

HSA International Conference: Livestock Welfare during Transport, Marketing & Slaughter

The Royal College of Physicians, Edinburgh, UK

Biographies of keynote speakers



Bob Elwood

Emeritus Professor Queen's
University, Belfast

'Pain and suffering in decapods'

Bob Elwood obtained his degree in Zoology at Reading University in 1972 and completed his PhD in 1975 on parental care and pup development in rodents. That year he obtained a lectureship in Zoology in Queen's University, Belfast, which allowed him to follow diverse interests in animal behaviour and ecology. These include investigations on the control of paternal care and the inhibition of infanticide in mammals, how animals gather information about resources, and how animals make decisions in contests. The latter used various crustacean species but the studies on hermit crabs were the most comprehensive. His interest in potential pain in crustaceans followed a chance meeting in 2005, with a well-known seafood chef, who asked if crabs and lobsters felt pain.

Bob was Treasurer and then President of the Association for the Study of Animal Behaviour. He has held editorial roles with Animal Behaviour, Biology Letters and Journal of Zoology. He supervised 40+ PhD students and devised and taught a MSc programme in animal behaviour and welfare. He was elected to the Royal Irish Academy, awarded the ASAB medal, and received the BSAS/RSPCA prize for innovative developments in animal welfare. Bob "retired" in 2015 and is now Emeritus Professor of Animal Behaviour at QUB, however, he continues to be involved with animal behaviour and welfare.



Will Jackson

Chief Strategy Officer, AHDB

'Animal welfare at slaughter:
labelling and the importance of
the consumer'

Will Jackson is The Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board (AHDB) Sector Strategy Director for Beef & Lamb.

Will plays a pivotal role working with the Beef & Lamb Sector Board and operational teams to deliver the organisation's 'Inspiring Success' strategy.

Will grew up on a dairy farm in Derbyshire, which really fuelled his passion to be involved with agriculture. His previous role was as Senior Agricultural Manager at Co-op, where he had responsibility for the beef, lamb and poultry accounts, along with experience of working on a day-to-day basis with farmers and retailers in the agriculture team at Arla Foods.

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Claire White

Senior Veterinary Advisor, NFU

'Development and application of
the Demonstration of Life
protocol'

Claire works as Senior Veterinary Adviser for the NFU, across animal health and welfare policy in all farmed species. She has occupied a number of roles in the food and farming sectors, from farm vet to management of food businesses, and as a university lecturer and industry trainer.

Claire began her career in farm practice in Salisbury after graduating from a joint vet degree and masters in infectious disease control from Liverpool University. After several years, her interest in the onward food supply chain and public health led her into employment with red-meat processor Dunbia. Working in several roles at group and regional level, she was responsible for animal welfare and later all technical standards, ensuring that products met the expected standards of customers and consumers.

Moving into a dual operational and teaching role for Bristol Vet School, she ran their abattoir which operates commercially, supplying local butchers and farm shops, as well as in a teaching capacity, whilst also delivering industry-facing animal welfare training, undergraduate lectures and contributing national policy work. Claire joined the NFU in summer 2021 and is now working on several key policy areas relating to animal health, responsible medicines use, welfare in transport and market access in relation to stunned Halal slaughter.

Outside of her main role, Claire also is a liveryman in the Worshipful Company of Butchers, leading their 'Young Butchers' initiative and an active committee member. She also provides export certification services to food businesses in the retail supply chain.