

final report

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Report of the Visit of Professor Christine Nicol

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Outcomes

The principal outcomes achieved by Professor Nicol's visit were:

- Livestock industry stakeholders have an increased awareness of the quality of animal welfare science and an improved appreciation of the ethics of scientists contributing to this work.
- Livestock industry stakeholders are more aware of the importance that export markets and supermarket buyers place on animal welfare standards.
- The livestock industry and livestock transporters have an enhanced appreciation of how livestock transport is viewed and regulated in the EU and possible implications for the future in Australia.
- Other stakeholders interested in animal welfare have a better appreciation of the quality of science used in animal welfare research and importance that the Western Australian Department of Agriculture and Food places on animal welfare.
- Animal Welfare researchers have an important contact at Bristol University who is well connected to other animal welfare researchers in Europe. They also have high level advice specific to current research projects.
- Western Australia's chief scientist has an important personal connection with Professor Nicol which could assist in raising the importance of animal welfare in Western Australia.
- Western Australian Department of Agriculture and Food staff have an improved appreciation of the importance of animal welfare to the livestock industries.

Professor Nicol

Dr Christine Nichol is currently Professor of Animal Welfare and head of the internationally recognised research group in Animal Behaviour and Welfare at the University of Bristol. The group comprises over 30 academic and research staff, with 10 associated support staff and 23 post-graduate students. She is amongst the most highly regarded Animal Welfare academics in Europe.

Her principal area of research is the application of animal behaviour to the improvement of animal welfare. Her work has had considerable impact in a range of applied contexts especially agriculture and the biomedical and pharmaceutical industries. Her work now has a particular interest in developing new methods of assessing welfare and applying these to highlight problem areas and to produce solutions. Increasingly this work takes place within a European context, and involves international collaboration.

Total research funding as at September 2005 is £7,082,187. This includes £1.9 million from a collaborative £2.5 million project funded by the BBSRC on Advancing Animal Welfare Science. Her role involves creativity and innovation to identify new research areas.

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Program

The following table gives an outline of the program followed for Professor Nicol's visit. During this visit she delivered 10 prepared presentations to an audience of over 400 people.

| Date | Venue | Topic | Audience |
|---------------------------------|---|---|--|
| Tuesday 27 February | War Memorial Convention Centre | Space, time and unassuming animals | Scientists, Government and Animal Welfare Organisations (150) |
| Thursday 1 March | MLA, Sydney | Open title | MLA staff and interested stakeholders |
| Monday 5 March | Murdoch University | Understanding Farm Animal Cognition & Validating Multiple Sources of Welfare Measurement | Murdoch staff and students (20) |
| | Murdoch Club | Lunch | Dean of Vet School and researchers |
| | Murdoch | Welfare Research issues | Murdoch AW research staff |
| Tuesday 6 March | DAFWA office | Discuss scope and issues of visit | Dir of Animal Biosecurity, Chief Veterinary Officer and Manager of Animal Health Surveillance |
| Wed 7 th March AM | Pastoralists and Graziers Association House | Science, politics and market forces in animal welfare and trends in Europe | PGA and WAF reps, livestock transporters and agents and Opposition Agriculture Spokesperson (18) |
| PM | Technology Park. | Developments in animal welfare in Europe | Public, AWO reps, vets, agric students (50) |
| | Thai Corner Mt Pleasant | Dinner | Uni Scientists, Livestock Industry reps |
| Thursday 8 March | Executive Conference Room | General discussion of Prof Nicol's role and scope of visit | DAFWA Director General and Executive |
| | DAFWA Theatrette | The impact of science, politics and market forces on | DAFWA staff (25) |

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| | | animal welfare issues and trends in Europe | |
| Friday 9 March | Wagin Woolarama | Live interview on WA ABC Country Hour | State-wide rural audience |
| Monday 12 March | Denmark Ag college | General talk on farm animal welfare | Ag College students (30) |
| | DAFWA Albany | The impact of science, politics and market forces on animal welfare issues and trends in Europe | DAFWA staff (40) |
| | ABC office Albany | Interview for morning rural program | Regional rural audience |
| Tuesday 13 March | DAFWA Theatrette | Solutions to Animal Welfare challenges in intensive animal industries - farm, industry and marketing trends | Intensive livestock industry and AWO representatives (50) |
| | UWA dining room | Lunch discussion of UWA research and AEC systems | UWA Vice Chancellor and researchers |
| | UWA | Meeting with WA Chief Scientist | Prof Lyn Beasley |
| | UWA | Discussion with researchers and PhD students | Researchers and PhD students (10) |
| | UWA | Validating measures/new measures of animal welfare | UWA researchers, students and others (40) |
| Wednesday 14 March | Fraser's Restaurant | Dinner with DAFWA senior managers | Ex Dir Trade and Development, Dir Animal Biosecurity, Chief Veterinary Officer. |