

Animal Acquisition, Receiving and Acclimation – Laboratory Animals

Purpose

The intent of this Standard Operating Procedure is to describe guidelines for acquiring, receiving and acclimating animals housed in Charles Sturt University designated animal holding facilities.

Responsibility

Principal investigator (PI) and their research staff, facility supervisor and manager, animal care staff, veterinary care staff.

Procedure

1. Acquisition responsibilities of the PI and Facility Manager:
 - a. Before ordering animals, ensure that the protocol has Charles Sturt University's Animal Care and Ethics Committee (ACEC) approval and, in the case of Genetically Modified Organisms (GMO) has also received the appropriate approvals (see also Application to Breed Genetically Modified Organisms Form).
 - b. Approve housing through the facility supervisor before placing an animal order.
 - c. Supply the facility supervisor with emergency contact information that includes the following:
 - i. Lab or office phone numbers
 - ii. Home phone numbers for evening, weekend, and holiday contact information
 - d. Unless animals are sourced from another registered and approved animal holding facilities, i.e. another University, animals must be purchased from an approved laboratory animal vendor.
 - i. Consult with the facility supervisor or veterinarian for information on approved vendors.
 - e. If animals are not available through an approved vendor, a health status report from the delivering facility should be obtained. It is the joint responsibility of the Facility Manager and the PI to ensure that this health status report is carried out. Animals will not be released from quarantine until their health status has been confirmed.
 - f. In the absence of such a report, the PI must arrange, through the Facility Manager for appropriate Health Status reports to be carried out on arrival of the animals. Pathogen testing can be done through the VDL and in conjunction with Cereberus Sciences (www.Cerberus.net.au).
 - g. Animals of unknown or unconfirmed health status should be viewed by a veterinarian on arrival and screened for potential pathogens. Animals should be placed in quarantine for additional screening.
 - h. Quarantine procedures will vary with the species of animal, the health status of the animals, and the facility in which the animals will be housed.
2. Receiving responsibilities of facility staff:
 - a. Inspect shipping containers for damage upon arrival.
 - b. Compare the packing slip contents to the original animal order and to the content of the shipment to make sure they are consistent with one another.
 - c. Report the following information to the facility supervisor and the PI:
 - i. Deviations from the order
 - ii. Shipping container damage
 - iii. Health status of the animals
 - d. Review the following information and transfer it to the animal's record:

- i. Health history
 - ii. Vaccination history
 - iii. Date of birth
 - iv. Strain
 - v. Genetic status
- e. Match the animal's permanent identification (e.g., tattoos, ear tags) with the records received and record these on the cage card.
- f. Ensure all animals received from approved vendors or Charles Sturt University sources are observed by animal care personnel. Report all abnormalities to a veterinary care staff member.
- g. For animals ordered through a non-approved vendor, ensure that the animals are observed by veterinary care staff on arrival and removed to quarantine as approved by the PI and Facility Manager.
- i. Accept health records for unapproved vendors only if they have been signed by a veterinarian.
NOTE: Animals from non-approved vendors will need to be quarantined for additional health and pathogen screening in consultation with the veterinarian.

3. Acclimation:

- a. An acclimation period of 7 days is strongly recommended for maximal adjustment. Experimental procedures conducted less than 72 hours after arrival must receive ACEC and where necessary, veterinary approval.
- b. Place animals in appropriate housing as soon as possible after they arrive.
- c. Provide animals with fresh food and water.
- d. Include the following information on the primary enclosure:
 - i. Principal Investigator
 - ii. Contact numbers
 - iii. Species and strain
 - iv. Sex
 - v. Date of birth
 - vi. Arrival date
 - vii. Strain
 - viii. Genetic status

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Reviewer	Dr Andrew Delaney