



Have You **HERD**

UF/IFAS DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL SCIENCES
NEWSLETTER VOL. 6 | FALL 2022

HAVE YOU HERD?

Fall 2022

UF/IFAS Department of Animal Sciences

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Cover Photo



Students measuring a chicken in Tracy Scheffler's Chicken Growth and Development Lab course. Photo Credit: Savannah Linzmaier. See page 10.

LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

Dear alumni, friends and supporters,

Another year is in the books! This year has been one of success and growth for our department and everyone in it.

Engaging with future students is vital to the future success of our program and a priority of mine and our advising office. This semester we launched the “Have You HERD” student program. This program gives high school students a glimpse of what it would be like to be a UF ANS student. Participants spend the day with a current ANS undergraduate and experience a day in the life as an ANS student. We have had five students participate thus far and are looking forward to having visit us next semester. For more information on the program flip to page 14.

Our faculty pride themselves on creating lasting bonds with their students. We are making an effort to keep our alumni engaged with our department and connect them with our current students. One way I see this taking root is through our annual Internship Seminar. Faculty member, Amie Imler has worked to grow this program from class presentations into a networking event where our students showcase their internship experiences to potential employers. Students from our department and beyond are invited to the event where they too can network to find potential internship and employment opportunities. Flip to page 13 to see a snapshot of the event.

As always extension events are a priority for our department. This semester we again hosted the UF Ram Sale, but this year it was accompanied by a new event, the Small Ruminant Short Course. Turn to page 12 for highlights of this event. ANS staff and faculty have already started preparing for the events of 2023 including the Ruminant Nutrition Symposium, 72nd Annual Beef Cattle Short Course, the Brahman Bull and Heifer Sale, Family Day at the Dairy Farm, and Sale in the Swamp just to name a few. Be sure to check our website and social media pages for updates on upcoming events and news about our department.

Please enjoy our latest newsletter which follows. Thank you for all you have done and continue to do to move the ANS mission forward. We could not do what we do without our alumni, friends, and stakeholders who generously support our efforts in so many ways. Whether you are giving through financial support, your time to speak to our students, or providing jobs and internships, we cannot say thank you enough. If you are interested in giving, please visit <https://give.ifas.ufl.edu/animal-sciences-giving/> to learn about various giving opportunities or feel free to reach out to me directly.

Sincerely,

John Arthington
Professor and Chair



John Arthington
PROFESSOR & CHAIR

Alumni Spotlight



Earlier this year, UF Animal Sciences Alumni Caroline Osgood, was offered the opportunity to become a therapeutic riding instructor for individuals with special needs and veterans with PTSD. Although Caroline had always seen herself working in the beef industry, this was an opportunity she could not pass up. Prior to becoming a riding instructor, Osgood worked on the cattle crew at Desert Ranch after her graduation from UF in the fall of 2017.

“I used to joke that the only way I’d ever leave the beef industry would be to work with veterans, but I never really considered doing that until I met the CEO of McCormick Research Institute. She offered me the opportunity to merge my love of horses with my passion for helping veterans,” Osgood said when asked if she thought this is the career path she would be on after graduating from our department.

Osgood was an Equine Science Specialization. During her undergraduate career, Osgood held leadership positions in both UF Block and Bridle and Gator Collegiate Cattlewomen as well as competed on the Horse judging team and Intercollegiate Horse Show Association (IHSA) Western Team. Through

her club involvement, she was given the opportunity to travel to Florida Cattlemen’s convention, the FCA Legislative Quarterly Meeting, National Block and Bridle

Convention and the National Cattlemen’s Beef Association Convention. Her judging team involvement allowed her to travel to Quarter Horse Congress and Quarter Horse World. Along with these trips she was able to attend many ranch tours and educational events.



During her time at UF, Osgood completed two different internships, one with Florida Heritage Beef and the other with Deseret Cattle and Citrus located in St. Cloud, Florida. Her internship with Deseret resulted in a job right after graduation. She worked for Deseret for four years before moving into her new position.

Osgood credits the animal sciences department for giving her a great education and incredible support system.

“I found professors that became not only mentors, but also friends and confidants. Even 5 years later, those professors greet me with a hug and reach out to check on me from time to time.”



