Title: Husbandry Care of Dairy Cattle

I. Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to outline the minimum standards of care for dairy cattle.

II. Policy:

All units providing animal care for dairy cattle used in agricultural research and teaching must meet or exceed these minimum requirements based on the Guide for the Care and Use of Agricultural Animals Used in Research (Ag Guide). Dairy cattle used in biomedical research and non-standard agricultural teaching must additionally meet the requirements in the USDA Animal Welfare Regulations (AWR) and the Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals (Guide). Deviations or exceptions must be approved by the Attending Veterinarian and the IACUC.

III. Procedure:

**Daily (365 days a year without exception):**

- Observe each animal and check for health concerns (AWR 2.33, Ag Guide pg. 22).
- Ensure adequate feed and ad libitum potable water is available (Ag Guide p. 20).
- Remove contaminated or spoiled food (Ag Guide pg. 78).
- Record and report sick animals to designated clinical veterinarian per standard operating procedure (AWR 2.33, Ag Guide pg. 9).
- Milk on a regular schedule that is appropriate for the goals of the herd or specific research project.
- Remove wet bedding and manure from free-stalls (Ag Guide pg. 77).
- Record daily completion of each task, initial each task, and date the log.

**As needed:**

- Remove excreta and food waste to ensure worker and animal health (Ag Guide pg. 20).
- Sanitize primary enclosures, feed bunks, and surrounding environment (Ag Guide pg. 20).
- Remove and replace worn or damaged equipment from primary enclosures and surrounding facility (Guide pg. 72).
• Maintain feed stuffs and remove spoiled or contaminated feeds (Ag Guide pg. 21). Expiration dates for bagged feed must be readily available.
• Clean and sanitize feed storage containers (Ag Guide pg. 20).
• Each facility will develop their own best practices with sanitization typically occurring every 6 months or whenever there is a change in species but may vary with facility.

**Environmental Enrichment:**
• Refer to the Environmental Enrichment policy (SOC-30-102).

**Housing:**
• Facilities for dairy cattle should provide physical accommodations that allow for a relatively dry area for the animals to lie down in and be comfortable, and should be conducive to cows lying for as many hours of the day as they desire (Ag Guide pg. 74).
• Enclosures must be in good condition, free of any damage and protrusions that may cause injury (Ag. Guide pg. 64).
• Floors shall be moisture-resistant, impact-resistant, slip-resistant, and resistant to corrosion (Ag Guide pg. 75).
• Whenever possible, cattle should be socially housed based on compatibility (Ag Guide pg. 79).
• Space requirements for agricultural research and teaching for dairy cattle can be found in Table 7-1 of the Ag Guide, pg. 76.
• Space requirements differ for biomedical research and agricultural use animals. Specific space requirements can be found in the Guide and the Ag Guide, respectively (see appendix 1).