



News

EU: ECVAM validates the h-CLAT assay for skin sensitization

The JRC has validated and recommended a new method, not based on animal testing, which identifies chemicals that can trigger skin allergies, estimated to affect already 20% of the population in Europe.

The human Cell Line Activation Test (h-CLAT) has been developed by industry and validated by the JRC managed European Union Reference Laboratory for Alternatives to Animal Testing (EURL ECVAM). It will help the identification of chemicals that can lead to allergic contact dermatitis (ACD), one of the most common occupational diseases, and therefore allow reducing the number of animals currently used for this purpose. So far the potential of chemicals to induce skin allergies was tested on mice and guinea-pigs.

Following the validation process, ECVAM now recommends the use of h-CLAT in the context of integrated approaches to testing and assessment, i.e., together with data from other non-animal methods and computer model (*in silico*) predictions.

The recommendation aims to inform scientific discussions at OECD in view of developing an OECD Test Guideline on the h-CLAT. The OECD Test Guidelines are internationally agreed test methods used by government, industry and independent laboratories. They are used to determine the safety of chemicals and chemical preparations, including pesticides and industrial chemicals.

Two other recommendations issued by EURL ECVAM on non-animal methods for skin sensitization testing, the DPRA and KeratinoSens™, recently led to the adoption of these methods as OECD Test Guidelines 442C and 442D (see other News).

JRC-IHCP-Communication
March 2, 2015

EU: EUSAAT 2015/ LINZ 2015 calls for abstracts

EUSAAT, the European Society for Alternatives to Animal Testing has announced the 19th European Congress on Alternatives to Animal Testing, which will take place on September 20-23, 2015 at the University of Linz, Austria. Topics/tentative sessions include:

- New technologies: systems biology, -omics technologies, stem cells, 3D models & human-on-a-chip
- International progress in 3Rs research

- Global cooperation on implementing the 3Rs
- Replacement – new approaches
- Predictive toxicology & risk assessment based on the AOP concept
- Specific toxicological endpoints: oral & repeated-dose toxicity, inhalation toxicity, sensitization, reprotox
- Nanotoxicology
- Bio-barriers
- Efficacy and safety testing of drugs, biological and vaccines
- Disease models
- Ethical and legal issues & EU Dir 63/2010 update
- Refinement & welfare, culture of care, best practice approaches, avoidance of severe suffering
- 3Rs in education and academia
- “Young scientists” session
- Free communications

More information: <http://eusaat-congress.eu/>

Abstract submission: <https://eusaat2015.online-registry.net/>

Deadlines: May 15 for oral presentations; May 31 for posters

EUSAAT Newsletter
March 23, 2015

EU: REACH information requirements for reproductive toxicity changed

The REACH annexes VIII, IX and X have been amended with the inclusion of the extended one-generation reproductive toxicity study (EOGRTS, EU B.56, OECD TG 443). EOGRTS will now be the information requirement for reproductive toxicity in REACH instead of the two-generation reproductive toxicity study (EU B.35, OECD TG 416). The two-generation reproductive toxicity study uses a minimum of 2,200 animals while the EOGRTS uses a minimum of 960 animals per test, a 40% reduction. The updated annexes will enter into force March 13, 2015. ECHA is updating its guidance on reproductive toxicity to reflect the regulatory changes and aims to finalize it by July 2015. A draft is already available on ECHA's website.

Updated annexes: <http://bit.ly/1I8XIs7>

Draft guidance on reproductive toxicity

(pdf): <http://bit.ly/1EkbULi>

Adapted from ECHA e-News
February 25, 2015



GER: Baden-Württemberg calls for applications for research funding and 3Rs prize

The Ministry of Rural Affairs and Consumer Protection of Baden-Württemberg is accepting applications for research funding to a total of € 400,000 and for the 3Rs prize for exceptional contributions to reducing or refining animal experiments in research or education, which carries prize money of € 25,000.