In Five Years

Alumni Spotlights of ANS alumni who graduated five years ago



Michael Gary

Quality Assurance Technician
Buckhead Meat of Florida

Michael graduated from the animal sciences department in the Fall of 2017 with a focus on food animal production. During his time at UF, Michael was a student manager for the Swine Research Unit. He interned with Smithfield Foods in North Carolina and Texas during his time as an undergrad which resulted in a job right after college. He now works as a Quality Assurance Tech for for Buckhead Meat of Florida. The most beneficial part of his undergrad was working in the swine unit because it introduced him to people involved in the career field in which he would enter. It also allowed him to develop his work ethic.

Advice to a Senior: Be willing to take a job somewhere you are not familiar with. The experiences will gain from having to start over will be something you remember forever, and it may turn out to be the best thing for you in the future.

Involvement while at UF: Meat judging team, Livestock Evaluation team, TA for swine related classes



Caroline Chappell

Best Management Practices Technician
FDACS

Caroline graduated from our department in the Fall of 2017 with a food animal specialization. During her time at UF she completed an Extension internship in the Northwest Extension District, which led to her career as a 4-H agent. After graduation, she went on to get her master's degree in Animal Sciences from Auburn University and later started as a 4-H agent in Jackson County as well as marry her husband, Logan. She now has a 10-month-old son named Emmett and works as a Best Management Practices Technician for the Florida Department of Ag and Consumer Services.

Advice to a Senior: There are so many unknowns for you right now, and that is an unnerving place to be. Just remember - as long as you work hard, are honest with yourself, and never give up, everything will work out the way it's supposed to!

Involvement while at UF: President of GCCW, Livestock and Meat Evaluation, CALS Ambassador

Research



Animal Behavior & Welfare Lab Makes Advances in

By: **Annabel Henson**

UF/IFAS Department of Animal Sciences faculty member, Emily Miller-Cushon began her program at UF in 2014 and is now an Associate Professor with a 60 percent research and 40 percent teaching appointment. She developed undergraduate and graduate courses that were specific to Animal Behavior and Welfare. Miller-Cushon found her passion for animal behavior research when she had an opportunity to conduct research as an undergraduate student. She then went on to complete graduate studies at the University of Guelph in Ontario, Canada.

The Animal Behavior and Welfare Lab is currently working on two projects, both funded through the USDA NIFA Agriculture and Food Research Initiative. The first project is assessing long-term effects of social housing for dairy calves on behavior, performance,

and welfare into lactation. While it is conventional for dairy calves to be separated from the cow at birth, there are various approaches on dairy farms to raise young calves in social groups with one or more other calves. Animal behavior and welfare research is working to discover how calves interact in social settings and how early social experience affects their development. In the dairy industry today, there is growing recognition of benefits of social contact for dairy calves and increasing adoption of some form of housing that allows for social contact between calves from a young age. Through their research, Miller-Cushon's group is looking at the long-term effects of early housing environment on dairy calf behavior, including how they behave in a novel environment, and cognition, or learning ability. They are also assessing long-term effects on health, growth, and reproductive development. They predict that socially reared calves may have advantages as they grow and eventually enter the lactating herd. This research can lead to recommendations to refine calf rearing on-farm.



The second project is funded through a program specific to exploratory research. They are using an ultra-wideband location tracking system to look at social proximity of dairy calves in group-housing, and then using social network analysis to assess how changes in social behavior of dairy calves coincide with subclinical and clinical respiratory disease. Miller-Cushon says she's excited about this particular project because it is "laying the groundwork for

Spotlight



Application

developing novel behavioral indicators to improve disease identification on-farm.” Respiratory disease is common among young dairy calves, which becomes an economic issue as well as a welfare issue. She is excited to continue working in this area of research.

For Miller-Cushon, assessing animal cognition in her lab has been a favorite part of the research being conducted. The project allowed them to look at behavioral flexibility (how easily a calf adjusts their behavior in response to changing external cues) using spatial learning tasks. The lab adapted previously developed animal cognition tests and found that various forms of enrichment, including access to chopped hay, affected the learning ability in calves. They are now using a modified form of the test to look at potential carryover effects of social housing on learning ability of weaned heifers. Although the test

is a lot of work, it provides opportunity for hands-on animal handling and behavioral observation. Cognition in dairy heifers may have implications for their ability to navigate their environment, affecting their long-term welfare, and Miller-Cushon is excited to learn more through this research.

