

Policy: SC-33-300  
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**Title: Husbandry Care of Horses and Donkeys**

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I. Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to outline the minimum standards of care for horses (*Equus caballus* and *Equus africanus asinus*).

II. Policy:

All units providing animal care for horses and donkeys 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)*. Horses and donkeys used in biomedical research and non-standard Ag practice 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)*.

III. Procedure:

**Daily (365 days a year):**

- Observe each animal and check for health concerns (*Ag Guide* pg. 22).
- Ensure adequate feed and ad libitum potable water is available (*Ag Guide* p. 21).
- Horses and donkeys housed inside or where they cannot graze should be fed and watered at least twice a day (*Ag Guide* pg. 94).
- Remove contaminated or spoiled food.
- Record sick and dead animals, and report them to Campus Veterinary Services (CVS) or designated clinical veterinarian per standard operating procedure for reporting sick or dead animals (*Ag Guide* pg. 9).
- Remove wet bedding and feces from stalls (*Ag Guide* pg. 92).
- Record daily completion of tasks, initial, and date log sheet.

**Weekly (Range horses only)**

- Observe each animal and check for health concerns (*Ag Guide* pg. 22).
- Record sick and dead animals, and report them to Campus Veterinary Services (CVS) or designated clinical veterinarian per standard operating procedure for reporting sick or dead animals (*Ag Guide* pg. 9).

**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, 92).

## UC Davis Office of the Attending Veterinarian Standards of Care

- 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. 21).

### **Environmental Enrichment:**

- Refer to the Environmental Enrichment policy.
- Horses and donkeys should be provided the opportunity to demonstrate species typical behavior. Examples of enrichment for horses include social housing, exercise, balls, and hanging ropes (*Ag Guide* pg. 31-32).
- Devices must be checked regularly for wear and discarded when safety hazards are observed.

### **Housing:**

- Facilities for horses and donkeys should provide physical accommodations that allow for normal postural adjustments at will, and permit the horse to lie down, stand up, turn around, and roll (*Ag Guide* pg. 90).
- Floors shall be selected for ease of cleaning and for sanitation, comfort, and safety of the horse or donkey, with proper bedding for indoor facilities (*Ag Guide* pg. 90-91).
- For outdoor housing, sufficient shade and shelter should be provided to protect from the elements (*Ag Guide* pg. 96).
- Whenever possible, horses and donkeys should be socially housed based on compatibility (*Ag Guide* pg. 96).
- Space requirements for agricultural research and teaching horses and donkeys can be found in Table Table 8-1 of the *Ag Guide* pg. 91.
- Space requirements for adult horses is 144 ft<sup>2</sup> per animal (*Guide* pg. 63)
- Space requirements for ponies and donkeys:

Animals/Enclosure	Weight (kg)	Floor Area/Animal (ft <sup>2</sup> )
1-4	-----	72
>4	≤200	60
>4	>200	≥72
( <i>Guide</i> pg. 63)		

**When housing this species, please also refer to the Animal Care Program's Standards of Care Policy on Pest Control, Identification and Labeling of Cages, Environmental Enrichment, Food Storage, House-Keeping in Facilities Housing Biomedical Research Animals, Physical Plant Facilities Maintenance, as well as the IACUC's Policy on Social Housing of Social Species.**