Eligible research projects aim to develop alternatives to animal experiments or to reduce pain and distress of animal experiments in research and education. They must be performed in Baden Württemberg or in cooperation with institutions located in Baden-Württemberg.

The research prize for exceptional contributions to replacing, reducing or refining animal experiments in research or education may be awarded for work performed in any state of Germany.

Deadline: April 30, 2015

More information: <http://bit.ly/1zGVSEo>

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GER: Database AnimalTestInfo: German initiative for more transparency in animal experiments

The third amendment to the Animal Protection Act provides for more protection of animals when they are used for scientific purposes. In this context, the Federal Institute for Risk Assessment (BfR) has been mandated to inform the public about all authorized projects with animals in Germany. In line with this mandate, the BfR has developed the database AnimalTestInfo which is now being made available to the public online at <http://www.animaltestinfo.de>.

In the European Union, about 12 million animals are used for scientific experiments per year, 3 million of these in Germany alone. New scientific insights into the abilities of animals to experience and express pain, suffering, fear and permanent damage puts a new perspective on the argument that animal experiments are ineluctable.

On February 1, 2013, the Federal Council approved the Third Bill to Amend the Animal Protection Act. This bill implements at the national level the goals of the European Directive 2010/63/EU on the protection of animals used for scientific purposes. One of the special goals of the new legislation is the consistent implementation of the 3R principle, i.e., avoiding animal experiments through the use of alternative methods (replacement), reducing the number of test animals to an absolute minimum (reduction), and minimizing suffering in animal experiments (refinement).

The database AnimalTestInfo contains summaries intelligible to the general public of all animal experiment projects in Germany whose implementation is initiated by the scientific

research institutes of the universities, the industries and the government and which have been authorized by the competent authorities of the federal states. The applicants for projects themselves are responsible for the content of the project summary published by the BfR.

These summaries contain information on the purpose of the animal experiments, what is planned with the experiment, what benefits may arise from the animal experiments and what implications for animal health are to be expected. The number and species of the animals intended to be used in the experiment (mice, rats etc.) and all measures taken to avoid use of animals in the first place, to limit their numbers, and to improve their welfare are also stated. The database can be searched by these criteria.

The Centre for Recording and Assessing Replacement and Complementary Methods to Animal Experiments (ZEBET) is also based at the BfR.

BfR press release
March 9, 2015

GER: Competition for national 3Rs prize announced

In the EU, animal experiments may be performed only when no corresponding methods to replace or reduce such experiments are available. Directive 2010/63/EU on the protection of animals used for scientific purposes requires EU Member States to contribute to the development and validation of such approaches.

To drive the development of alternative methods the German Federal Ministry for Nutrition and Agriculture has announced the 34th prize for 3Rs research. The prize money is €15,000. Especially junior scientists are encouraged to apply for the prize.

The prize will be awarded for innovative, future-oriented scientific work that contributes to the development of methods and procedures aimed at replacing or reducing animal experiments. In accordance with the 3R principle, methods that improve animal husbandry or reduce pain, distress or harm in an experiment (refinement) are eligible for the award at second-tier level.

Applications should describe the biological relevance of the results for humans and the relevance for animal protection, especially which animal experiment is replaced or reduced and an estimation of the number of animals that could be saved. Applicants may submit manuscripts in German or English that are accepted for publication or have been published within the last two years. In case of multiple contributors, the senior author should include a statement detailing the contributions of each author.

Deadline: May 31, 2015

More information: <http://bit.ly/18RrFVw>

BfR press release
March 9, 2015

GER: Investigations into macaque experiments at Max Planck Institute Tübingen

The public prosecutors office of Tübingen searched the Max Planck Institute for Biological Cybernetics in Tübingen in January 2015. The search was ordered in response to complaints regarding violations of the German Animal Protection Law and continued already ongoing investigations. One of the complaints was submitted jointly by *Ärzte gegen Tierversuche*, *Erna-Graff-Stiftung für Tierschutz* and *Menschen für Tierrechte Baden-Württemberg* (<http://bit.ly/1xehA6Y>).

