
Valdosta State University Institutional Animal Care & Use Committee

Standard Operating Procedure Number 013

**PROCUREMENT, RECEIPT, QUARANTINE, AND ACCLIMATION OF
LABORATORY ANIMALS**

PURPOSE: This Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) specifies procedures to be employed by Valdosta State University (VSU) animal users to procure and receive live vertebrate animals from vendors for research and instructional purposes. Departure from these procedures requires explanation in the Animal Use Protocol (AUP) and approval of the IACUC.

PROCUREMENT AND RECEIPT OF LABORATORY ANIMALS

Live vertebrate animals intended for use in research or instruction should be acquired from reputable vendors (Charles River Laboratories, Carolina Biological Supply, and the like) when possible. Normal university procurement procedures should be followed in purchasing the animals. The animal user is responsible for arranging delivery of the animals at a time and place that does not put the health and well-being of animals in jeopardy (i.e., avoidance of extended holding time, temperature extremes, insufficient food or water, etc).

The specific day of the week the animals will arrive is dependent upon the species requested and the supplier providing the animals. In any case, the animals should be permitted to acclimate to the new environment and recover from the stresses of shipping prior to the initiation of any research or instructional activities. There is good scientific evidence to suggest that a minimum acclimation period of seventy-two (72) hours is required for rodents to return to pre-shipping status (Landi, M., Krieder, J.W., Lang, C.M., and Bullock, L.P. [1982], Effect of shipping on the immune functions of mice. *Am.J.Vet.Res.* 43:1654-1657 and Dymysza, H.A., S.A. Miller, J.F. Maloney, *et.al.* [1963]), Equilibration of the laboratory rat following exposure to shipping stresses. *Lab.Anim.Care* 13:60-65).

Vendors supplying animals to VSU are expected to provide animals free of internal and external parasites. If no health monitoring report is available for the animals received or if the report indicates some condition may exist, the animals should be isolated and, as appropriate, tested and monitored prior to release from quarantine.

Upon receipt of the shipment, the animal user should ensure that animals of the correct age, sex, and weight were received. Rodents should be checked for overt signs of poor health and unfitness, including physical trauma, behavior problems, and other possible health problems. Amphibians, reptiles, and fish should also be observed for overt signs of disease. Any animals showing signs of overt clinical illness or disease upon delivery should be euthanized immediately, and the vendor /source should be notified of the unsatisfactory delivery. The Attending Veterinarian is available to assist animal users in inspecting and monitoring animals received.

Animals should be placed in appropriate housing as soon as possible after receipt. All animal shipping materials should be removed from the animal facility immediately. Rodent shipping

boxes should not be allowed to come in contact with other rodents or be introduced into other rodent rooms.

QUARANTINE AND ACCLIMATION OF LABORATORY ANIMALS

All rodents procured from reputable vendors should be quarantined and acclimated for seventy-two hours before use. Other warm-blooded species received from reputable vendors may require quarantine and/or acclimation; procedures to be employed should be specified in the Animal Use Protocol. Amphibians and reptiles received from reputable vendors may be utilized twenty-four (24) hours after receipt and inspection. Any deviations from these quarantine and acclimation procedures should be explained in the Animal Use Protocol.

Vertebrate animals from non-vendor sources (i.e., wild-caught, farm-raised, or otherwise provided by a non-licensed source) should be quarantined for a minimum of seventy-two hours and for as long as necessary to assure that health of the new animals is acceptable and that the possibility of introducing diseases into the general population is minimized. Quarantine, acclimation, monitoring, including any health checks, and research related procedures should be described in the Animal Use Protocol.