



PEOPLE FOR
THE ETHICAL
TREATMENT
OF ANIMALS

April 1, 2020

Kirk H. Schulz, Ph.D.
Office of the President
Washington State University
PO Box 641048
Pullman, WA 99164-1048

Via e-mail: kirk.schulz@wsu.edu

Dear President Schulz,

Thank you in advance for your time. I'm writing on behalf of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) and our more than 6.5 million members and supporters worldwide regarding an urgent matter. Based on the repeated and documented failure of Washington State University (WSU) to abide by the federal Animal Welfare Act (AWA), and given the COVID-19 pandemic that is influencing the shut-down of animal experiments around the world,¹ we urge WSU to immediately: 1) prohibit approval of new animal protocols and experiments; 2) prohibit breeding and acquisition of new animals for laboratories; 3) finalize and end ongoing animal experiments; and, 4) prove that all of these animals and experiments are concretely advancing human health, and if they're not then switch to superior human-relevant, animal-free research methods.²

WSU's Culture of Noncompliance: Animal Welfare Act Violations

According to public records obtained by PETA from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), WSU has been cited by the USDA on several occasions. The following are a few AWA violations that the agency's inspections have revealed: a dog died when a veterinarian failed to examine him/her when serious symptoms were noticed; deer mice died when staff failed to provide them with enough food; unlabeled syringes with medications were found in a refrigerator; three bighorn sheep received 50 times the approved dosage of a drug for three consecutive days; two young bears had to be euthanized after their health deteriorated when staff failed to monitor them; and a female pygmy rabbit was injured on her face and the attending veterinarian was never notified.

¹ <https://www.statnews.com/2020/03/14/coronavirus-pandemic-forces-research-labs-shut-down/>

² https://www.peta.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/The-Research-Modernization-Deal-Report-US_FINAL_2020_300.pdf

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COVID-19: Ending Animal Experiments Protects Animals, Staff, and Patients

As part of its COVID-19 contingency plan, WSU is urging its experimenters to have a “depopulation” plan,³ which will likely lead to the killing of many animals. This begs the question why taxpayer dollars are being used on experiments that can easily be ended or delayed or that involve animals who, apparently, are considered by many universities to be extraneous to the testing in the first place. Equally troubling is that the experiments themselves are not critical to advancing human health, since more than 90 percent of highly promising basic science discoveries (most of which involve animal experiments) do not enter routine clinical use in humans.⁴

We call on WSU to publicly release the following information:

- 1) An itemization of all experimental protocols that will continue as part of WSU’s COVID-19 response plan (such that they may be categorized as critical, essential, necessary, and/or other similar terminology);
- 2) An itemization of all experimental protocols that will not continue as part of WSU’s COVID-19 response plan (such that they may be categorized as extraneous, non-critical, non-essential, ramped down, disposable, unnecessary and/or other similar terminology);
- 3) The number and species of animals who are in experimental protocols covered by item number 1 above (e.g., in a critical and/or similar terminology category), and the number and species of animals who are in experimental protocols covered by item number 2 above (e.g., not in a critical and/or similar terminology category); and,
- 4) The endpoint/disposition of animals used in experimental protocols covered by item number 2 above (e.g., not in a critical and/or similar terminology category), and notice of if, when, and how many of these animals have been and/or will be euthanized, culled, killed, destroyed, disposed or reduced in cage census.

You can contact me by e-mail at ShalinG@peta.org or by telephone at 757-962-8325. We look forward to your swift reply to this quickly developing and urgent matter. Thank you.

Sincerely yours,



Shalin G. Gala
Vice President, International Laboratory Methods
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³ https://s3.wp.wsu.edu/uploads/sites/2542/2020/03/WSU_Lab_Checklist_03.17.2020_checked.pdf

⁴ <https://www.bmj.com/content/348/bmj.g3387.long>