Undercover video footage shot by an animal carer over the course of six and a half months had been shown in a stern-TV television documentary in September 2014. The footage showed mainly macaques, e.g., tearing at their head implants or panicking upon awaking from anesthesia strapped to a primate chair. The regional council is independently investigating the allegations of cruelty to animals and killing animals without reason. The Max Planck Institute has announced that it will employ a further veterinarian and improve the observation of the animals.

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GER: Petition for a competence center

The animal protection organization “*Menschen für Tierrechte – Bundesverband der Tierversuchsgegner e.V.*” is running an online petition for the establishment of a central German competence center with the designated task of advising on the availability of alternative methods, and of assessing whether an animal experiment is indispensable in the sense of the Animal Protection Law and whether an animal experiment is ethically justified in the sense of the Animal Protection Law. The envisaged center shall also support the dissemination of knowledge on alternatives to animal experiments. According to the organization’s website almost 10,000 signatures have been collected to date.

More information: <http://bit.ly/1FYDQFg>

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IND: Mahatma Gandhi-Doerenkamp Centre (MGDC) wins PETA India Award

Courtesy of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) India, a Humane Science Award was bestowed on the Mahatma Gandhi-Doerenkamp Centre (MGDC), based in Tiruchirappalli,

Tamil Nadu, for Alternatives to Use of Animals in Life Science Education. The award recognizes the MGDC for, among other successful efforts, their monumental progress in pushing for humane legislation and reducing and eliminating animal testing via educational workshops for teachers, researchers, veterinarians and physicians.

“The exceptional strides made by the Mahatma Gandhi-Doerenkamp Centre are modernizing research and preventing millions of animals from being cut up in classrooms”, says PETA Science Policy Adviser Dr Chaitanya Koduri. “PETA’s motto reads, in part, that ‘animals are not ours to experiment on’ – a philosophy that this group are making a reality by helping students use exclusively modern and humane research methods.”

In the past five years, the MGDC has sponsored more than 60 workshops at institutions across India, educating teachers at the high school through university levels on modern digital dissection simulations, which produce better results in the classroom than archaic animal-based methods. The group has also teamed up with PETA to push for changes in course curricula through the University Grants Commission and Medical Council of India, sparing the lives of millions of animals every year.

The MGDC has tackled high-level research as well, holding 17 intensive 10-day training sessions on cell culture techniques and *in vitro* technology, educating nearly 300 researchers and scientists on modern, animal-free methods. The MGDC’s work with SkinEthic Academy in France has also resulted in three workshops, helping to integrate 3-dimensional *in vitro* methods that take the place of animals in cosmetics tests.

Adapted from PETA India
press release
February 27, 2015

INT: New version of OECD QSAR Toolbox available

The QSAR Toolbox is a software package developed by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) to make quantitative structure-activity relationship (QSAR) technology readily accessible, more transparent, and less costly, thereby increasing regulatory acceptance of QSAR analyses. An update of the QSAR Toolbox (version 3.3.2) is now available. The update contains some new scientific features, including improvement and modifications of the general mechanistic Cramer schemes, as well as bug fixes and usability improvements.

More information: <http://bit.ly/1w1BjBb>

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INT: News from InterNICHE

2014 was a successful year for InterNICHE and its work to replace harmful animal use in education and training. InterNICHE National Contacts and Partners worked to promote alternatives and distribute resources, to collaborate with teachers to facilitate replacement, and to share the experiences of life science departments that have already implemented progressive teaching approaches. InterNICHE Co-ordinator Nick Jukes works with all the contacts and visited a number of countries for outreach, events and meetings. A selection of news, projects and achievements from 2014, and plans for 2015, are described below.

