

Dr. August Battles
Attending Veterinarian/
Director of Animal Care Services
Dr. Marcel Perret Gentil
Assistant Director for Veterinary
Services Programs
Editor



UNIVERSITY OF
FLORIDA

ANIMAL CARE SERVICES **NEWSLETTER**

Animal Care Services
Health Science Center
Communicore CB-159
P.O. Box 100006
Gainesville, FL 32610
Telephone: 352-392-2977
Fax: 352-392-3766

Volume 2, Issue 3

June 2002

ACS Website Has Been Updated!!

Be sure to check out our website at <http://www.health.ufl.edu/acs/>. The format has changed and is constantly being updated to bring you the most current information available on animal ordering, emergency contacts, policies, and online training. The website also contains copies of the bi-monthly newsletter, links to key sites, fees, and other important information for PIs.

AAALAC International Site Visit

The Association for Assessment and Accreditation of Laboratory Animal Care International will conduct a site visit between July 9-12, 2002 at the University of Florida Health Science Center to review the animal care program and facilities. Accreditation by AAALAC International demonstrates to funding and regulatory agencies, and the general public, the University's commitment to quality animal care and use. Failure of the University to maintain accreditation will negatively impact research funding and recruitment of research faculty. It is important to recognize that the site visitors will, in addition to the central animal facilities, visit investigator's laboratories where animals are used. Investigators and their staff should be prepared to respond appropriately to questions asked by the visitors. It is extremely important that all members of the staff are familiar with their currently approved Animal Care and Use Protocols. If you have concerns about issues in your laboratory, do not hesitate to call one of the ACS veterinarians or myself.

Our immediate objective is to meet all AAALAC and other federal, state and local requirements, and receive reaccreditation. However, our ultimate goal is to treat each day as an AAALAC day, upholding to the highest standards of animal care and use.

Renovations and Equipment Improvements

We have completed renovations of the ACS Experimental Surgical Suites and will begin renovations of the cage wash facility in the Communicore building around July 1, 2002. We will be expanding the facility and will replace the tunnel and rack washers. We will also be adding a bedding filling station, waste disposal area, a larger autoclave unit, and a bottle filling station. Ventilated racks are being installed and centomatic watering is being added to the SPF area.

Introductions

Mrs. Tammy Kegley has joined ACS from the Horticultural Sciences Department at the University of Florida. Tammy will be working in the Director's office as Dr. Battles' assistant. Her background includes experience in payroll, travel, and other secretarial duties.

Animal Care Services (ACS) and the office of the Attending Veterinarian publishes, every other month, a newsletter to communicate with those who use or provide support to the animal care program at the University of Florida. This newsletter contains new policies, new services provided, updates on animal facility improvements, updates on federal regulations, policies and other items of importance to animal users. We use e-mail as our primary method of distributing the newsletter and also have copies of the newsletter available in the animal facilities. Please print this newsletter and distribute it to members of your department. If you did not receive this newsletter by email, and would like to be added to the email list, please send an email message to tmkegley@vpha.health.ufl.edu with "add to ACS newsletter" under subject. All issues will be maintained on our website.

New Animal Contact Program

The new Animal Contact Program is now in effect. The program now includes a mandatory risk assessment for all individuals who work with animals or enter animal facilities at UF. For new employees, the risk assessment will be done during the post-offer health assessment. For current employees, the risk assessment will be done at the time of the annual Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee proposal update. The new Animal Contact risk assessment form along with the updated Information Packet and Handbook can be found at the following EH&S website: <http://www.ehs.ufl.edu/bio/animal.acweb.htm>.

PPE

Animal Room Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) signs are now being followed. On all animal room doors, in the Communicore, you will see a list of PPE you must wear into that room. Please, make sure to dress in listed PPE before going into rooms and remove PPE after exiting. Leaving Lab coats in the hallway. There will be a training power point presentation sent to PIs via email and the presentation will also be on the ACS web site. If you have any questions regarding this new policy, contact Kelly Flint at 846-2416 or email at anitemp@vpha.health.ufl.edu.

Notice to Investigators using Rats and Mice

In an effort to maintain the clean rodent population at ACS/HSC, a Sentinel Health Monitoring Program was recently introduced for rodents housed by ACS. The results from the first batch of tests showed that some of the conventional animal rooms are positive for murine pathogens such as Mouse Hepatitis Virus, GD-VII, Mycoplasma pulmonis and Rodent Pinworms. The detailed results are posted in animal rooms. If you have questions or concerns, please contact the ACS Veterinary Services.

Please note that these are not newly introduced pathogens. They were detected as a result of the new testing program for the conventionally housed rodent population. In the past there was no routine Health Monitoring of conventionally housed rodents. The results are based on samples collected from sentinel animals which do NOT necessarily mean that all the animals in conventional housings are positive or exposed to all organisms.

ACS requests help from all investigators in containing this problem. Please follow the new rules while entering the animal rooms. The SPF barrier facilities tested negative for all pathogens.

New Policies

(NOTE: All ACS policies can now be located on the web at <http://www.health.ufl.edu/acs>)

Policy on Overcrowding of Mouse Cages Located in the Health Science Center Animal Facilities

Effective June 15, 2002, the housing of mice must not exceed a density greater than recommended by the 1996 NRC "Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals", unless approved by the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee. This overcrowding policy clarifies standards and procedures to help ensure compliance with the "Guide". Overcrowding is defined as more than 5 adult mice (mice over 21 days of age) per cage (cages marked 75 Jag High Temp and the 8" x 11" boxes). However, Animal Care Services (ACS) has several smaller mouse boxes that may be used to house a maximum of 4 adult mice per cage or a female with one litter of unweaned mouse pups. The ACS will replace these smaller boxes over the next several months with the 75 Jag High Temp cages. For paired breeding conditions, a breeding pair with a litter per cage is the maximum allowed. Under harem breeding conditions, a mouse box containing more than one pregnant mouse, with a visibly extended abdomen, is considered overcrowded. This is necessary to prevent two litters in one mouse box. Boxes with more than one litter are considered overcrowded.

