal or human health threat from wildlife is identified.

Thanks to the participation of hundreds of volunteers, GWH has discovered several important threats facing wildlife and provided practical guidance on how to help prevent them. ■



Credit: Royal Society for the Protection of Birds



Credit: Graham Ritchie



For more information, including factsheets and links to an interactive map, visit www.gardenwildlifehealth.org.



Credit: Understanding Animal Research

Developing standards for laboratory animal care in China

For some years, UFAW has been jointly organising seminars with the Home Office, Chinese Association of Laboratory Animal Science, and the Association for Assessment and Accreditation of Laboratory Animal Science (now known as AAALAC International) to assist in the development of Chinese regulation in this area. The latest of these led to an invitation to UFAW's Chief Executive Dr Robert Hubrecht to speak at the 7th International Forum on Laboratory Animal Science & Technology in Beijing, China. His presentation addressed the often-perceived conflict between the needs to provide standardisation and high quality animal environments that meets the animals' needs. Dr Hubrecht also lectured on animal welfare to the students of the Beijing Chinese Agricultural University. ■

LASA/UFAW meeting on the welfare of animals bred and kept for research



UFAW held a joint meeting with LASA (Laboratory Animal Science Association) in September to provide professional development for laboratory animal professionals on the care of animals bred for research.

Speakers covered aspects of welfare assessment of rodents, rabbits, dogs, primates and farm animals, and provided practical examples of good care and husbandry, particularly during early development. This period is particularly important as a good start in life helps animals to cope with later stressors such as transport or new social groups. The meeting concluded with a presentation on one pharmaceutical company's experiences of rehoming dogs, rabbits and rodents in the USA. ■

RSPCA/UFAW rodent and rabbit welfare meeting

The 22nd annual joint RSPCA/UFAW meeting on rodent and rabbit welfare was held in October and provided an opportunity for welfare scientists and animal technologists to present recent advances in rodent and rabbit welfare research to an audience of other researchers and those responsible for the care and welfare of these animals in labs and elsewhere.

Over 80 participants heard talks on a number of topics including refinements to the way laboratory rabbits are bred, an examination of the housing conditions preferred by lab rabbits, and an introduction to a project (which has been partly funded by UFAW) that will look at the influence of smells such as cleaning products and surgical gloves on mice.



The day also included talks of particular practical relevance to those working with lab mice including an introduction to the ShARM project (<https://www.sharmuk.org/>) which aims to share material from aging mice colonies to reduce the number of mice bred to model the diseases of old-age. The day ended with an update from the Home Office (who regulate animal experimentation in the UK) on the latest changes to the regulatory system and the various advice and guidance which they provide on the use of rodents in research. ■

IN BRIEF

Notification for election to Council at the 2016 AGM

In accordance with Article 46 of the Constitution, members' nominations for election to Council at the 2016 AGM must reach the UFAW office between 7th August and 4th September 2016. Further information is available from the UFAW Secretary.

2016 Annual General Meeting

This year's AGM will be held in the afternoon of Wednesday 19th October 2016 at the UFAW office (The Old School, Brewhouse Hill, Wheathampstead, Herts). Full details of the time and business of the meeting will be sent to members in due course.

Council changes at the 2015 Annual General Meeting

Professor Neville Gregory and Barbara Cooper retired from Council. We extend our gratitude to them for their time and service to UFAW. We welcome Charlotte Reid, communications consultant and Andrew Wilson, veterinary surgeon. Dr John Bradshaw was re-elected to Council.



17th Annual Animal Welfare Student Scholarship meeting, Writtle College

Each year, students awarded a UFAW Animal Welfare Student Scholarship are invited to present the findings of their studies at an annual meeting. In late December, 14 of these students, from universities and colleges across the UK as well as in Austria, Portugal and the USA, travelled to Writtle College in Essex to present their research and share their projects at UFAW's 17th Animal Welfare Student Scholars Meeting.

The topics covered were wide-ranging: from hock lesions in dairy cattle and the sexing of chickens before they hatch, to using thermal imaging as a welfare tool in identifying arthritic conditions in primates and the nocturnal behaviour of orphan young Asian elephants in a Sri Lankan rehabilitation centre. ■



Credit: UFAW

Former UFAW Scholarship Award winner becomes British Veterinary Association (BVA) President

UFAW extends its congratulations to Sean Wensley BVSc MSc Grad DMS MRCVS on his appointment in September as President of the BVA.

