

Animal pain and OIE Standards

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Better understanding of the mechanisms of animal pain and its treatment, together with increasing societal expectations that animal pain, when significant, should be treated, are key facets of any contemporary consideration of related OIE Standards. Such standards would aim to deliver better welfare where pain may be avoided to a great extent or altogether, and where effective pain relieving drugs or other means that are both practical and affordable, are also available. Additional contextual aspects need to be evaluated, including access to and quality of support or expertise, and whether animals are being treated in the laboratory or veterinary clinic, on-farm, in a zoo or the wild, or elsewhere. Likewise, the orientation of such standards requires attention: are they to be primarily directed towards the practical 'management' of pain, or towards 'educational' standards in terms of curriculum details and the relevant knowledge and skill levels acquired, or both?