When cages are observed as overcrowded, they will be marked with an "Overcrowded Cage" orange card and the ACS office is notified. After the overcrowding has been corrected, the individual that corrected the overcrowding signs

and dates the card and returns the orange card to the ACS office. Removal of this card, prior to correcting overcrowding, will be immediately reported to the IACUC for corrective action. Animal Care Services will separate mice if the overcrowding is not corrected by 10:00 A.M. on the 4th day following the day the cage was marked as 'overcrowded'. The ACS will adjust the census, duplicate the cage card, and identify the new cage with a card indicating the date the overcrowding was corrected. While every effort will be made by the ACS staff to duplicate and identify separated animals correctly, their only mission in this instance is to ensure that full compliance with federal mandates is maintained. Should an investigator fail to rectify one or more overcrowded cages, ACS assumes no liability whatsoever in the maintenance of research data on the affected animals cage card.

There will be a \$25.00 service charge per incident. If there are more than three boxes at one time, there will be an additional charge of \$5.00 per box. If an Investigator has more than 3 incidents in a 30-day period, the ACS will report this to the IACUC. The IACUC has approved the policy of allowing overcrowding up until the 4th day post weaning and up to three incidents of overcrowding per month per investigator.

Unidentified Animals or Cages of Animals

Effective July 1, 2002, all animals used for biomedical research, teaching or testing at the University of Florida Health Science Center must be identified with cage cards provided by Animal Care Services. Cages or pens containing animals with the Investigators name, but are not identified with an Animal Care Services cage card will have an "Unidentified Cage" light orange cage card placed on the cage. Investigators are given until 10:00 A.M. on the 4th day following the placement of the orange card on the unidentified cage to complete a temporary cage card (available in the ACS office) or to have an ACS cage card placed on the cage. After 10:00 A.M. on the 4th day, the Investigator will be notified by phone about the unidentified cage. If no corrections are made within one business day following the phone call, the IACUC will be notified of the noncompliance. A \$25.00 service charge will be assessed to the Investigator at this time. Cage cards are available from the ACS office. ACS will provide cage cards only for animals that are listed on an approved Animal Care and Use Protocol.

Unidentified cages with no investigators name will be also be identified with an light orange card and held for 3 business days. At the end of the 3rd day ACS will determine the most appropriate action.

Identification of Surgical Rodents

Animal Care Services has implemented a new policy of identifying rodents that have undergone surgery at the Brain Institute and the Communicore building. We are asking the PI's to help us implement this policy.

Below are the instructions to research staff on how to report the surgeries (the same instructions are posted in each room).

As soon as your animal is returned to it's room:



- Place the Blue 4" x 6" magnetic placard printed with "Sx" on the room door **facing** the hallway (if there is not one already on the door).



- Attach the small "Sx" starburst sign to the cage by pressing firmly on the center of the suction cup.

Pink

- Fill out the *Investigator Surgery Log* & place on the clipboard located on the door facing the hallway. (this form is filled out only once, on the day the animal is returned to the cage).

Note: The PI is responsible for providing daily post-op care for his/her research animals and remove sutures or clips on time.

Please, do not remove any of the above signs. Veterinary staff will remove them at the appropriate time.

Policy Changes/Clarifications

Drug Order Policy

According to the University of Florida policies, ACS staff will no longer be allowed to dispense controlled drugs. Each researcher will be responsible for ordering their own drugs using their DEA restricted license. ACS will be allowed to dispense non-controlled drugs. Please refer to the ACS website for ordering.

Quarantine of Rodents from Non-Approved Vendors

Our goal is to eliminate all rodent pathogens on this campus. A primary source of rodent pathogens is the introduction of rodents from colonies that harbor pathogens. Preventing the introduction of infected rodents is a critical step in reducing or eliminating infected colonies. We are now requiring that rodents coming from a non-approved vendor undergo a six-week quarantine. Please call one of the ACS veterinarians for additional information on quarantine procedures.

Animal Ordering Policy

ACS staff members are responsible for placing **ALL** animal orders for principal investigators (PI's). Orders will be placed with approved vendors only as listed on the ACS website (<http://www.health.ufl.edu/acs/>). Animals from non-approved vendors may require quarantining. You will be informed of this prior to processing the order. Unauthorized animals will be rejected upon arrival.

Animal orders received by 5:00 p.m. Wednesday are placed Thursday morning for delivery the following week. Late order requests will be placed with the next week's orders. A late order processing fee of \$25.00 will be charged for orders placed after 5:00 p.m. Wednesday for delivery the following week.

Transportation Policy

Animals arriving from vendor shipments will be delivered to their housing site on the same or the next day free of charge. Housed animals may be relocated only after approval by an ACS veterinarian. This includes movement from room to room as well as movement from facility to facility. Animal movements requiring a truck and driver must be scheduled two working days in advance. Animals will be moved on Tuesdays and Fridays only. Fees for deliveries can be found in the ACS website. Deliveries on other days or with insufficient notification will result in higher charges.