Sean, who is now the Senior Veterinary Surgeon for Communication and Education at veterinary charity the People's Dispensary for Sick Animals (PDSA), was awarded a student scholarship by UFAW in 2000 to undertake a research project on the behaviour and welfare of caged pet zebra finches. Sean's research drew attention to deficiencies in zebra finch husbandry and he made recommendations on how their care could be improved. Having had his interest in animal welfare science sparked, Sean went on to study for a Masters degree in Applied Animal Behaviour and Animal Welfare at Edinburgh Veterinary School. ■

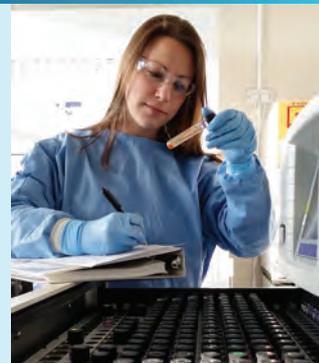


Welcome

The work of the charity depends on members' support, which in turn requires effective fundraising and communications. Tracey Woods joined the charity in August to further develop this aspect of the charity's activities, taking over from Brian Pemberton who had been with the charity for 10 years. Tracey has extensive experience in this area, having previously worked with the City of London Police, the Imperial War Museum and a number of animal welfare charities. ■

GRANTS AND AWARDS

UFAW's 3R's Liaison Group Research Scholar Rachel Tanner from Oxford University finished her project at the end of last year. Her research – "Development of mycobacterial growth inhibition assays for early evaluation and gating of novel TB vaccine candidates" has been timely.



Credit: Rachel Tanner

Tuberculosis (TB) poses a serious global health threat, with an estimated 9 million new cases and 1.5 million deaths annually. The current vaccine, BCG, is inadequate but development of an effective alternative is severely hampered by a measure of protection. Candidate vaccines are currently tested using preclinical animal models such as mice and non-human primates. Large numbers of animals are required and must be infected with M.tb: a procedure classified as 'Moderate' in severity by the Home Office. Experiments are long and it is unclear whether outcomes are predictive of efficacy or even safety in humans.

Work in Rachel's project centred on the optimisation and evaluation of a functional *in vitro* Mycobacterial Growth Inhibition Assay, the MGIT, which takes into account a range of immune mechanisms and their interactions. Such an assay represents a potential alternative to animal models for early testing of vaccine candidates. Applying the MGIT, a BCG-induced reduction in mycobacterial growth was detected in humans, NHPs and mice.

With further development, the MGIT assay represents a potential correlate of protection that may reduce the number of animals used and accelerate the development of an effective vaccine. ■

LINKS UPDATE

One of the educational initiatives by which UFAW seeks to encourage interest and engagement with animal welfare science is the UFAW LINK scheme. This outreach programme has been running since 2003 and consists of a network of academics at universities and research institutions in the UK and elsewhere that have agreed to help UFAW with promoting the ethos of a scientific approach to improving the welfare of animals and to disseminate relevant information on the charity's activities, and that of our sister charity the Humane Slaughter Association.

UFAW has continued to gradually expand the scheme and new LINKs have recently been established with the Utrecht University, The Netherlands, the University of Helsinki, Finland, the University of Milan, Italy, the Free University Berlin, Germany and Roehampton University, UK. A full list of LINK institutions and reports on their activities can be found on the UFAW website, but some examples of recently funded activities are detailed here.

Staff and postgraduate students from four behaviour and welfare groups attended a 3 day event in September organised by Natalie Chancellor for the Royal Veterinary College and



Credit: Natalie Chancellor

supported by the UFAW LINK Scheme. Participants from the Universities of Bristol, Lincoln and SRUC Edinburgh heard and discussed excellent presentations covering a wide breadth of topics, species and stages of life; for example pecking devices to improve welfare of pullets, aggression and abnormal behaviour in dogs, through to head-only stunning of poultry. The event provided students with an encouraging platform to present their research and to forge contacts with their peers. ■

University of Reading

(LINK: Dr Rachael Neal)

In September, with support from the UFAW LINK scheme, the University of Reading's new intake of BSc Animal Science students received a great introduction to animal welfare science in the context of zoo animal management from Marwell zoologist Danielle Free.



