Research Question
Is public acceptance of animal-based research affected by having a regulatory system in place?

Methods
• Using an interactive web-based survey we asked participants: “Do you support the use of 100 pigs for research to reduce phosphorous pollution?”

Participants were asked to answer yes or no (quantitative data) and to comment on why they answered as they did (qualitative data)

Three scenarios were used to explore their views:
1. Pigs fed two different natural grain diets
2. Pigs surgically implanted with a fistula to determine the effects of two diets
3. Pigs genetically modified (GM) to produce less phosphorous in their manure

• Participants that supported scenario 1 were randomised to either scenario 2 or 3, and then asked if they continued to support the research

• For the results presented below, participants were initially told that the experiments were unregulated. Those who did not support the research were directed to the same scenario, but with the research now regulated.

Results: Quantitative

Results: Qualitative

Key points from qualitative comment data:
- Participants either stated conditions under which they would support the proposed research, or reasons for their support/opposition

- 71% of participants opposed to the scenario involving GM pigs expressed a rule based ethic (i.e. “GM is wrong”)

- A rule based ethic was only expressed by:
  a) participants opposed to all use of animals in research
  b) participants opposed to the use of GM animals

Conclusions
• Invasiveness and GM decrease public acceptance of research on animals
• Willingness to accept animal research increases when regulation is in place
• Much opposition to research involving GM animals stems from rule based approaches to ethical decision making