

BACKGROUND

The Animal Welfare Act and Regulations (AWAR) definition of ‘animals’ exclude agricultural animals “...such as, but not limited to, livestock or poultry, used or intended for use as food or fiber, or livestock or poultry used or intended for use for improving animal nutrition, breeding, management, or production efficiency, or for improving the quality of food or fiber.”(AWAR, 9 CFR 1.1). Based on this definition, agricultural animals used for other purposes, such as biomedical research and testing, are subject to the AWAR.

Public Health Service (PHS) Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals mandates that institutions use the Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals (Guide) as a basis for developing and implementing a program for activities involving animals. The Guide states that it “...applies to agricultural animals used in biomedical research, including those maintained in typical farm settings.” It further emphasizes that the use of farm animals in research should be subject to the same ethical considerations as the use of other animals in research (Guide, page 32). The Guide for the Care and Use of Agricultural Animals in Research and Teaching (Ag Guide) primarily refers to agricultural animals used in agricultural research for which the scientific objectives are to improve understanding of the animals’ use in production agriculture.

POLICY AND PROCEDURE

The IACUC will use the above criteria to classify animals and their use as either biomedical or agricultural. The rationale for making this determination should be documented. The IACUC will use the Ag Guide for establishing appropriate standards for use of agricultural animals in non-biomedical research and teaching. In the same way, the IACUC will use the Guide for establishing appropriate standards for use of agricultural animals in biomedical research and teaching. However, there may be circumstances where it is appropriate to follow the standards of the Ag Guide in biomedical research settings (e.g., specific recommendations for environmental enrichment, transport, and handling). Proposals to conduct such activities will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and any approval to depart from provisions of the Guide must be based on scientific justifications acceptable to the IACUC.

REFERENCES

Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals, 8th Edition (2011)

<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/olaw/Guide-for-the-Care-and-Use-of-Laboratory-Animals.pdf>

Guide for the Care and Use of Agricultural Animals in Research and Teaching, 3rd Edition (2010)

http://www.fass.org/docs/agguide3rd/Ag_Guide_3rd_ed.pdf

Implementation Date: October 21, 2013	Reviewed/Revised Date: October 21, 2013	IACUC Chair: T. Bradley
--	--	----------------------------