

## Prestigious award for Professor in animal behaviour and welfare

**Professor Alistair Lawrence has been awarded the title of Honorary Fellow of the International Society for Applied Ethology.**

Professor Alistair Lawrence, Chair of Animal Behaviour and Welfare at the University of Edinburgh and Scotland's Rural College (SRUC), was awarded the title of Honorary Fellow at the annual Congress of the International Society for Applied Ethology (ISAE) on 7-10 August 2017 in Denmark. The title of Honorary Fellow is awarded by the ISAE Council to persons of eminence in the field of the aims of the Society.

ISAE provides a forum for the discussion of advances in applied animal behaviour science and education and covers aspects relevant to human-animal interactions such as farming, wildlife management, the keeping of companion and laboratory animals, and the control of pests. The Society has an international federal structure as well as regional representatives around the world.

Professor Lawrence has a PhD on sheep social behaviour after which he built a research team focusing on the application of animal behaviour to interpret and improve animal welfare in a range of farm species. He is currently working on understanding the wider effects of positive animal psychology on health and welfare, with a focus on play behaviour and environmental enrichment.

“It is a very great honour to be given this award. ISAE is **the** international society that represents the application of animal behaviour science to better understand how to improve how humans interact with animals. This award recognises my contribution to applied animal behaviour science and also that of the many colleagues I have worked with at the Easter Bush Campus. Edinburgh is a fantastic place to study animal behaviour and welfare with so much potential to find cross-disciplinary solutions to complex animal welfare issues.” Professor Alistair Lawrence

### Animal Welfare at the Easter Bush Campus

The Easter Bush Campus hosts the largest concentration of animal science and animal welfare related expertise anywhere in Europe. The Roslin Institute, the Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies (R(D)SVS) and SRUC all work to improve animal welfare. The following are a number of examples of collaborative work.

#### Understanding positive emotional states in animals

Together with SRUC, Roslin and Biomathematics & Statistics Scotland (BioSS), we aim to develop experimental approaches to study positive emotions in animals, including play behaviour in pigs (see [video](#)) and tickling of rats (see [video](#)). We will use these approaches to develop measures of positive emotions in animals and to study the wider effects of positive emotions on health and welfare.

#### Hunger in poultry and pigs

The problem of hunger in feed-restricted broiler breeders and dry, lactating sows has been recognised as a major welfare issue for some years. These animals have high growth potential but must be rationed to be healthy adults. Roslin and SRUC are collaborating to find diets which restrict energy to ensure good health without chronic hunger.

## Genetics of aggression in pigs

Pig aggression is a major problem for farmers with serious welfare implications. Joint work between SRUC and Roslin is pursuing various genetic solutions to the problem including the use of selective breeding against highly aggressive personalities.

Teaching: Master of Science (MSc) programmes

The Easter Bush Campus runs two highly successful MSc programmes in animal behaviour and welfare. The MScs in Applied Animal Behaviour and Welfare and in International Animal Welfare, Ethics and Law are both based at the R(D)SVS and are taught by researchers from SRUC, Roslin, R(D)SVS and other parts of the University of Edinburgh.

Jeanne Marchig International Centre for Animal Welfare Education

The JMICAWE was formed in 2011 to improve the health and welfare of animals through education, training, research and promoting the important role of veterinarians in protecting animal welfare. The Centre lies within the R(D)SVS and uses skills and inputs from across the Easter Bush Campus.

For further information please contact [Professor Alistair Lawrence](#).

### Relevant links

- Institute Strategic Programme: [Improving Animal Production & Welfare](#)
- [Play as an indicator of positive welfare](#)
- Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies: [International Animal Welfare](#)
- SRUC [Animal Behaviour & Welfare](#)
- [The Jeanne Marchig International Centre for Animal Welfare Education](#)
- Developmental Biology Research Division: [Improving animal welfare and production traits](#)
- [Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Body](#)
- [MSc in Applied Animal Behaviour and Welfare](#)
- [Online MSc in International Animal Welfare, Ethics and Law](#)

– From Inês Crespo, The Roslin Institute