

## **Policy and Procedures for Use of Agricultural Animals in Research and Teaching**

### **Use of Agricultural Animals in *Agricultural* Research and Teaching**

The use of agricultural animals in agricultural research and teaching is not covered by the Assurance on file with the Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare in accordance with PHS Policy or regulated by the USDA under the Animal Welfare Act as documented in the Code of Federal Regulation Title 9, Subchapter A Parts 1, 2 and 3. Nonetheless, as stated in the introduction to this research manual, “The University of Vermont is committed to the humane care and use of animals in activities related to research, testing and teaching.” While unregulated, this commitment extends to agricultural animals used in agricultural research and teaching.

#### **Definitions:**

Agricultural animals are defined as horses and farm 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.” 9 CFR 1.1

The Association for Assessment and Accreditation of Laboratory Animal Care International (AAALAC International) makes the following distinction:

“...uses of farm animals are often separated into biomedical uses and agricultural uses, and different criteria for evaluating standards of housing and care for animals of the same species may be appropriate. Decisions on categorizing research uses of farm animals and defining standards for their care and use should be based on user goals, protocols, and concern for animal well-being and should be made by the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee.”

#### **Policy, Procedures and Guidelines:**

The IACUC will use the above criteria to classify animals and their use as either biomedical or agricultural. The IACUC will use the “Guide for the Care and Use of Agricultural Animals in Agricultural Research and Teaching” for establishing appropriate standards for use of agricultural animals in non-biomedical research and teaching.

When a UVM faculty member contracts or arranges to utilize animals on a commercial farm for purposes of research or teaching, the IACUC must determine that the specific farm is committed to providing a high standard of animal welfare. Commercial farm operators are encouraged to follow best management practices. Prior to the submission of the Animal Use protocol to the IACUC, the farm owner or manager must complete a [farm assessment](#) checklist such as the National Milk Producers’ Federation (NMPF) FARM program<sup>i</sup> or other<sup>ii</sup> and provide a copy of the assessment checklist to the Principal Investigator. The completed farm assessment must accompany the IACUC protocol submission. Based on the level of invasiveness of the planned research and the completed farm assessment, the IACUC will evaluate the suitability of the collaborator farm, determine whether a farm inspection is warranted and, if so, whether that inspection will be carried out by IACUC members or by Committee designees.

The Institutional Official, the Vice President for Research, has delegated the following roles and responsibilities for oversight of the use of agricultural animals:

ENTITY	ROLES/RESPONSIBILITIES
IACUC	The IACUC is responsible for overseeing the program for the care and use of agricultural animals in research and teaching. Specifically, the IACUC is responsible for the review, approval and oversight of (1) protocols involving animals in agricultural research and teaching.

	(2) standard operating procedures for routine care and husbandry, and (3) the facilities where animals are housed and research is taking place.
University Veterinarian	The University Veterinarian is responsible for the oversight of health care and routine care and husbandry for agricultural animals. When the University engages third parties to provide such care, these arrangements should be specified in the IACUC protocol and subject to the University Veterinarian's or her/his designee's oversight. The University Veterinarian is responsible for consulting on the development of all protocols and reviewing them to ensure the appropriateness of the care and use of the animals in the proposed projects. At the discretion of the University Veterinarian and the IACUC, this oversight may include announced or unannounced visits to the cooperating farm.
College of Agriculture and Life Sciences	Agricultural animals which are held on UVM facilities are principally a College resource. The College is responsible for animal ordering and inventory of animals for research and teaching activities when the animals are housed in University facilities (e.g. the Miller Dairy Research Center and the Morgan Horse Farm). The College is responsible for providing the resources for maintaining the animals in accordance with established standards for health and welfare whether or not they are involved in specific research and teaching protocols.
OACM	The Office of Animal Care Management is responsible for training research personnel, documenting such training, and oversight of the UVM Occupational Health Program. Appropriate training will be made available for managers and employees of collaborator farms on which UVM researchers utilize animals.
Large Animal Veterinarian	A large animal veterinarian, either employed by the University or a third party is responsible for general health care and monitoring of animals used in research and teaching protocols. Collaborator farms must demonstrate a valid veterinarian-client-patient relationship with a licensed veterinarian.
Entity owning any facility where UVM's agricultural animals are housed	<b>Prior to approval of the research</b> , these entities are responsible for: Completing the checklist in the NMPF " <a href="#">Quick Reference User Guide</a> " or a comparable checklist <sup>ii</sup> and returning to the Principle Investigator <b>Following approval of the research</b> , these entities are responsible for: Annual review and resubmission of the farm self-assessment tool Facility upkeep in accordance with established standards. Maintaining all necessary licenses current. Providing routine care and husbandry in accordance with established standards. Providing copies of health reports/records and testing results when requested by the IACUC.
Teaching and /or Research Faculty:	It is the PI's responsibility to ensuring appropriate monitoring of animals specific to their protocol. Farm workers associated with the research animals need to be added to specific protocols, and to be trained on the principles of agricultural research animal care and use.

## Use of Agricultural Animals in *Biomedical Research and Teaching*

Currently the use of agricultural animals in biomedical research and training is restricted to the Ungulate or Given facilities. Other facilities may be used if such facilities meet the standards required by the Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals and the standards set by the IACUC.

<sup>i</sup> [http://www.nationaldairyfarm.com/sites/default/files/NMPF\\_QuickRefGuide\\_2010\\_VIEW.pdf](http://www.nationaldairyfarm.com/sites/default/files/NMPF_QuickRefGuide_2010_VIEW.pdf)

<sup>ii</sup> Other acceptable animal welfare survey instruments may be available through the producer's milk procurement organization or through the New York State Cattle Health Assurance Program (<http://nyschap.vet.cornell.edu/module/welfare/welfare.asp>).