France

InterNICHE Partner for France, Dr Andre Menache, participated in a round table on animal issues organised by French MP Chantal Jouanno in December 2013. Andre helped ensure that animal use in schools was kept on the agenda in 2014. The French organisation **Oïkos Kai Bios** had also been promoting alternatives and asking questions of the Ministry for Education. Because of lack of clarity on the government position on dissection and of the impact of the transposed European Directive, a question was asked in parliament by the MP to elicit an official response.

The French Ministry for Education announced in November 2014 that no vertebrate animal purpose-bred for scientific procedures may be used for dissection in the school system. The ministry document states that invertebrates may still be used, as well as vertebrate animals intended for human consumption – and in France, this includes frogs. Mice and rats can therefore no longer be used for school dissections, and it should now be easier for students who conscientiously object. The Swiss League Against Vivisection (LSCV) is offering support to French campaigners.

India

Nick Jukes was invited by the Indian government agency that deals with animal experiments, the CPCSEA, to speak at the national conference of the agency in New Delhi in November 2014. He called for a full ban of harmful animal use in education and training. Other international speakers included Dr Jarrod Bailey on the failures of the animal model for human disease prediction, Prof Coenraad Hendriksen on alternatives within vaccine production, and Dr Christian Pellevoisin from alternative testing company Episkin.

A meeting was also held with the University Grants Commission (UGC), who fund universities and help define the national curriculum. Nick was an invited expert at the UGC's dissection committee in 2010. Later that year the UGC recommended to discontinue dissections in zoology practical classes. In a very significant move, the UGC then fully banned dissection across the country in 2014. Anecdotal evidence suggests that half of the estimated 60 million animals killed annually for dissection in zoology may now have been saved, but there has been no comprehensive survey. The CPCSEA and several academic councils are also limiting animal experiments for specific courses at different academic levels.

InterNICHE has been working in India for over 12 years and has played an important role in the promotion of alternatives. With support from the Marchig Animal Welfare Trust, and with permission from some producers to duplicate software, alternatives to the purchase value of over € 250,000 have been distributed for free, including through CPCSEA and academic networks. However, there is still a significant shortage of alternatives in the country. This impacts negatively on the effectiveness of the ban. A project to launch wider distribution of alternatives is being developed by InterNICHE. Meanwhile, a manual on alternatives is being co-written by Nick and zoology professor Dr B. K. Sharma to support the process of replacement.

Ukraine and CIS countries

National Contact for the Ukraine, Dmitry Leporsky, continues to represent InterNICHE and German colleagues in negotiations with universities across the country. The use of contracts to formalise agreements concerning curricular transformation continues to be an effective strategy in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). The documents, usually signed by the Dean, detail the animal use and agree to end it in exchange for specific hardware, software and models. The annual use of over 60,000 animals has now been replaced with alternatives, and more contracts have now been signed in the Ukraine and Russia. Dmitry also re-visited Kyrgyzstan in May-June 2014.

Canada

National Contact Dr Olivier Berreville continues to provide support and advice to teachers and students in the country, and gave a talk at the Queen's University conference 'Thinking Outside the Cage: Towards a non-speciesist paradigm in science' in March 2014. The focus of the talk was the positive impact of humane education on the knowledge, skills and attitudes of future researchers. In June, an InterNICHE multimedia exhibition and presentation were organised at the Canadian Council on Animal Care (CCAC) National Conference. A guest participant from Cornell University in the US demonstrated a range of models – primarily core skills trainers – developed after being inspired by the InterNICHE / Animalearn multimedia exhibition at the 8th World Congress on Alternatives held in Montreal in 2011.