Miller-Cushon recruits graduate students who are excited about applying an understanding of animal behavior to improve animal welfare. There are also many opportunities for undergraduate research assistants within the Animal Behavior and Welfare lab. These opportunities give students the chance to gain hands-on experience working with dairy calves and recording behavioral data from video. A few of the AB&W undergraduate research assistants have gone on to apply to graduate school and study animal behavior and welfare.

If you are interested in learning more about Miller-Cushon and the Animal Behavior and Welfare lab please visit our website at <https://animal.ifas.ufl.edu/research-programs/management/welfare-and-behavior/> and check out their research updates on Instagram @abwlab.

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UF Block

LITTLE INTE

Block and Bridle was able to host its annual Little International event, commonly known as “Little I.” Little I is a small-scale livestock show and is the initiation event for new members. Initiates must work to show an animal they have little or no experience with under the guidance of old member coaches. They are given two months to prepare the showmanship skills necessary to compete with their animal at the livestock show. This event facilitates relationship building between old members and new members, allows for development of interpersonal communication skills, and provides opportunity for members to gain hands-on experience with multiple livestock species.

Little I started with a lunch graciously provided by Farm Credit of Florida. Following lunch, members showed their assigned species they worked with for over two months. Mr. Jason Stalnaker was our swine judge, Ms. Ashley Hughes as our beef judge (UF alumna), Mr. Tyler Getzlaff as our sheep judge and Ms. Samantha Sullo as our equine judge (UF Animal Sciences alumna). Two members from each species class were chosen by judges to go to the Round Robin contest, where all eight members have to show all four species. Overall, we had a great show with a great turnout from friends and family, alumni, along with faculty and staff!

We are so absolutely proud of all the hard work and dedication our students have put in this semester towards Little I. A special thanks to our species coaches, club advisors, unit managers, and judges for making all this possible! Congratulations to Chloe Howard, our Little I Grand Champion, and Harley Seay, our Little I Reserve Champion!

Spotlight by: Gina Tran



E Bridle

INTERNATIONAL



Growth & Development Lab Improves Student Experience

By: Shelby O. Thomas



UF/IFAS Department of Animal Sciences (ANS) faculty member, Tracy Scheffler, was awarded a 2022 University of Florida College of Agricultural and Life Sciences Instructional Improvement Mini-Grant earlier this year. She proposed ANS 4932 Special Topics in Animal Science – Chicken Growth and Development and was able to offer the course in the fall of 2022.

“I wanted to do some things to improve growth and development to make it a little more interesting and hands on for the students,” Scheffler said. “I wanted a way to reenforce some of the things they learned in lecture.”

The course focuses on practical application of the principles of animal growth and development using chickens. In this lab, chickens are used as a model to examine how a particular factor affects animal growth and development. The animals are used to explore broader implications for animals, producers, and consumers.

“I have challenged the students to come up with the next problem they think should be addressed and ideas for how to address it,” Scheffler said.

One goal of ANS is to incorporate more opportunities for students to interact with the vast poultry sector of the animal sciences industry. While some opportunities do exist, such taking students to the International Production and Processing Expo, the opportunity to

work with the animals through a hands-on approach was not a prevalent option for students before now.

“There are limited opportunities for chicken, and we do have some students who are really interested in chickens,” Scheffler said. “This gives them another chance to work with poultry.”

The decision to use poultry was also based largely in the fact that students can see the entire growth and production process of the animal. A fact that was appreciated by animal sciences undergraduate, Paulina Farias.

“I chose to take this lab course because I have a huge interest in poultry,” Paulina said. “I’ve raised chickens all my life, but I have never had the chance to compare differences between such different breeds. It was very interesting to see how their eating habits, behavior, and rate of growth were so different.”

Dr. Scheffler is working to teach her students critical thinking skills right out of the gate by asking them to find ways to answer the question at hand. The topic this semester focused on the quality of slow growing versus fast growing chickens. Student involvement and interest in a course is paramount to making the learning process effective. One way Scheffler works to engage her students further is by connecting the content with their life outside of the classroom.