Credit: Danielle Free

Her talk covered an introduction to the history of zoos, the concept of welfare and how it can be measured via behavioural and physiological tests and observations. The importance of welfare in relation to the law and regulatory bodies for zoos was also

considered, as was the role of animal management in ensuring high levels of welfare in captive animals. ■

University of Liverpool

(LINK: Professor Lynne Sneddon)

Dr Charlotte Burn (RVC) gave a talk in November to staff and students at Liverpool on 'Misunderstanding man's best friend: Using science to help understand and address welfare problems in dogs' ■

University of Prince Edward Island, Canada

(LINK: Professor Mike Cockram)

Through the LINK scheme, UFAW supported the attendance of five veterinary students from The Atlantic Veterinary College (AVC), University of Prince Edward Island, Canada to participate in the 15th Annual Intercollegiate Animal Welfare Judging & Assessment Contest at Ohio State University. Twelve teams from nine veterinary schools in North America participated in the annual competition, which aims 'to provide a unique educational experience while strengthening student vocabulary and reasoning skills'. There was also a team assessment of Jersey dairy heifers. Ashley Butt, one of the students writes: 'Being a part of the 2015 AVC AWJAC Team helped us to build that confidence by developing enhanced knowledge of animal welfare, as well as better our skills in communication and public speaking..... I am very grateful for having had the opportunity to work with such an excellent team over the last few months. It has been a gratifying experience that I will highly recommend to my peers and colleagues'. ■

The UFAW Journal Animal Welfare

Animal welfare is an area of research that draws on knowledge from a wide range of disciplines bringing together physiologists, animal behaviourists, veterinarians, animal care staff, philosophers and legislators.

The UFAW journal *Animal Welfare*, established in 1992 to help develop the science of animal welfare, is published quarterly, taken in 45 countries around the world and is freely available to qualifying not-for-profit organisations in developing countries.

The topics covered are often diverse. The November issue contained, for example, articles on transport of sheep and horses, pampas deer responses to humans, broiler hen welfare, handling of badgers and many others. One paper described a possible alternative to the anticoagulants frequently used to control rodents, which appears to be more humane; while another suggested that there may be even more reasons for being concerned about stereotyped behaviour in animals than had previously been thought. The article showed that mice with stereotyped behaviour which can be caused by sub-standard housing and husbandry, experience more aggression than their cage mates, which may be linked with impairments in these animals' social behaviour. ■



Recent advances in Animal Welfare Science

As part of its on-going commitment to improving animal welfare through increased scientific understanding of animals' needs and how these can be met, UFAW is holding the fifth of its series of one day conferences on 'Recent advances in animal welfare science' on 23rd June 2016. The conference has once again attracted a diverse and dynamic programme of speakers from the UK, Europe and the USA and will feature 14 talks on subjects ranging from developing and validating a practical screening tool for chronic stress in livestock to a history of animal sentience. There will also be poster sessions featuring over 70 presentations.

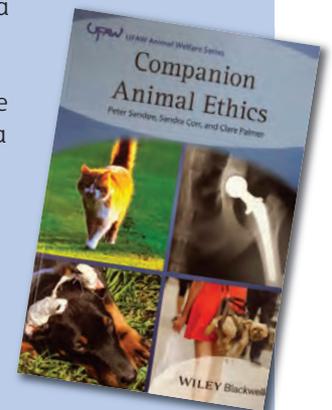
The conference, which is being held in York, aims to provide a forum at which the broad and growing international community of scientists, veterinary surgeons, policy makers and others concerned with animal welfare can come together to share knowledge and practice, discuss advances and exchange views. ■



Credit: Shutterstock

New title in UFAW/Wiley Blackwell animal welfare book series

We are pleased to announce a new title, *Companion Animal Ethics* to the UFAW/Wiley animal welfare series. Over the past century, there has been a huge increase in the number of companion animals, especially dogs and cats. Sharing our homes or lives with animals means that we have to both consider their welfare and take into account practicalities of ownership. This raises a number of ethical and welfare issues, including pet breeding, obesity, dealing with behaviour issues, neutering and many others. The authors, Professor Peter Sandøe, Dr Sandra Corr and Professor Clare Palmer, have written an excellent volume that identifies the problems and the considerations that need to be taken into account – helping to steer the reader, whether owner, animal care professional or welfare scientist through these sometimes difficult decisions. This is the 11th title in the series. UFAW members are entitled to a 35% discount on purchases of these and other Wiley Books. ■

