

UC Davis Office of the Attending Veterinarian Standards of Care

Policy:	SC-20-107
Date:	6/9/2025
Enabled by:	The Guide, The Ag Guide APHIS, PPM
Supersedes:	4/1/2022

Title: Acquisition and Acclimation

I. Purpose:

To establish appropriate acquisition methods and acclimation periods for newly received research and teaching animals. Per the *Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals* (the Guide), newly received animals should be given a period for physiologic, psychological, and nutritional stabilization before their use. Experience has shown that animals that are properly acclimated do better on study and provide more consistent and relevant, reproducible data in addition to the welfare concern of coping with the stress of shipping. Acquisition of agricultural animals should be in compliance with the *Guide for the Care and Use of Agricultural Animals in Research and Teaching* (the Ag Guide).

II. Policy:

Research and teaching animals must be procured according to the University policy for animal acquisition as detailed in PPM 290-30. All acquisitions, except those involving agricultural animals bought at auction, are initiated through the Animal Tracking System (<https://iacuc.ucdavis.edu/protocol/AnimalTracking/index.cfm>). All departmental/facility procedures regarding animal acquisition must be followed to ensure adequate and appropriate space is available. The veterinary staff or designated animal facility staff will examine incoming animals as required by veterinary policy and operating procedures. Animal Facilities should develop local standard operating procedures for acquisition and acclimation with their veterinary staff. Vendors and other sources must be approved by the Animal Care Program, usually by inclusion as a source in an animal care and use protocol. The use of vendors that are AAALAC accredited and produce purpose bred laboratory animals is expected. It is also expected that USDA covered species come from a registered facility and be class A animals. Exceptions to these sourcing requirement must be documented in an approved IACUC protocol. Imports of animals from other Universities or Institutions should also come from similar accredited and registered facilities and each source be listed in an approved animal care and use protocol.

III. Procedure:

When animals arrive from off campus sources, they should have an acclimation period prior to experimental use. Terminal studies may have a shorter acclimation period than non-terminal studies procedures.

Recommendations can be obtained from Campus Veterinary Services.

Please contact AnimalTransfer@ucdavis.edu or IACUC-Staff@ucdavis.edu for guidance regarding acquiring animals from non-vendor off campus sources. Generally, rodents may be used on arrival

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for terminal procedures, but should have a 3 day acclimatization period prior to anesthesia, surgery or similarly invasive procedures.

For species covered by the USDA Animal Welfare Act (AWA) a minimum of 7 days post arrival acclimation is required prior to any major survival manipulations. This allows for examination, post arrival testing, and processing by the veterinary staff or designated facility manager. It is the responsibility of the principle investigator to ensure the animal has been released for study prior to placing the animal on project. A minimum of 24 hours/overnight acclimation is required for terminal use to allow for intake exam and acceptance of the animal for study by the veterinary staff or designated facility manager.

In addition, certain species may have required diagnostics that must be performed prior to study, for example Q fever testing must be completed and results reviewed by the veterinary staff prior to acceptance of sheep on study or activities involving in utero or fetal work.

Wild caught rodents may require testing for zoonotic diseases.

USDA covered non rodent species must be checked in and accepted for study by the veterinary or other appointed staff prior to release for study.

Animals arriving in poor condition or displaying any abnormal characteristics or any adverse effects from the travel must be reported to the veterinary staff. Additional acclimation time may be required for animals that arrive in poor condition or they may be rejected and a suitable replacement requested from the vendor.

Individual exceptions maybe granted by the campus/attending veterinarian or by the assigned clinical veterinarian. This veterinarian may waive the acclimation period for experimental reasons if the animal appears in their professional opinion to be suitable for experimental use.

Study related exceptions that are more than occasional exceptions to this policy should be written into the animal use and care protocol and be scientifically justified.