"I asked the students what part of the chicken they normally eat and all but one of them preferred the white meat, the breast," Scheffler said. "So do the proportions on the chicken change when you have slow growing chicken? Is there less breast meat, or is it that there's the same amount of breast meat, just a slower growing chicken?"

The hands-on experience the students are receiving in this course is aiding tremendously to their understanding of growth and development as it applies to livestock. Undergraduate animal sciences student, Bailey Cox said the course allowed her to solidify her understanding on the topics she learned in the lecture course.

"This lab has been instrumental to my understanding and application of growth and development of farm animals," Bailey said. "I was skeptical about this class at first, but after going through an entire semester, it has genuinely been one of the best experiences of my undergraduate career."

Through this course, students step into the shoes of a livestock producer. They see the joys and discomforts of being responsible for the production of a flock of chickens. Bailey said her favorite part of the course was watching the livestock grow and knowing she had a hand in the production of the animals.

"This experience was filled with so many learning opportunities and the ability to collaborate and solve

real issues with others in a real-world setting," Bailey said. "I liked that the class was not black and white, and we had to continuously change our perspective to navigate new issues."

Students who took the course gave it rave reviews and recommend it to interested students. Paulina said Dr. Scheffler teaches valuable skills, and the lab would help diversify the animal sciences student experience.

"My favorite part of the course was my assigned individual check in on our birds," Paulina said. "I was able to note differences in the two flocks since our last check in class."

Long term, Scheffler's goal for the course is not only to give students hands on experience, but to use the data collected in the lab to inform the lecture portion of growth and development. The students will be collecting data in real time that can be compiled and shared in future lectures. She also plans to measure the educational impact and effectiveness the lab in conjunction with the lecture course as soon as the course is officially established.

Currently, Scheffler is working to establish an official course number so the lab can be offered every semester. For now, the course is open to 10 students in the spring of 2023. Students will continue to explore the question of slow growing versus fast growing chickens. 🐔



UF Small Ruminant Short Course

The first UF/IFAS Small Ruminant Short Course was hosted Friday, September 16th. This event is an excellent example of faculty collaboration between the Department of Animal Sciences, UF College of Veterinary Medicine and Agronomy. The Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University is also a partner of the program. The turn-out was amazing with the Straughn Center nearly full with over 150 attendees. This sector of the industry is eager for extension outreach and engagement. A big thank you goes out to everyone that worked hard to make the event successful. Izabella Toledo and Catalina Cabrera lead the charge on this year's successful event.

In addition to the short course the 2022 UF Ram Sale was held on Saturday, September 17th with 135 attendees. Nine rams sold for an average of \$705 with the highest selling for \$2,000. In its second year, this program has grown in popularity and the department looks forward to the continued success of the UF Ram Test and Sale. Be sure to check the department website for updated information about the 2023 UF Ram Test and Sale.



Internship Seminar



The Department of Animal of Sciences hosted its annual Internship Seminar on Thursday, October 20, 2022 at the UF/IFAS Straughn Professional Development Center. This year, approximately 40 Animal Sciences students showcased their internship experience from the past academic year. Approximately 100 students from across the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences attended the event along with Animal Sciences staff and faculty. Industry partners from across the state were also in attendance during the event's networking hour, designed to connect employers and students with future internship and full-time job opportunities. The event was sponsored by Farm Credit of Florida, Buckhead Meat & Seafood, and Wayne Sanderson Farms.

Have You HERD Program Reflection

By: Savannah Linzmaier

The fall of 2022 brought a new immersive program for high school students to the UF/IFAS Department of Animal Sciences (ANS). This fall semester, the Animal Sciences Undergraduate Office successfully launched the “Have You HERD” (HYH) student program.

This new program is designed to give high school students a chance to spend a day at ANS. Five students took part this fall and experienced the department in a way that has never been done before. Alexis Tilton, ANS undergraduate academic advisor, was the trailblazer for Have You HERD.

“The idea for the program came from us wanting to showcase our unique department to high school students and allow them more access to witness everything available at the University of Florida,” Tilton said.

The idea for this new recruitment program came from the goal of bringing in five students during the fall 2022 semester. The undergraduate advising office and the communications team worked quickly to get HYH developed, branded, and well-advertised to meet the August 1 application opening date.