South Africa

InterNICHE Partner organisation the NSPCA continues to build on the successful series of events on alternatives in education, research and testing that were organised with InterNICHE in 2012. Speakers Dr Barbara Grune from ZEBET and Dr Andre Menache contributed to this first national promotion of alternatives. Further meetings with university teachers, and with the Department of Basic Education concerning school dissection, have brought more successes since. Most universities have now replaced the animals used for comparative anatomy classes, an annual use of around 2000 animals. Interest in replacement of live porcine experiments with humane laparoscopy training devices is growing. There is also internal NSPCA training for basic veterinary procedures using alternatives. The transfer of primary care skills and animal welfare messages goes first to community campaigners and then out to the townships.

Peru

In Peru, InterNICHE Partner organisation Unidos por los Animales (UPA) continue their work for alternatives with campaigns, talks, stalls and an online presence. A successful seminar and multimedia exhibition was held in November 2014 at the Faculty of Human Medicine (UNMSM) at San Fernando. The InterNICHE / UPA Alternatives Loan System is a valuable resource for Peru, and two thirds of items are on semi-permanent loan to universities. UPA works closely with teachers and students, and at the Universidad Nacional Agraria La Molina (UNALM), a small student group ended the frog dissections and is undertaking a comparative study.

9th World Congress on Alternatives

The 9th World Congress on Alternatives and Animal Use in the Life Sciences (WC9) was held in Prague, Czech Republic, in August-September 2014. Nick was part of the education team and gave 3 oral presentations. InterNICHE, its Partners and other contacts had several oral and poster presentations with a replacement theme. National TV coverage featured interviews with the organisers and InterNICHE contacts, as well as some veterinary training alternatives. Afterwards, InterNICHE held a 3-day satellite meeting.

New international publications

InterNICHE is producing a major book of case studies of 100% replacement in education and training and is inviting contributions from across the globe. The publication will share the experiences of university deans, teachers, students and campaigners who have helped realise the vision of humane education and full replacement. It will address alternatives in disciplines such as anatomy, physiology, pharmacology and surgery from the fields of medicine, veterinary medicine and biology. A new film on alternatives in veterinary education and training is also being produced to address innovation at student and professional level. More international footage is being gathered, and editing will be complete in 2015.

Other news from across the world

In January 2014, an InterNICHE workshop on alternatives in education was organised at the large 'Asia for Animals' congress in **Singapore**. Humane Society International (HSI) addressed alternatives in testing, particularly for cosmetics and chemicals, and detailed progress in India and elsewhere.

In **Norway**, National Contact Dr Siri Martinsen continued to help veterinary students with their rights not to perform animal experiments. She also worked within the national committee on military surgery training to achieve replacement. By using the argument that the military has not scientifically proven that they are necessary, she pushed the committee to state publicly that they would not allow further experiments.

The international InterNICHE Alternatives Loan System is managed from **Germany** by National Contact Dr Astrid Schmidt. Collections of alternatives are borrowed for multimedia exhibitions, and individual loans to teachers, students and campaigners are also common. Some are used for trial and demonstrations, others as actual learning tools by conscientiously objecting stu-

dents during their courses. National Contacts may mentor students through different courses; they, in turn, often involve other students, passing on knowledge, resources and confidence to object. The InterNICHE contacts in Germany also set up and help run <http://invitrojobs.com> to provide information about ethical careers and to help smooth the transition from humane education to humane science.

Promoting alternatives at an academic level, particularly at veterinary congresses, continues in **Iran** through National Contact Dr Ramak Roshanaie and Partner organisation the Iranian Anti-Vivisection Association (IAVA). A new network of volunteers has now been established across the country. Some replacement in physiology, pharmacology and anatomy was achieved during 2014 and in previous years.

In contrast to continuing problems with severe animal experiments across **Egypt**, InterNICHE contact at the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine at Cairo University, anatomist Dr Fawzy Elnady, has developed a new preservation method for animal cadavers. When following the InterNICHE Policy concerning the source of the cadaver, the technique could play an important role in replacement in anatomy and pathology, as well as in surgery training, as preserved organs and tissue can retain some flexibility. A presentation can be seen at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UVE9j7L-eOg>.

