

product or idea. This kind of approach has not been much used in estimating values in relation to animal welfare even though opinion polls have been used at times to 'measure' public attitudes to various animal welfare issues.

In an attempt to make welfarists, the food industry and legislators aware of the economic implications of farm animal welfare and to identify research needs, the Department of Agricultural Economics of the University of Reading held, in September 1993, a small, one-day 10-person workshop. The present volume is the printed proceedings of this workshop. It is made up of the full texts of the five presented papers and a summary of the workshop discussions. The first paper, by D M Broom (a biologist), largely covers the scientifically measurable aspects of welfare and the public view of animal agriculture as indicated by the opinion polls. The second paper is by J P McNemey (an economist) and is essentially the material he delivered to the Annual Conference of the Agricultural Economics Society in Oxford in April 1993, being based round his now near-classic Perceived Animal Welfare/Livestock Productivity graph. The next two papers, by R M Bennett (the Editor of this proceedings volume) and by S J Henson and N F Beard (both economists), are on theoretical and practical economic techniques for valuing animal welfare. These two contributions cover such matters as social choice, utility/disutility theory, contingent valuation and hedonic pricing. Non-economists may find these two pieces heavy going. It might have been useful if a number of elementary economics/marketing texts had been recommended so that naïve non-initiates could seek out the background to the seemingly strange concepts held by some economists. The final paper, by A Swinbank, covers the international trade policy issues arising from farm animal welfare legislation. The summary and conclusions of the workshop, by R M Bennett, are a clear and helpful account of the main thrust of this pioneering and important meeting.

The economic consequences of animal welfare choices and the effects which the resulting decisions will have both on the individual consumer and on society as a whole, are aspects of farm animal welfare studies which are beginning to receive serious attention from legislators, administrators, politicians and animal production experts.

This book, from the Agricultural Economics and Management Department of the University of Reading, is a most useful and interesting introduction to these new ideas on the economic valuation of farm animal welfare.

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Practical Animal Handling: 1 – Small Mammals

Written and produced by British Veterinary Association Animal Welfare Foundation (1994). Colour VHS video, 15 min. Obtainable free of charge from the publishers, 7 Mansfield Street, London W1M 0AT, UK.

This video is the first of what is intended to be a series covering the handling of common and exotic pets presented in UK veterinary practices.

This particular edition covers the handling of seven small mammals commonly seen in the consulting room featuring gerbils, mice, rats, hamsters, guinea pigs, rabbits and ferrets. The

intention of the video is stated as reminding professionals of the different approaches to handling these mammals, and to assist in the training of new staff, students and veterinary nurses.

Undoubtedly a good deal of planning, thought, care and expertise has gone into the production of the excellent programme. The picture and sound quality are good, the titling is clear and above all the content is judged perfectly. Without being patronizing to those already handling animals, or too difficult to follow for those new to such techniques, there is a simple and visually clear demonstration of the safest and easiest ways of handling small pets.

Simple rules – such as ‘Do pick up a mouse by its tail, but not a gerbil’ (how many of us have!) – are allied to sensible warnings – such as the fact that a mouse even when picked up by the tail can turn, run up it, and bite! The particular plus of this video from an animal welfare point of view is that the information provided emphasizes the safety to the handler but equally promotes ways of handling which are safe for the animal concerned, and minimize any stress and trauma involved.

In addition to precise information on holding, lifting and examining each species, techniques of exposing the common sites of injection are explained. Another section also describes the special problems of handling young and old animals. Although I have been handling such pets for more than 20 years, I still found the video interesting and informative. It is a handy reminder that a gentle but firm approach, with a knowledge of the appropriate method of restraint for each individual species, is far better than a quick grab at a passing bundle of flesh.

Without doubt this video should be required viewing for all veterinary students and veterinary nurse trainees. Equally, qualified vets and nurses will find it useful, especially those who do not regularly come into contact with small pets. Even those who do will almost certainly learn from it.

If the remainder of the series is produced as professionally, competently, clearly and informatively as this, then the BVA Animal Welfare Foundation will have achieved well deserved success.

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Managing Set-aside Land for Wildlife ITE Research Publication No 7

L G Firbank, H R Arnold, B C Eversham, J O Mountford, G L Radford, M G Telfer, J R Treweek, N R C Webb and T C E Wells (1993). HMSO: London. 146pp. Paperback. Obtainable from HMSO Publications Centre, PO Box 276, London SW8 5DT, UK (ISBN 0 11 701568 7) Price £9.95.

The recent and continuing changes in agricultural policy have generated widespread interest in the value of set-aside land for wildlife. Although the primary objective of set-aside has always been to reduce food production it has also had a major impact on the landscape and the wildlife it contains.