

## WVU IACUC POLICY: Acquisition and Disposition of Agricultural Research and Teaching Animals

### Purpose and Background

The *Guide for the Care and Use of Agricultural Animals in Research and Teaching* states “the institution should develop a mechanism and process of control for animal acquisition that ensures coordination of resources that will preclude the arrival of animals in advance of preparation of adequate housing and appropriate veterinary quarantine procedures.” Appropriate animal procurement safeguards the health and welfare of our current herds and flocks and is imperative for an adequate institutional veterinary care program.

This policy ensures agricultural animals used on Davis College Research, Education and Outreach Centers (REOC) at West Virginia University (WVU) and at Potomac State College (PSC) are acquired from known sources to certify good health and well-being, and that they are disposed of in an ethical, practical and humane manner when they are no longer required for research or teaching use. All vertebrate animals **must** be acquired lawfully, used judiciously, and disposed of properly. Regardless of method, the final animal disposition **must** be listed on the IACUC-approved animal use protocol.

### Policy

Below are the IACUC-approved methods of acquisition and final disposition of animals involved in agricultural research and teaching at WVU/PSC.

### Acquisition

1. All new livestock acquisitions **must** be approved by REOC management and the clinical veterinarian.
  - a. A new “Animal Acquisition Form” **must** be completed, directing inquiries to the specific farm manager, prior to purchase. (Minimum 5 days prior to arrival) Animal Acquisition Form can be found here:  
<https://wvu.kualibuild.com/app/66018645f0b061013b9b837c/run>
  - b. Management and veterinary staff **must** be provided enough advanced notice of the acquisition to ensure the needs of the animals can be properly met.
2. Veterinary staff evaluation will include approval of the animal source (if necessary) and available medical records.
  - a. At the veterinarian’s discretion, sources can be designated as approved sources and would not require each purchase to be reviewed.
  - b. The veterinarian may request to inspect the animal(s) prior to purchase/delivery.
  - c. Records from approved sources should be routinely evaluated to ensure maintenance of quality.
  - d. The veterinarian has the authority to deny importation of animals due to health or welfare concerns.
3. All out-of-state arrivals **must** come with a Certificate of Veterinary Inspection (CVI). Health documentation needed for in-state animals is determined by the clinical veterinarian.

- a. Any health documents (including CVI when required) **must** be attached to Animal Acquisition Form.
  - b. Original acquisition forms and CVI documents are maintained on file with the clinical veterinarian and a copy with the farm manager.
  - c. Any prior testing will be determined by the clinical veterinarian and test results provided prior to purchase of the animals.
4. Animals used for research or teaching, but not owned by WVU, remain the property of their owners.
    - a. Veterinary care is provided as necessary.
    - b. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), delineating collaborator responsibilities, **must** be in place. A copy should be submitted to the Office of Animal Welfare.
5. Acclimation periods **must** be implemented and appropriate for the species and its prior experiences. (See IACUC Policy #12-005 Acclimation of Newly Acquired Animals)
    - a. Routine husbandry and veterinary procedures may be required prior to completion of the acclimation period.
    - b. Research or teaching manipulations cannot be performed prior to completion of the acclimation period unless approved in the IACUC protocol.
  6. All newly acquired animals should undergo a quarantine period which includes appropriate clinical treatments and testing. (See Agricultural Procedure: *Animal Acquisition, Acclimation, and Quarantine BMP*)

### **Disposition**

- West Virginia University endorses the ethical considerations of the 3R's in use of animals. The concept of reduction advocates minimizing the number of animals used to achieve scientific results including strategies of reuse and the sharing of resources.
- Prior to the euthanasia of any healthy, viable vertebrate animal, researchers **shall** consider alternative dispositions including: use of animals in future research or teaching activities, transfer of animals to another researcher, appropriate use of animals as a food source for other species or people, adoption, animal sanctuaries, and provision of long-term care for long-lived species for projects yet to be identified.
- The IACUC may request appropriate justification when viable alternatives to euthanasia appear to exist but have not been addressed by the principal investigator.

For all animals, the approved protocol **must** indicate the final disposition for the animals involved. The following is a list of acceptable dispositions.

1. Euthanasia – Animals may be euthanized in accordance with the current American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) Guidelines for the Euthanasia of Animals, with a method approved in the protocol.
2. Transfer to another protocol/Reuse – Animals may be transferred from one active IACUC-approved protocol to another active approved protocol or off protocol to the production herd/flock covered by standards of care.

3. Individual Sale/Lease – When animals can be retired through sale or lease to appropriate individuals.
4. Export to another institution – Animals may be transferred to a suitable institution for research or teaching.
5. Sale food/fiber- Animals may sold for food/fiber.

Other methods of disposition can be requested by contacting the Office of Animal Welfare and providing specific information for consideration.

### **References**

1. [Animal Welfare Act and Animal Welfare Regulations](#), United States Department of Agriculture, 2017.
2. [Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals](#), National Research Council, 2011.
3. [Guide for the Care and Use of Agricultural Animals in Agricultural Research and Teaching](#), Federation of Animal Science Societies, 2010.