InterNICHE Partner organisation in **Kenya**, the African Network for Animal Welfare (ANAW), jointly won the Lush Prize for Training for 2014. InterNICHE has worked with ANAW for a number of years, co-organising pan-African seminars and other events. In **Denmark**, InterNICHE held a multimedia exhibition of alternatives at the national conference for scientists held on World Day for Laboratory Animals in April 2014. New InterNICHE Partners have recently been welcomed from **Portugal**, **Serbia** and **Argentina**, offering new opportunities in these countries.

Nick Jukes, InterNICHE coordinator

INT: OECD publishes new test guidelines for *in vitro* skin sensitization

The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in February published two new test guidelines for the *in vitro* assessment of skin sensitization, i.e., Test No. 442C: In Chemico Skin Sensitisation - Direct Peptide Reactivity Assay (DPRA) and Test No. 442D: In Vitro Skin Sensitisation - ARE-Nrf2 Luciferase Test Method. The methods are available at <http://bit.ly/1Fa8QOZ>

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INT: Request for proposal for hazard assessment of inhaled nanotubes

The PETA International Science Consortium Ltd. (PISC) recently organized an international workshop that was held at the US EPA headquarters in Washington, DC, on February 24-25, 2015. The workshop included experts from different sectors and disciplines to discuss the technical details for the development of an *in vitro* test to predict the development of pulmonary fibrosis in cells co-cultured at the air-liquid interface following exposure to aerosolized multi-walled carbon nanotubes (MWCNTs). During the workshop, experts made recommendations on cell types, exposure systems, endpoints and dosimetry considerations required to develop the *in vitro* model for hazard identification of MWCNTs. The next step is the development and preliminary assessment of the reliability and relevance of this *in vitro* test method, and PISC will fund this research.

Deadline: May 29, 2015.

More information: <http://bit.ly/1EkzYhp>

Jessica Sandler
PETA International Science
Consortium Ltd.
Via AltTox.org Community
Blog
March 18, 2015

ISR: Monkey breeding facility closed down

The breeding and export branch Mazor of the company BFC in Israel must close down and release 1,300 monkeys bred for animal experimentation. An Israeli multimillionaire, who also established a cat and dog rescue, has bought all the animals for 2 million dollars. Animal protectionists and antivivisectionists had demanded the closing down of the monkey breeding facility for twenty years. Some of Mazor's monkeys were caught in the wild in Mauritius. About a year ago the Israeli state-owned airline El Al had successfully petitioned the High Court to follow the example of many other airlines and absolve it from transporting monkeys for Mazor. Further, since 2015 the export of wild animals from Israel for experimental purposes is prohibited. The animals cannot be released into the wild; a sanctuary will be built for them using donations.

Adapted from press release
Ärzte gegen Tierversuche e.V.
January 19, 2015

South Korea: Five year plan to reduce cosmetics testing on animals announced

The South Korean Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs in January announced a "Five Year Plan for Animal Welfare," which was submitted by national assembly members in March. The first phase of the plan will ban testing on finished cosmetic products while testing of cosmetic ingredients will be banned in 2017. The bans however only apply where there are Korean government-accepted alternatives; it exempts some product categories, such as preservatives, sunscreens and colorants, and it does not limit the sale of cosmetics tested in animals in other countries. Currently nine alternative methods have government approval in South Korea.

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UK: NC3Rs accepting applications for David Sainsbury fellowship scheme

David Sainsbury fellowships support exceptional, 3Rs-minded, early-career scientists with the transition to an independent career. Applications from any area of medical, biological or veterinary research are within remit; those that integrate a range of disciplines or include an industrial partner are particularly encouraged. The competition offers fellows an award of £65k per annum for three years.