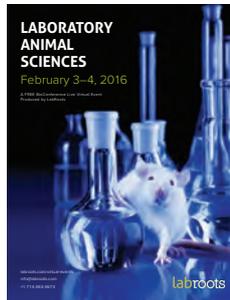


Further details are available from the UFAW website.

UFAW GIVES PRESENTATION AT VIRTUAL CONFERENCE

UFAW'S Senior Scientific Programme Manager Dr Huw Golledge gave a keynote presentation at the LabRoots two-day international Laboratory Animal Science (LAS) virtual conference, which was held live entirely online.

Participants were able to log in to watch live video webcasts given by over 30 industry experts, as well as ask questions which were answered during the course of the webcast. The conference brought together scientists, students, veterinary technicians, veterinarians, technical support staff, IACUC (Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee) administrators and committee members, as well as training and compliance personnel from around the world to learn about recent advances in the science of animal wellbeing, housing, enrichment and biotechnology.



Dr Golledge's presentation entitled "A good death? Are our 'euthanasia' methods for lab animals actually humane?" brought participants up-to-date with the latest research in this area and drew attention to the gaps in our knowledge.

Said Huw: "Animals used in science often have to be euthanised at the end of experiments, the least we owe these animals is to give them a humane death. I was pleased to have the opportunity to discuss some of the latest research into the most humane ways to euthanise lab rodents with those who care for them."

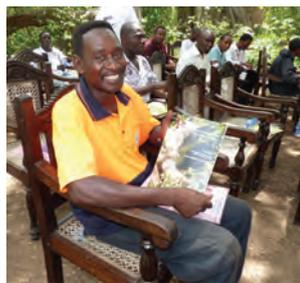
The LabRoots virtual conference has already reached over 46,000 people and this is growing steadily as more people log in to watch the presentations "on demand". ■



For further information and to watch Huw's keynote presentation, see <http://www.labroots.com/virtual-event/laboratory-animal-sciences-2016>

John and Margaret Cooper

Long-serving members John and Margaret Cooper recently visited Kenya and, prior to their trip, very kindly offered to take with them educational materials for UFAW and its sister charity the Humane Slaughter Association. Animal Welfare Journals, HSA guidance notes and technical posters were disseminated to veterinary schools, students and those teaching the next generation of animal welfare inspectors.



John, who trained as a veterinary surgeon and who is now a specialist pathologist with particular interests in wildlife and exotic species and his wife Margaret, a lawyer, are involved in teaching at various universities. They combine their medical and legal backgrounds in the promotion of an inter-disciplinary approach to veterinary and biological education, wildlife conservation and forensic service and work with communities in East Africa.

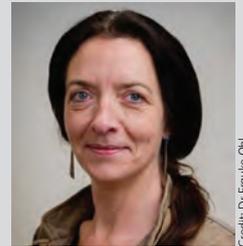
The materials were well received and will provide invaluable information on a number of aspects of animal welfare as well as on stockmanship/handling of animals being transported, in markets and at slaughter.

We are indebted to them both for their ongoing support. ■

OBITUARY

Professor Dr Frauke Ohl

We were extremely sad to hear of the passing of Council member Professor Frauke Ohl in January. Having been trained as a



Credit: Dr Frauke Ohl

zoologist in Kiel [Germany], Professor Ohl worked at the University of Utrecht as Professor of Animal Welfare & Laboratory Animal Science and, in 2011, she was appointed as Chair of the Dutch Council of Animal Affairs (Ministry of Economic Affairs). As a member of UFAW's Council, she brought extensive knowledge, compassion and dedication to animal welfare and will be much-missed by her fellow Trustees and members of staff at UFAW. We extend our deepest sympathy to her family and friends.

'Safeguarding animal welfare demands better knowledge about the animal's own perception. But it is humans that decide what is the quality of animal welfare that is to be safeguarded – and this decision demands ethical reflection. This is the interdisciplinary approach I like to explore with students'.