The program had immediate interest; the introduction post on Facebook was shared 116 times! IFAS Extension offices, 4-H clubs, and FFA Chapters were a huge help in quickly spreading the word about the program. By the time the application closed on September 1, HYH fall 2022 had 33 applicants.

The application to the program is unique and allows



the selection committee to get a better understanding of the applicant and why they are interested in the program. Applicants are required to submit a 3-4-minute video of themselves describing their background and interest areas. They are asked to talk about the animal sciences discipline they enjoy learning about, why they are interested in the program, and what they would want to see if they were to spend a day in the department.

The five students selected and spent a day in ANS were Ava McCoy, Camille Britt, Isaac Harper, Megan Watier, and Savannah Jerrels. Each of these students had custom itineraries created with their interests in mind. These students met with an academic advisor,





interacted with current ANS undergraduate students, took a tour of campus, sat in on classes they selected, and most of them spoke with faculty members or judging coaches about opportunities within the department and animal industry.

Zachary Seekford, Animal Sciences graduate student and Graduate Teaching Assistant, assisted in the ANS ANS3319C Reproductive Physiology and Endocrinology in Domestic Animals lab where Camille Britt attended class.

“One of my personal philosophies is to instill in students the same level of excitement and interest about reproductive physiology that I have. The Have you HERD program allowed me to build on this philosophy by introducing Camille to the basics of porcine semen collection and sperm cell morphological analysis,” Zachary said. “The HYH program allowed me the opportunity to expand my teaching style and adjust to different levels of understanding.”

The experience the students have at ANS will likely follow them into their future and their educational and career decisions. The biggest takeaway from this program is the meaningful connections with students, faculty, and staff the participants are able to make. The benefit of student-to-student connections made up much of the feedback received from the five HYH participants.

ANS faculty member Todd Thrift, who had two of the students attend his ANS3246L Beef Production Practicum and one student attend his ANS4243 Beef Cow-Calf Management lecture, expressed his appreciation of the program. He called the program

a “brilliant idea” and essential to recruiting animal industry-seeking students to our department.

“The biggest thing is not so much them going to class but getting to interact with college students,” Thrift said. “These are people they can look up to and form an association with early on.”

Tilton got to know each of these students while they were visiting the department and witnessed the impact of this program on each of them. She, and the rest of the undergraduate advising office are excited to see the long-term effects of this program. The hope is to see these students in ANS classrooms again in the future.

“It was wonderful to see how enthusiastic and open they were to meeting current students and exploring career opportunities within the animal industry,” Tilton said.

Animal sciences students, faculty, and staff played a major role in the success of the HYH program. ANS will continue to offer this program every fall and spring semester. Prospective students who wish to pursue an education and career in the animal agricultural industry are encouraged to apply for Spring 2023 and future semesters.

Applications are open until January 15, 2023 for the upcoming semester. Application information can be found on the ANS blog at <https://tinyurl.com/HYH2023>.

[HYH2023](https://tinyurl.com/HYH2023). 🐸 🐮 🐄 🐷 🐵

Congratulations

New Faculty Faces



Zongliang (Carl) Jiang
Associate Professor



Haipeng Yu
Assistant Professor

Faculty Awards



Peter Hansen
L.E. Casida Award for
Excellence in Graduate
Education



Gbola Adesogan
E.T. and Vam
York Professor
of International
Agriculture



**Arie Hendrik
Havelaar**
International
Leadership Award



Brad Daigneault
CALS Innovation in
Teaching

Department of Animal Sciences

Ambassadors



Carmen Burner
Animal Biology



Jessica Czipulis
Food Animal



Emma Lipori
Animal Biology



Mikaela Martin
Animal Biology



Taylor McKinney
Food Animal



Douglas Natcoe
Food Animal



Grace Oyer
Animal Biology



Payton Rethmel
Food Animal



Karina Vestergaard
Animal Biology



Shelby Welshons
Animal Biology

UF Animal Science

In October alumni, faculty, staff, students, and friends gathered at the UF/IFAS Beef Teaching Unit South for the UF/IFAS Department of Animal Sciences Alumni Tailgate prior to the UF/LSU game. The event hosted approximately 100 people in support of the department's student judging teams. Attendees enjoyed fellowship, great food, gave away game tickets to the game to two of our attendees, and watched the Gators take on LSU. A highlight of the event was recognizing alumni from 5-, 10-, 15-, and 20-year judging teams and coaches. It was so great to hear all of the stories shared from our alumni as well as watch them interact with our current judging team members.

