



Understanding Animal Research
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Dear For Life on Earth,

In response to your letter dated 02.04.2014, as previously noted, we are more than willing to participate in a debate on the pros and cons of animal research. We do this all the time and to this end we helped organise 30 debates last year at universities across the country to give students an opportunity to make up their own mind on this complex issue. We have also led the work to develop a Concordat on Openness on Animal Research in the UK, which commits its signatories to encouraging more discussion about animal research.

However, we feel that your proposed motion is rather narrow. We feel that a meaningful debate on the usefulness of animal research to human – and animal – health should encompass all the areas of research in which animals are used. I would also note that Michael Mansfield QC, who endorses your debate, is not unbiased on this issue as the patron of an animal rights group and an outspoken critic of the use of animals in society.

There are other practical issues associated with the debate conditions you have laid out, which I suggest we set our minds to resolving once we've agreed a title for the debate and agreed that it should not deem discussion of large swathes of animal research off-limits. As you'll be aware, even some opponents of animal research accept its usefulness in some areas of scientific research.

Yours sincerely,

Wendy Jarrett