Professor Frauke Ohl

Dr Huw Williams PhD MSc MRCVS Hon Ass FRAGS

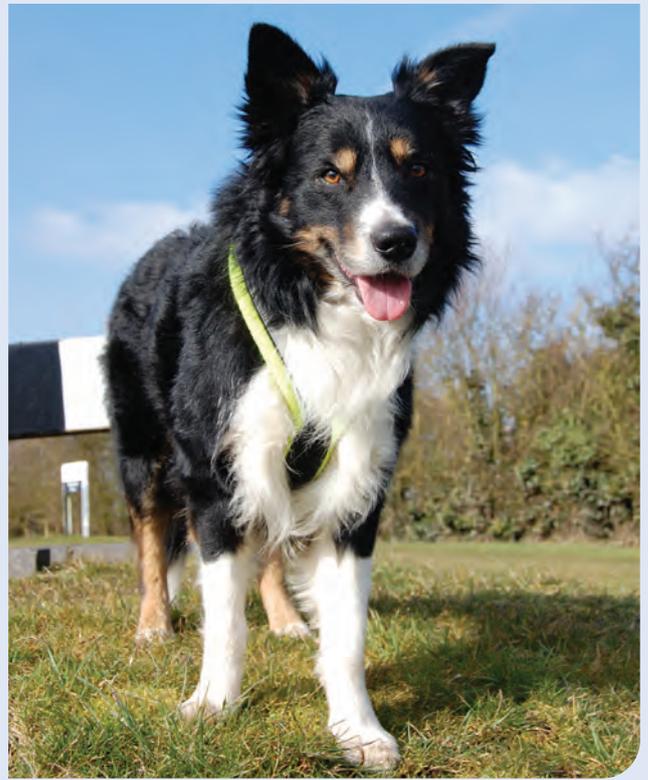
It was with great sadness that we learnt of the death, on 10th September last year, of Dr Huw Williams. Dr Williams was not only a respected colleague but also a staunch supporter of UFAW and its work, serving as a member of Council between 1972-8 and again from 1987 to 1993 and bringing with him a wealth of knowledge and experience. From 1955 until his retirement in 1992, Dr Williams lectured in the Department of Animal Husbandry at the Royal Veterinary College. UFAW extends its sincere condolences to his family and friends.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Why UFAW's work is important

Despite many advances in animal care and increasing concern about animal welfare, many animals still suffer unnecessarily due to our lack of understanding of their needs and how best to meet them. UFAW promotes essential study and education in animal welfare, developing practical and lasting solutions to welfare problems.

We've achieved so much over the last 90 years, thanks to the support of people, both within and beyond the scientific community, who share our concern for the welfare of animals. But there's so much more to do and we can't do it alone. By continuing to support UFAW, you will enable us to carry on with our important efforts on behalf of all animals. Thank you. ■



Credit: UFAW

Our fundraising promise to you

UFAW is very grateful to all our donors for their generous support. We have welcomed donations, both large and small, since our creation in 1926 and have used them to harness science in the service of animal welfare. We have always valued our supporters and donors and been committed to accountability and transparency so that donors and prospective donors can have full confidence in the Universities Federation for Animal Welfare.

When you consider making a donation to us, we undertake that:

- all communications concerning it will be honest, truthful and will comply with the law
- your right to privacy, confidentiality and anonymity will be respected and you will not be subjected to any form of undue pressure
- if you wish to cease giving, we will respect your decision and if you tell us that you don't want us to contact you in a particular way we will not do so
- your gift will be applied to the purpose for which it was originally requested



Credit: UFAW

- your gift will be handled responsibly and to the greatest advantage of the beneficiary/ies
- your gift will receive appropriate acknowledgement and recognition. We will not disclose the names of individual donors or benefactors unless express permission has been sought
- we adhere to the Institute of Fundraising codes of practice
- we are scrupulous, trustworthy and open in our appeals for public support
- we value hearing from our supporters. We ensure that all questions, concerns or complaints are dealt with respectfully, sensitively and quickly. ■

Thank you!

To all our supporters who so kindly donated to our Autumn Appeal in support of our educational work overseas. At the time of going to press, £808 had been donated which will enable us to promote animal welfare education in developing countries



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