

Policy:	SC-33-700
Date:	6/9/2025
Enabled by:	IACUC/AV/ ILAR/APHIS
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Title: Husbandry Care of Camelids

I. Purpose:

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

II. Policy:

All units providing animal care for camelids used in agricultural research and teaching or as livestock guardians must meet or exceed these minimum requirements based on the Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals (*Guide*). Camelids used in biomedical research and non-standard agricultural teaching must additionally meet the requirements in the USDA Animal Welfare Regulations (*AWR*). 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.10).
- For temperature-controlled housing, record minimum and maximum temperatures and humidity, if housed indoors.
- 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 rooms, anterooms, and surrounding areas, including removing encroaching vegetation around outdoor enclosures.
- Record daily completion of each task, initial each task, and date the log.

As needed:

- Feed must be discarded after 6 months of the milling date (*Guide* pg. 66) unless manufacturer guidelines recommend a shorter or longer expiration date.
- Disinfect the animal room including walls, floors, and ceilings (if possible) (*Guide* pg. 72).

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- Outdoor enclosures should be cleaned regularly to prevent excess buildup of spider webs, leaf litter, and other extraneous materials.
- Clean and sanitize water troughs and feed bunks (*Guide* pg. 70).
- Each facility will develop their own best practices for sanitization of the macroenvironment typically occurring every 6 months or whenever there is a change in species.”
- Llamas and alpacas need to be sheared routinely. Typically, this is yearly, but timing may vary from every 6 months to every 2 years depending on breed, coat type, and speed of growth.
 - We strongly recommend utilizing a shearer experienced in shearing camelids, as most sheep shearers do not shear camelids.

Environmental Enrichment:

- Refer to the Environmental Enrichment policy ([SOC-30-102](#)).

Housing:

- Whenever possible, camelids should be socially housed in compatible groups (*Guide* pg. 51).
- Animals must have enough space to express their natural postures and postural adjustments without touching the enclosure walls or ceiling, be able to turn around, and have ready access to food and water. In addition, there must be sufficient space to comfortably rest away from areas soiled by urine and feces (*Guide* pg. 56).
- Floors shall be moisture-resistant, non-absorbent, impact-resistant, and relatively smooth (*Guide* pg. 137). Refer to Physical Plant SOC 50-102.