



Media Release

19 July, 2012

For Immediate Release:

HSA announces award for significant advances in humane slaughter

The Humane Slaughter Association (HSA) has announced the winner of its 2012 award for significant advances in humane slaughter. The award, which recognises individuals or organisations that have made significant scientific, technical or other advances that have led to improvements in the humane slaughter of livestock, was won by the Stunning and Slaughter Group at the University of Bristol's School of Veterinary Sciences.

This year, in honour and memory of John Ace-Hopkins who won the award in 2011 and who died in November 2011, the award was named the 'HSA John Ace-Hopkins Award for Significant Advances in Humane Slaughter' and was presented to the Stunning and Slaughter Group at the Veterinary School at Langford on Thursday 19 July.

The members of the group, Dr Toby Knowles, Dr Jeff Lines, Dr Mike O'Callaghan, Dr Mohan Raj, Mr Lindsay Wilkins and Mr Steve Wotton MBE, have made major contributions to the science underpinning humane livestock slaughter.

For over 15 years the group, led primarily by Dr Mohan Raj, have investigated the design and operation of the poultry waterbath stunner and initially developed the use of controlled atmosphere (CA) systems, which offered an alternative to the traditional multi-bird electrical waterbath stunner.

Dr Becky Whay, Head of the Animal Welfare and Behaviour Group at the University of Bristol's School of Veterinary Sciences, said: "I am delighted the group have been recognised with this award for their work, especially as Drs Raj and O'Callaghan have recently retired after a lifetime's work in this field.

"The group's research has led to a high welfare alternative through the use of both CA and an electrical alternative that has real potential for the future."

One example of the group's contribution is their research into controlled atmosphere methods that has paved the way for the commercial development of gas slaughter systems for poultry. Although these have welfare advantages over electrical waterbath methods, as the birds do not need to be handled or shackled, electrical systems are likely to remain in use, and the group has undertaken key research into assessing the efficacy of electrical stunning and into various welfare refinements for this method.

In addition to its research, the group has played a major role in training and promoting good practice for welfare through the Masters degree in Meat Science and Technology and the Animal Welfare Officer training courses at Bristol, and through its contributions

to the Farm Animal Welfare Committee (FAWC) and European Food Standards Agency (EFSA) scientific reviews that have helped shape legislation.

The HSA is an independent charity that works through educational, scientific and technical advances to improve the welfare of food animals worldwide during transport, marketing and slaughter. For more information about this work visit www.hsa.org.uk or telephone 01582 831919, email info@hsa.org.uk.

-ENDS-

Attached photo:



Members of the Stunning and Slaughter Group of the University of Bristol's School of Veterinary Sciences at the presentation of the HSA award for significant advances in humane slaughter: left to right – Mr Steve Wotton MBE, Mr Lindsay Wilkins, Dr Mike O'Callaghan, Dr Toby Knowles, Dr Mohan Raj, Dr Jeff Lines.

Media contact:

James Kirkwood, HSA Chief Executive and Scientific Director. Tel: 01582 831919, email kirkwood@hsa.org.uk

Note to Editors:

As an independent registered charity, the HSA is unique in working exclusively to achieve the highest worldwide standards in food animal welfare at markets, during transport and at slaughter through scientific and technical advances, education and training. Its work includes researching, refining and demonstrating humane slaughter methods, publishing material such as guidelines, best practice, books and videos, funding research projects and the development of equipment. Specialist technical staff provide expert and practical advice on all welfare issues relating to food animals.

The HSA is funded by voluntary donations, subscriptions and legacies.

For more information about the HSA's work call 01582 831919, email info@hsa.org.uk or visit www.hsa.org.uk

The Humane Slaughter Association, The Old School, Brewhouse Hill
Wheathampstead, St Albans, Herts. AL4 8AN
Tel: 01582 831919
Fax: 01582 831414
Email: info@hsa.org.uk
www.hsa.org.uk

Humane Slaughter Association and Council of Justice to Animals
Registered in England Charity No: 209563