Title: Husbandry Care of Sheep

I. Purpose:

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

II. Policy:

All units providing animal care for sheep 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). Sheep 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).
- Ensure adequate feed and potable water is available (Guide pg. 65-68).
- Record and report sick animals to designated clinical veterinarian per standard operating procedure (AWR 2.33, Ag Guide pg.9).
- For temperature-controlled housing, record minimum and maximum temperatures and humidity.
  - Temperature range for sheep is 61°F to 81°F (Guide pg. 44).
  - Humidity range for sheep is 30% to 70% (Guide pg. 44).
- Spot clean cage, removing animals unless sufficient space is available for the animals to remain dry (AWR 3.131).
- Remove and replace any enrichment devices that are worn, damaged, or heavily soiled (Guide pg. 72)
- Clean and organize room, anterooms, and surrounding premises (Guide pg. 72).
- Record daily completion of each task, initial each task, and date the log.

As needed:

- Disinfect the animal room including walls, floors, and ceilings (if possible) (Guide pg. 72).
- All wooled sheep should be sheared at least annually.
Remove and replace worn or damaged equipment from primary enclosures and surrounding facility (Guide pg. 72).
Chow must be discarded after 6 months of the milling date unless manufacturer guidelines recommend a shorter or longer expiration date (Guide pg. 66).
Clean and sanitize feed storage containers (Guide pg. 67).
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)

Facilities:
- Temperature alarms must be installed in all temperature-controlled rooms housing sheep (Guide pg. 143).
- Adequate ventilation must be provided for the health and comfort of the animal at all times.
  - A minimum of 10-15 fresh room air exchanges per hour shall be provided in animal housing areas (Guide pg. 46).
- Floors shall be moisture-resistant, non-absorbent, impact-resistant, and relatively smooth (Guide pg. 137). Refer to Physical Plant SOC 50-102.

Housing:
- Whenever possible, sheep should be socially housed in compatible groups (Guide pg. 51).
- Floor space taken up by food bowls, water containers, and enrichment devices should not be considered part of the floor space (Guide pg. 56).
- Space requirements for agricultural research and teaching sheep can be found in Table 10-1 of the Ag Guide pg. 142.
- 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).