During the Alumni Tailgate a ribbon cutting was held for the North Beef Teaching Unit's classroom. Thank you to All American Solar, who provided a generous gift in support of the department's beef teaching program. The celebration took place with testimonies from students who benefit from the excellent teaching experiences provided by this facility. Thank you to Brandon Bing, Blake Blackmon and All-American Solar for your support of the UF/IFAS Department of Animal Sciences.

Thank you everyone who came out to support the judging teams.



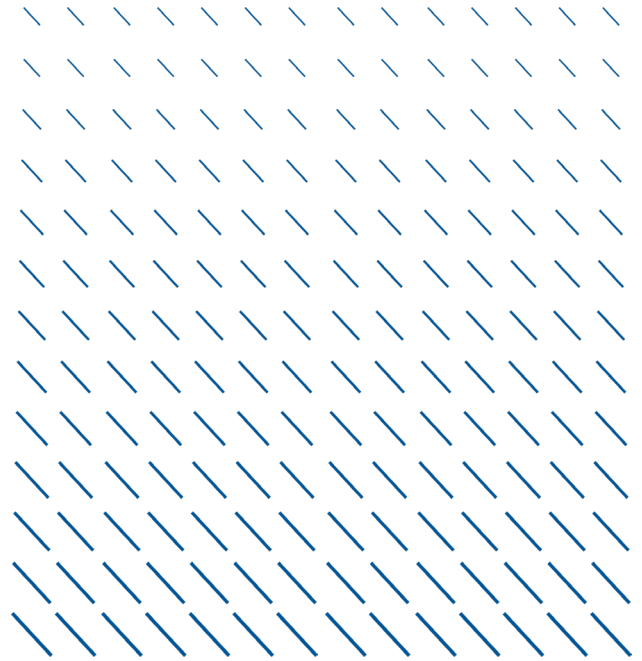
ces Alumni Tailgate



Awards & Recognition

Awards & Accomplishments

- ANS Distinguished Professor & L.E. Red Larson Professor, **Peter J. Hansen** received the L. E. Casida Award for Excellence in Graduate Education from the American Society of Animal Sciences.
- **Adegbola Adesogan** was named the E.T. and Vam York Professor of International Agriculture.
- ANS Professor, **Arie Hendrik Havelaar** received the International Leadership Award from the International Association of Food Protection.
- ANS Assistant Professor, **Brad Daigneault** received the CALS Innovation in Teaching Award.
- ANS graduate student, **Zach Seekford** received the IFAS Edward Fisher scholarship.



SHARE YOUR STORY WITH US

We enjoy hearing updates from our alumni!

- Do you have internship or job opportunities for animal sciences students?
- Are you interested in speaking in an undergrad class about your career?
- Would you like to be featured in a **Have you HERD** Alumni Spotlight?

**Visit our website to learn how to be involved with the UF/IFAS
Department of Animal Sciences!**

**CONNECT WITH US ON
SOCIAL MEDIA @UF_ANSCI**



Upcoming Events

January 14 **Cow Sale**

January 21 **Beef Dinner**

January 26 **Retired Faculty Luncheon**

February 11 **Family Day at the Dairy**

February 20 – 22 **Ruminant Nutrition Symposium**

March 3 **International Cook-off Day**

March 4 **Open Gate**

March 24 – 26 **Ropin in the Swamp**

April 22 **Sale in the Swamp Preview**

April 29 **Sale in the Swamp Ends**

May 10 – 12 **Beef Cattle Short Course**

May 10 – 12 **Brahman Bull and Heifer Sale**

**CHECK OUR WEBSITE FOR UPDATES
ON ALL OUR EVENTS!**

2022



Recap



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GIVING

Your generous donation to the UF/IFAS Animal Sciences Department will provide support for our students, faculty and staff.

To support ANS, our scholarships and more, visit [**give.ifas.ufl.edu/animal-sciences-giving/**](https://give.ifas.ufl.edu/animal-sciences-giving/).

A N I M A L . I F A S . U F L . E D U