

CHANGING PATTERNS IN THE USE OF RESEARCH ANIMALS VERSUS PUBLIC ATTITUDES: POTENTIAL CONFLICT



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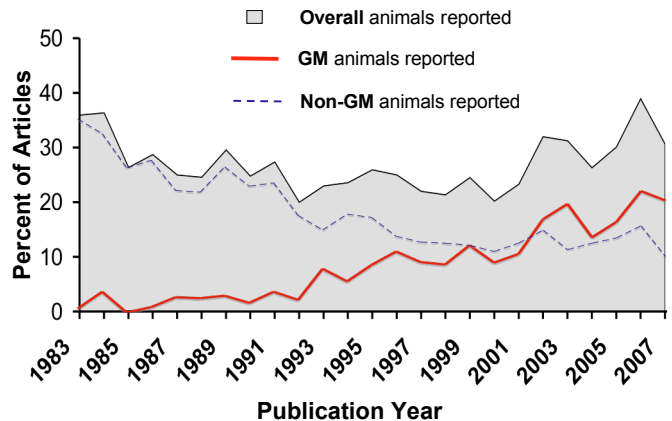


BACKGROUND

- One of the long-standing ethical goals of laboratory animal science is to reduce the numbers of animals used in research
- Very little data is available on worldwide changes in the number and type of animals used in research
- Changing patterns in the use of animals needs to be understood in relation to the willingness of the public to accept different types of research animal use

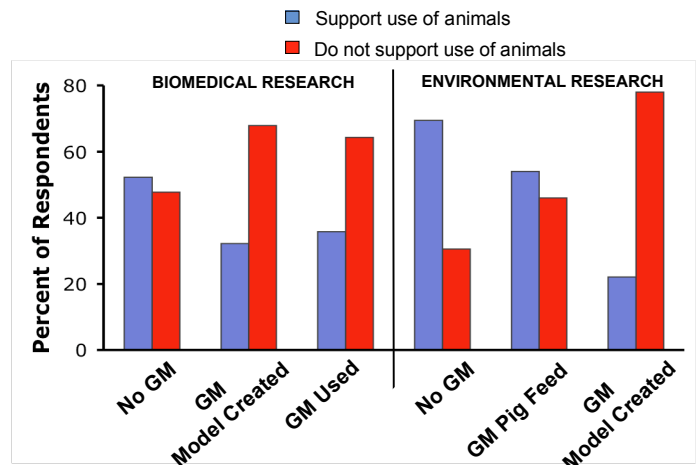
BIBLIOMETRIC ANALYSIS

- Bibliometric methods were used to map global trends in research animal use over the past 25 years
- We sampled 2691 original research articles from four high impact journals (Nature, Science, Cell, Nature Biotechnology)
- Overall animal use fell until the early 1990's, but has been increased over the last 15 years
- This increase is driven by the increased use of genetically modified animals



INTERACTIVE WEB SURVEY

- Using 2 online surveys, we compared attitudes of the public towards different uses of animals in research
- Both surveys included scenarios with and without the genetic modification of pigs and in the environmental case, the genetic modification of the pig feed
- The level of public support declined when genetic modification was proposed in both scenarios ($p < 0.001$)



IMPLICATIONS

- These results indicate that the public is much less willing to accept the use of animals in research when this involves genetically modifying animals
- The increasing use of animals in research, especially of genetically modified animals, is likely to face increased public opposition