

Summary of the 2007 Glasgow University Veterinary Medical Association (GUVMA) Animal Welfare Symposium



This year's GUVMA animal welfare symposium took place on Friday 23rd February at the University of Glasgow's Faculty of Veterinary Medicine at Garscube. The aim of the symposium was to promote learning, discussion and awareness of issues concerning the welfare of animals.

As a result of BVA AWF funding, GUVMA were able play host to three high-profile guest speakers:

James Scott, British Association for Shooting and Conservation (BASC)

Liz Carter, Universities' Federation for Animal Welfare (UFAW)

Professor Tipu Aziz, Consultant Neurosurgeon, Oxford University & Oxford Radcliffe Hospital

James Scott's presentation addressed the role played by shooting organisations (notably the BASC) with regards to animal welfare and conservation. Although possibly seen as an unusual choice for a welfare-oriented afternoon, the presentation proved to be balanced, up-to-date and very interesting, and allowed many audience members to gain a whole new insight into the shooting scene and the work of the BASC in maintaining and promoting countryside and animal conservation.

The second speaker of the day was Liz Carter from UFAW who presented on the topic of religious slaughter techniques and associated animal welfare concerns. This is a subject that is perhaps not often tackled from a strictly scientific viewpoint and as such, the presentation proved to be thorough, very well constructed and highly thought-provoking.

The final presentation of the day was given by Professor Tipu Aziz, a consultant neurosurgeon at Oxford's John Radcliffe Hospital and lecturer at Oxford University. Professor Aziz entered the public domain when he appeared as a supporter for the "ProTest" campaign on a TV documentary. Professor Aziz's presentation combined scientific fact, his own experimental data along with videos of his own patients' remarkable recoveries via medical treatments which were developed using animal testing. Professor Aziz also took time to examine the anti-testing campaign and the basis for such extreme activism surrounding the new research centre at Oxford University.

The afternoon was well attended by students and staff from the faculty, and concluded with an informal Q&A session and a chance for the audience members to have a one-to-one chat with the guest speakers.

The entire event proved very successful indeed. GUVMA is very grateful to the BVA AWF for their generous sponsorship for this event, without which the afternoon would certainly have not been possible.