Deadline for submission of outlines: May 15, 2015

More information: <http://bit.ly/1D177yq>

NC3Rs newsletter
February 2015

UK: Home Office announces limited ban on animal tests for household products

The UK Home Office announced on March 12, 2015 that animal tests will no longer be performed for finished household products or chemicals where more than half of their usage is expected to be as an ingredient in household products, i.e., cleaning products, polishes, detergents, paint, decorating materials, laundry products, adhesives and air fresheners. The ban, which shall enter into force in October, follows a coalition promise in 2010 to end animal testing for household products.

The ban will likely have limited effects for the following reasons: no animal experiments were performed on finished house-



hold products since 2010 in the UK, companies will need to define the expected usage of a chemical as being more than half for household cleaning products to avoid testing, and even then a legal requirement of another regulation or an exceptional justification can trigger the animal tests.

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UK: Laboratory animal anesthesia e-learning resource available

The NC3Rs have made available their new e-learning resource on 'Laboratory Animal Anaesthesia for Minor Procedures' at <http://cbctraining.ncl.ac.uk/eM-EU20/story.html>. The online program, developed by Paul Flecknell and colleagues at Newcastle University and funded by the NC3Rs, is free to access and contains scenario-based training materials designed to be used as a basic introduction, a refresher, or for continued professional development.

NC3Rs newsletter
February 2015

USA: EPA proposes reporting and record keeping requirements on nanoscale materials in the marketplace

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is proposing one-time reporting and recordkeeping requirements on nanoscale chemical substances in the marketplace. EPA currently reviews new chemical substances manufactured or processed as nanomaterials prior to introduction into the marketplace to ensure that they are safe. For the first time, the agency is proposing to use TSCA to collect existing exposure and health and safety information on chemicals currently in the marketplace when manufactured or processed as nanoscale materials. The proposal will require one-time reporting from companies that manufacture or process chemical substances as nanoscale materials.

The companies will notify EPA of: certain information, including specific chemical identity; production volume; methods of manufacture; processing, use, exposure, and release information; and available health and safety data.

Nanoscale materials have special properties related to their small size such as greater strength and lighter weight, however, they may take on different properties than their conventionally-sized counterpart. The proposal is not intended to conclude that nanoscale materials will cause harm to human health or the environment; Rather, EPA would use the information gathered to determine if any further action under the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA), including additional information collection, is needed.

The proposed reporting requirements are being issued under the authority of section 8(a) under TSCA. The agency is requesting public comment on the proposed reporting and recordkeeping requirements 90 days from publication in the Federal Register. EPA also anticipates holding a public meeting during the comment period. The time and place of the meeting will be announced on EPA's web page.

More information: <http://www.epa.gov/oppt/nano/>

U.S. Environmental
Protection Agency Weekly
Digest Bulletin
March 29, 2015

USA: Grants available from the Alternatives Research and Development Foundation

The Alternatives Research and Development Foundation (ARDF) is soliciting proposals for its 2015 Alternatives Research Grant Program. Grants of up to \$40,000 are available to support individual projects of scientific merit and feasibility with potential to significantly reduce or replace laboratory animal use. Preference will be given to projects at U.S. universities and research institutions and projects that use pathway-based approaches.

Deadline: April 30, 2015

More information: <http://www.ardf-online.org>.

AltTox.org Community Blog
February 17, 2015

USA: Review of USDA animal welfare policies

Farm animals used in agricultural research in the US are exempt from protection under the Animal Welfare Act. Following a New York Times investigation into research practices at the U.S. Meat Animal Research Center in Nebraska (<http://nyti.ms/1AGgtZw>), the U.S. Department of Agriculture, which oversees the facility through its Agricultural Research Service, has named its first ever animal welfare ombudsman and announced that it will review and update its animal welfare strategy.

Further, a bill termed the Animal Welfare in Agricultural Research Endeavors (AWARE) Act has been introduced which aims to end exemptions for farm animals used in agricultural experiments at federal facilities from protections under the Animal Welfare Act.

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