



Humane Slaughter Association

Media Release

24 March 2017

Humane Slaughter Association (HSA) funds project to assess CCTV in slaughterhouses

The HSA is pleased to announce that it has made a grant award to Ellie Wigham, a PhD student at the University of Bristol for her project *“Analysis of the use of CCTV data to monitor and improve slaughter plant welfare in the US – what can we learn from our American friends?”*

The main focus of Ellie’s project is to assess the effects of independent CCTV auditing on animal welfare in lairage and at slaughter. With this system being now more widely used in the United States of America, often as a customer requirement to ensure optimum welfare protocols are being followed and to identify any welfare risks, the project aims to gain a detailed understanding of the process and of its benefits for animal welfare. The knowledge acquired by this program in the US will be used to evaluate the benefits of CCTV for slaughterhouses in the UK and Europe.

HSA’s Chief Executive Dr Robert Hubrecht said: “Providing funding for essential research and other projects is part of the HSA’s remit to improve the welfare of food animals between the farm gate and slaughter. CCTV is one way of monitoring animal handling in slaughterhouses, but much depends on how it is used, and it can only be a part of the total effort needed to maintain high welfare standards. Consideration needs to be given to how the video is collected, stored and assessed and the impact on animal welfare. Ellie’s project should provide more detailed information with the potential to facilitate informed decisions for industry.”

There is currently no legal requirement in the UK for business operators to install CCTV in slaughterhouses. However in July 2015 a public petition in the UK calling for mandatory CCTV in slaughterhouses with independent monitoring gathered over 112,000 signatures. According to a report by the Farm Animal Welfare Committee which was produced in February 2015, CCTV in UK abattoirs is increasing in both red and white meat slaughterhouses, with the monitoring mostly carried out on site by the Food Business Operators. The welfare benefits of this practice have yet to be fully documented.

In May last year, the Food Standards Agency (FSA) carried out a further survey on the use of CCTV in slaughterhouses and reported that they, Defra and the industry all support the voluntary adoption of CCTV as a useful complement to the existing system of control. Many business operators have used this facility to good effect and all the major retailers specify the use of CCTV in their contracts.

-ENDS-

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Note to Editors:

The HSA is an independent charity recognised internationally for promoting scientific, technical and educational advances towards improving the welfare of food animals worldwide at slaughter, killing, marketing and transport.

The charity is also noted for its livestock expertise and provides education and training in the fields of transport, marketing and slaughter in the United Kingdom and around the world. Its work includes researching, refining and demonstrating humane slaughter methods, publishing material such as guidelines, best practice, books and videos, funding research projects and the development of equipment. Specialist technical staff provide expert and practical advice on all welfare issues relating to food animals.

The HSA is funded by voluntary donations, subscriptions and legacies.

For more information about the HSA's work call 01582 831919, email info@hsa.org.uk or visit www.hsa.org.uk

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